Babergh Mid Suffolk District
Working Together

2020
HIGHWAY & TRANSPORTATION CONSULTANTS

Phase 1 – Parking Strategy Consultation Feedback Report

FOR BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILS

Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION

2020 Consultancy was commissioned by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to undertake a car park study and prepare a parking strategy covering off-street car parks and the provision of on-street parking. The Councils are seeking to develop a parking strategy that align with the Councils vision, which is designed to shape the future growth of the districts, set out opportunities for enhancing the quality of the local environments and the range of different uses it offers, and provide a prospectus for investment in Babergh and Mid Suffolk. The District Councils consider the parking strategy to be a key means of enhancing what are already strong and vibrant districts, and its preparation underscores the importance as an asset for residents of Babergh and Mid Suffolk, visitors to the district, and those who work in the district.

As part of the development of the parking strategy, it is necessary to undertake investigation studies into the existing parking provision to understand the baseline and where potential improvements can be made through appropriate intervention. To support this process, a district-wide stakeholder engagement exercise was undertaken to gain feedback from various stakeholders on their parking behaviours, concerns, likes, and what is considered important when parking within Babergh and Mid Suffolk. This is the first of two consultations that will be held on the parking strategy, with a second process undertaken on the draft strategy and the interventions contained within it. This report summarises the initial consultation process.

It is fundamental for the development of the parking strategy to garner a level of stakeholder and public engagement that would allow for opinions and possible concerns to be offered. It is from this engagement that data can be sourced and analysed to allow for a higher standard of subject understanding. It is important to offer this platform for engagement to produce further understanding and possible mitigating actions that would have a higher adoption probability with thorough stakeholder involvement at this stage. It was clear from the high levels of engagement on the consultation process and online survey that the subject of car parking in Babergh and Mid Suffolk is an important issue. Babergh and Mid Suffolk has many trip generators and attraction destinations that require parking facilities and this process allows for the parking provision to be looked at both for the short-term and long-term.

2.0 CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS

2.1 REQUIREMENT FOR CONSULTATION

The aim of the public consultation is to give the public and stakeholders an opportunity to express their views on off-street and on-street parking within Babergh and Mid Suffolk, both the existing provision and the potential changes and improvements. The results of the consultation will be used as part of identifying the possible changes needed to ensure that the parking provision is sufficient for use both now and over the next 20 years. The car parks were individually identified and scored against a range of different criteria to evaluate the current provision. This data and the data obtained from the consultation will inform the overall recommendations. On-street parking provision was assessed, and the data acquired will contribute to the overall parking provision and final report.

Note on COVID-19

In March 2020, the UK Government issued guidelines in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. To reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus, the general public were instructed to remain two meters away from anyone outside of their household and unnecessary travel was not permitted. Public buildings were also closed, and large events banned. Whilst restrictions have been eased and broadly removed, the planning and delivery of stakeholder engagement and public consultation will continue to be impacted for some time with many choosing to continue any engagement remotely.

To ensure that government guidelines were adhered to, 2020 Consultancy considered the alternative arrangements for consultation including the undertaking of virtual engagement and public consultation. This allowed stakeholders the opportunity to provide their comments and feedback on the key questions regarding their parking views and experiences, whilst accommodating the needs of the hard-to-reach groups, without impacting upon the project programme and maintaining social distancing. The virtual consultation process was offered to various key stakeholders along with an online questionnaire, it was carried out in line with the UK government guidelines and advice provided by the UK Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and the Consultation Institute (TCI).

2.2 CONSULTATION MATERIAL

To promote the consultation, a poster was prepared and distributed to stakeholders, advertised on the Council's website and various forms of social media as well as displayed in all council owned car parks. Appendix A provides a copy of the poster that was used as part of the consultation.

2.3 CONSULTATION APPROACH

Public consultation for the first phase of the parking strategy project began on Tuesday 31st August 2021 and was due to last for four weeks, ending on Tuesday 28th September 2021. However, it was agreed to extend the consultation for a little over two weeks to maximise engagement. Therefore, the consultation process lasted just over six weeks in total concluding on Friday 15th October 2021.

As with the majority of public consultation exercises, it was agreed to include both targeted consultation where stakeholders with a known interest were contacted, as well as non-direct consultation, which involved hosting the consultation online for all stakeholders to participate. During the early stages of the project, 2020 Consultancy worked with officers of Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils to identify stakeholders that would be directly contacted. These stakeholders included:

- Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councillors
- Babergh and Mid Suffolk Town and Parish Councils
- Emergency services
- Transport operators
- Walking and cycling groups
- Disability groups
- Schools and colleges
- Environment agency
- Natural England
- Historic England
- Road Haulage Association
- Local shopping centres
- Business chamber groups

- Sports and leisure groups
- Open space groups

Stakeholders were contacted approximately 10 days prior to the consultation commencing to introduce the project and provide key milestones within the consultation. This included the opportunity to attend a virtual stakeholder workshop, which involved a presentation from 2020 on the project, including findings to date, future changes that could happen, and how it could relate to the districts wider plan. It also provided details on the consultation questionnaire. A copy of the presentation is included in Appendix B.

The consultation questionnaire sought stakeholder views on general parking questions such as, how often do you travel into your local towns and villages, habits when deciding on what car parks to use and issues experienced parking in their residential streets. Respondents had the opportunity to outline why they preferred certain car parks over others and what they would perceive to be the best improvements that could be made to the existing provision.

The questionnaire provided the respondent the chance to register their reasons for trips and if they used car parks or on-street car parking. It also gave them the opportunity to document if they had or have experienced any problems with parking across the districts. In the questionnaire, there were also questions around priority spaces and Electric Vehicle charging. Importantly at the end of the questionnaire, respondents were provided the opportunity to express in a comments section, anything that the previous thirty two questions had not touched upon.

A copy of the questionnaire is contained in Appendix C of this report.

2.4 PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESPONSES

During the consultation period responses received from stakeholders were logged and analysed. This included returned questionnaires, emails, and letters. All communication received from stakeholders was acknowledged and where necessary a reply was provided, which included emails and phone calls.

2.5 VIRTUAL STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS

The virtual workshops were well received and offered a safe and cohesive opportunity for the stakeholder to express their views. The attendance was adequate with approximately 40 attendees over the six workshops held. Feedback supplied after the workshops both directly prior to the end of the meeting or from emails sent post workshop were generally positive. The feedback given highlighted that the opportunity to discuss personal views on parking within Babergh and Mid Suffolk was invaluable.

Some comments provided indicated that the workshops and the wider engagement process wasn't specific enough for individual towns and villages. However, as the parking strategy is being delivered at a strategic level, it isn't feasible to go into the detail for each and every town and village within the two districts. This information was fed back to the stakeholders that were raising these concerns.

Table 1 below summarises the key points of conversation from the workshops.

Comments from Stakeholder
Important to ensure sufficient parking for tourists
Reaffirm that this is a parking strategy - not just a car parking strategy
Signage to car parks and parking areas should be investigated including Variable Message Signs that display spaces available
Focusing on an off-street and on-street strategy welcome to provide more detail in both documents to enable stakeholders with a specific interest to focus on one area with appropriate signposting to other sections
When investigating Electric Vehicle charge points, this should incorporate behaviours as well as infrastructure
Babergh and Mid Suffolk should be raising awareness of the second consultation such as through Council tax bills or other innovative methods
Concerns raised over on-street parking near train stations
Assurance sought that parking considerations for new developments will be considered as part of the development of the parking strategy
Electric vehicles shouldn't be given priority over standard vehicles in car parks but instead it's important to ensure there is sufficient provision
Car parks should provide parking provision for all potential users including motor homes, cyclists, motor cyclists etc
Required clarification as to how the parking strategy would adapt to the changing environment of town and village centres i.e. from shopping to commercial
Concerns raised over quality of parking machines in car parks

Residents parking permits should be explored in Lavenham due to ongoing issues that occur in residential streets
Assurance sought that parking within council owned estates will be incorporated in the strategy
Statement on parking charges including the fact there are advantages and disadvantages in free parking but important to understand location is key on these
Whilst some car parks scored poorly for provision of infrastructure such as CCTV and lighting it's important to recognise this isn't welcome in some car park locations
Important that disabled parking is critical part of parking strategy including how theses parking places are enforced
Ensure clear links to work around sustainable travel
Parking for motorhomes - use of empty car parks overnight, a chargeable service / would need to remove height restrictions. How would this be enforced?
Important that engagement is carried out with other parking operators
Needham Lake car park likely to be improved in near future as part of improvements to the visitor centre

Table 1 – Comments from stakeholders during virtual workshops

3.0 QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As part of the consultation exercise, an online questionnaire was developed, which focused on identifying the current car parking trends and levels of car parking satisfaction, purpose for travel into a particular area, improvements needed for payment options, on street parking habits and the importance of certain car parking in general. This section reviews the 1,248 completed responses.

3.2 QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

3.21 LOCATION

The questionnaire started with a request for the respondent to provide their post code which allowed the responses to be identified with a proximity to an area within the district. Figure 1 provides a snapshot map of completed responses based on the location of the stakeholder. This demonstrates that responses were received across most areas of both districts, which is encouraging to confirm that the consultation promotion was district wide. As expected, it shows a core concentration of responses gathered around the larger towns such as Sudbury, Stowmarket, and Hadleigh, although there were good numbers received from some smaller towns and villages including Eye, and Lavenham.

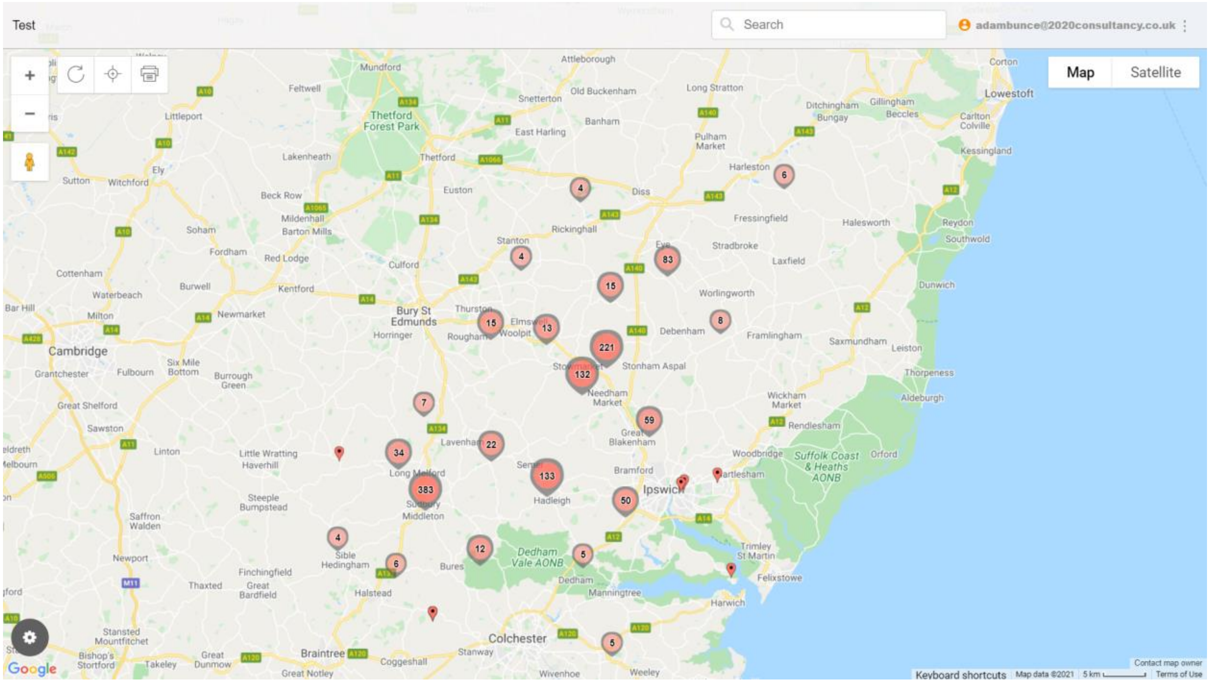


Figure 1 – Heatmap of consultation responses

The questionnaire contained a further 31 questions – a mixture of open and closed format questions. The data has been processed to assess responses and is summarised on the following pages.

3.22 QUESTION 2 ASKED ARE YOU RESPONDING AS …

This single selection question enabled a simple tabulation of responses. This question received 790 answers meaning 458 respondents did not answer this question.

Figure 2 below shows the breakdowns of responses based on the criteria stated.

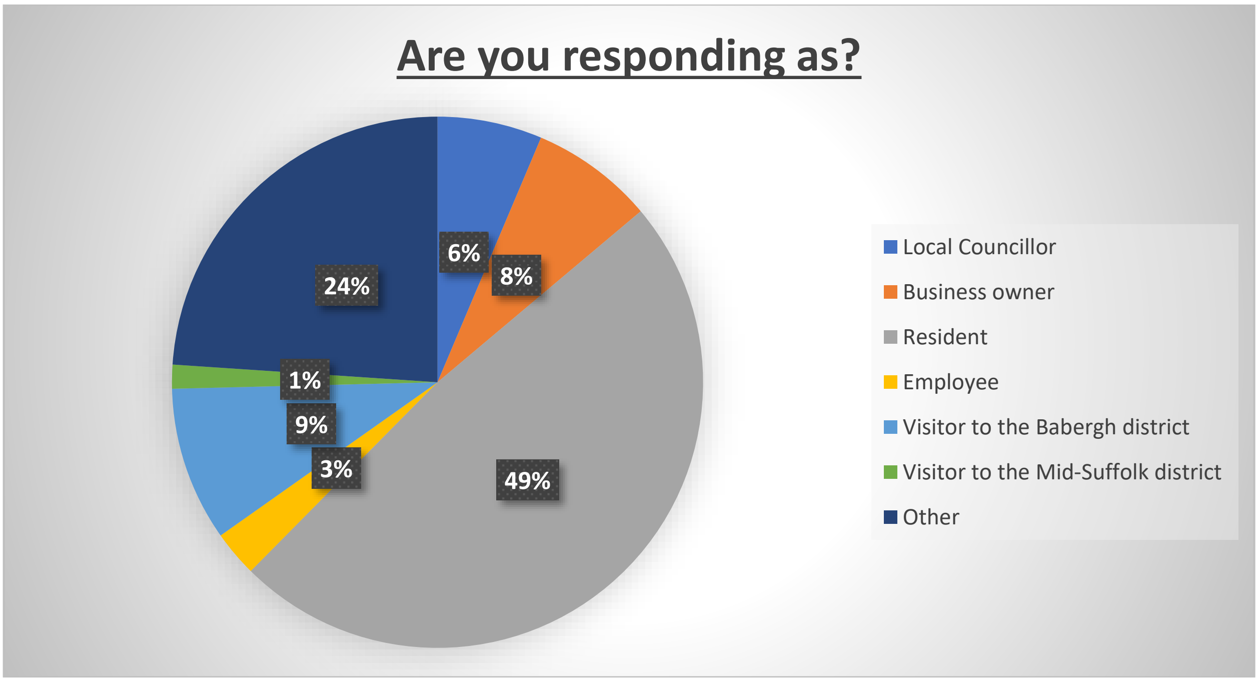


Figure 2 – Breakdown on respondents

The purpose of this question was to provide a breakdown of who was completing the questionnaire. As shown above 49% of respondents were residents which shows that car parking is a subject with significant public investment.

Figure 2 also shows there is a broad range of engagement from a variety of areas including business owners, local councillors and visitors to the districts.

3.23 QUESTION 3 ASKED WHERE DO YOU CURRENTLY PARK YOUR VEHICLE(S) AT THE FOLLOWING TIMES

This multi selection question enabled a simple tabulation of responses and received 1,239 responses with 9 respondents not answering this question. Figure 3 provides a breakdown of the responses.

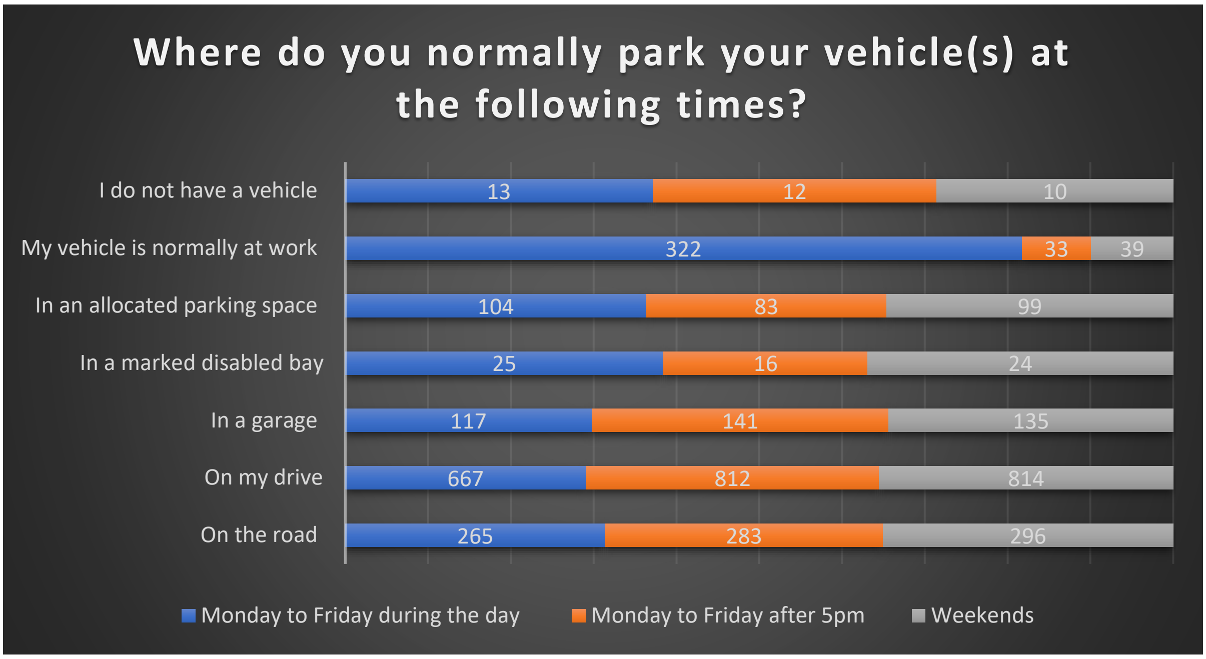


Figure 3 – Existing parking habits for respondents

The purpose of this question was to determine where vehicles were parked by their owners at different times. This question helps determine how many car owners use their vehicle in travelling to work and also if they have access to off road parking. This can give strong data towards car occupancy in the area along with where the car can be located at different times of the day and week.

The results show that the large majority of respondents park their vehicle at work, which subsequently means they travel to work by car. There was also a large amount of response for vehicles located in a garage or on a drive. This provides strong data towards off-road parking provision.

3.24 QUESTION 4 ASKED HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE FOLLOWING ISSUES REGARDING PARKING IN YOUR STREET

This single selection question enabled a tabulation of responses which received 1,235 responses with 13 respondents not answering this question.

Figure 4 below shows the breakdown of responses based on particular issues.

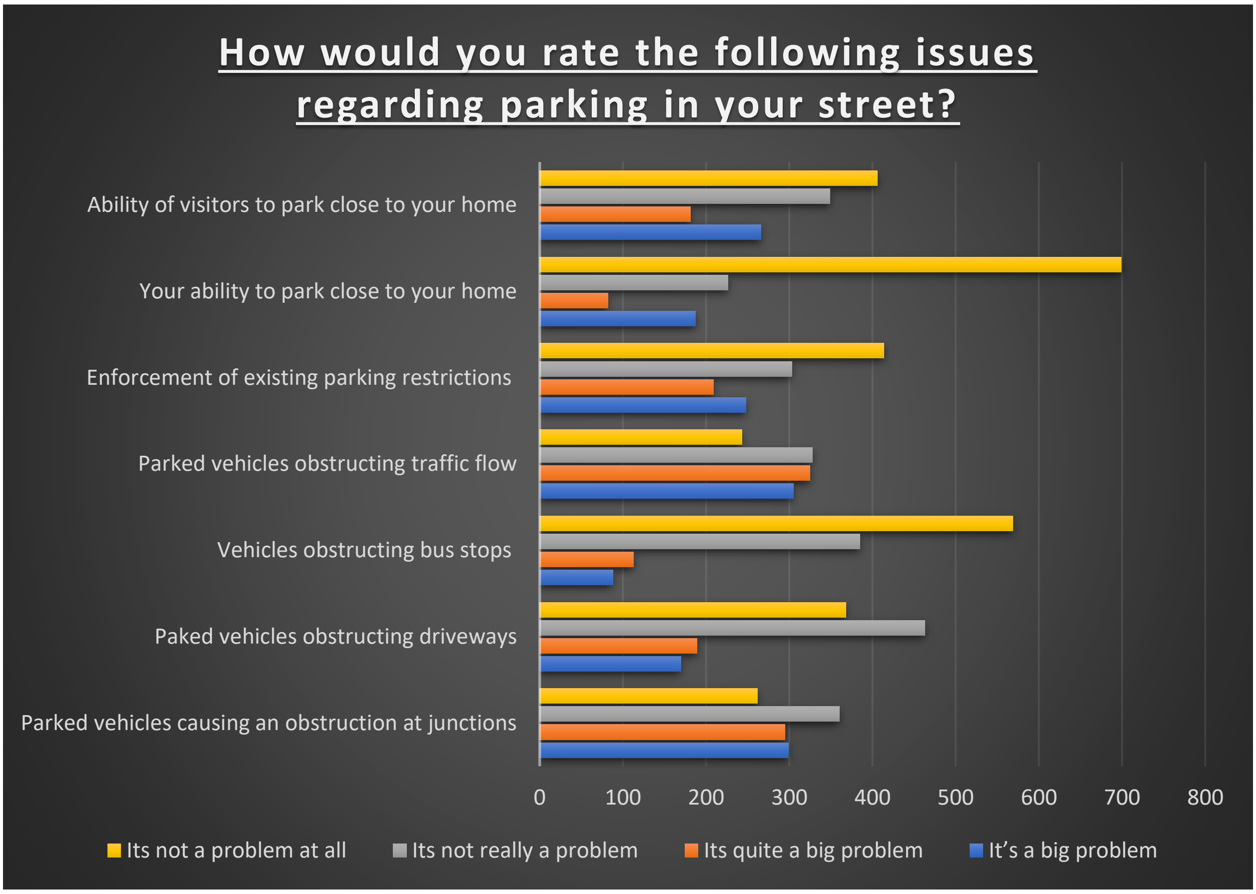


Figure 4 – Existing parking issues for respondents

Figure 4 above shows the various issues that can be apparent and the severity of the issue that the respondent deems correct, with the following levels of severity.

- It's not really a problem
- It's quite a big problem
- It's a big problem.

The purpose of this question is to determine from a pre-arranged selection of issues at what severity the issue is present within the area the respondent lives. This data can then be analysed and used to collate together evidence towards issuing change in a particular area based around the issues outlined. This single selection per issue question allowed for a broad overview of issues that can be experienced through parking. The issue that had the highest response rate for 'it's a big problem' was parked vehicles obstructing traffic flow.

3.25 QUESTION 5 ASKED DO YOU THINK THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS CHANGED THE WAY YOU TRAVEL INTO THE BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK REGIONS AND HOW OFTEN YOU VISIT THE TOWN CENTRES?

This question received 1,232 responses meaning 16 respondents did not answer the question.

Figure 5 below shows the breakdown of responses based on travel habits after the pandemic.

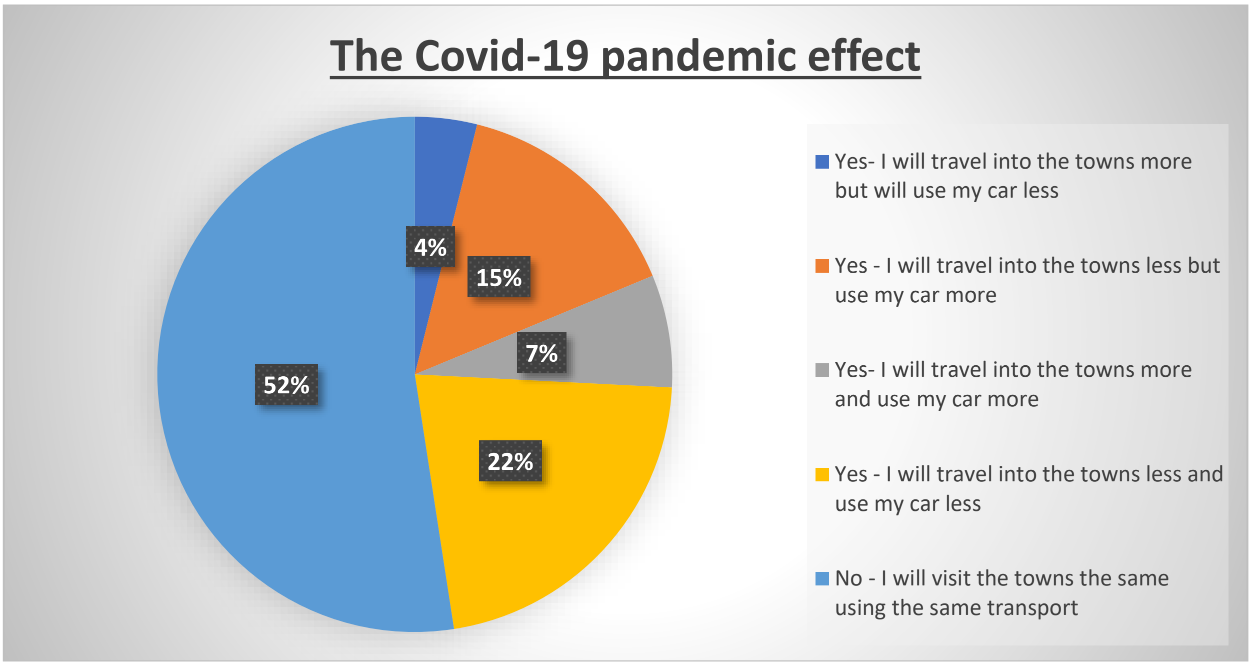


Figure 5 – Impact Covid-19 may have on parking

The purpose of this question is to determine how the pandemic could affect the travelling habits of residents and by what mode they will travel. The results show that 52% of respondents will continue to travel into towns but use their car less. This supports the theory that there could be less travel into town centres by vehicle in the future if this is deemed to be a true reflection. The next most selected option at 22% was respondents stating that they would travel into the town less and use their car less. This suggests that the pandemic has affected how regularly people wish to travel and also highlighted the need to use vehicles less often.

3.26 QUESTION 6 ASKED GENERALLY HOW OFTEN DO YOU TRAVEL INTO A TOWN CENTRE BY CAR?

This single selection question received 1,244 responses with 4 respondents not answering the question.

Figure 6 below shows the breakdown of respondents based on how often they travelled into a town / village centre by car.

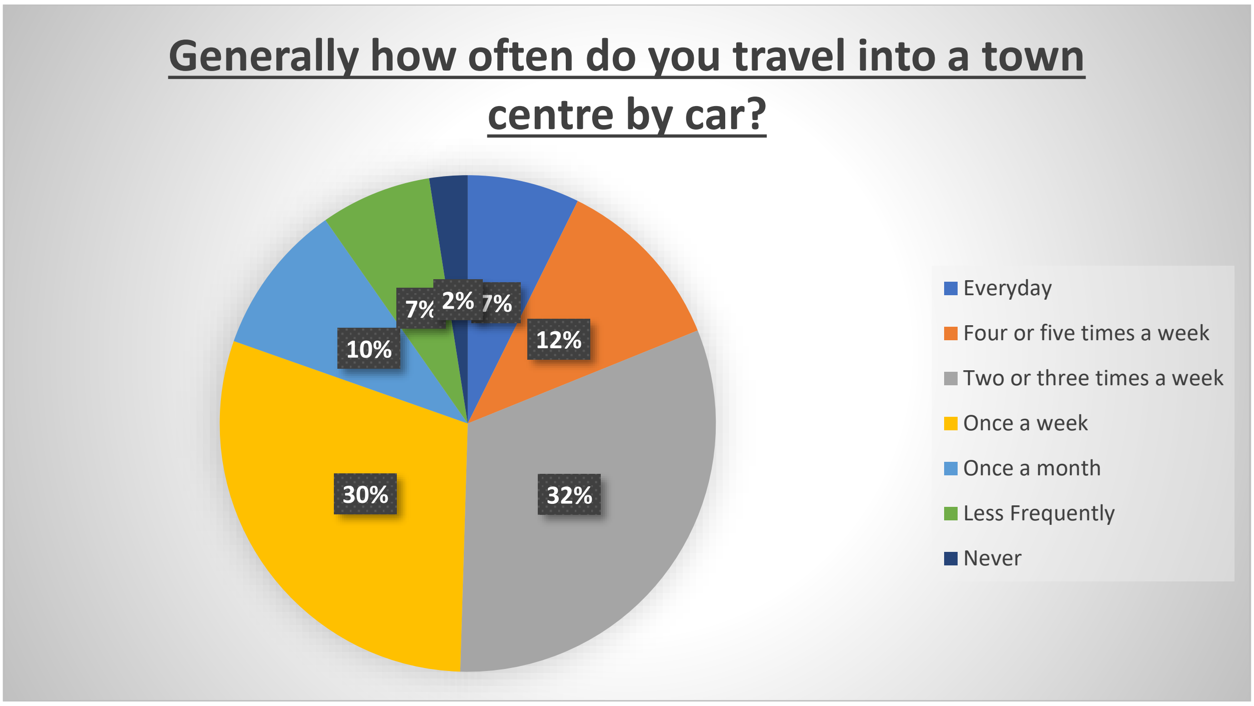


Figure 6 – Existing driving behaviour in towns / villages

Question 6 is asking respondents for information surrounding how often they travel into the town centre. With over 30% of respondents saying that they visited the town centre once a week, this information is encouraging towards the area maintaining a healthy economy through residential spend. The highest response came from the option @two to three times a week' which stood at 32% of respondents selecting this answer. This data is promising for the local economy, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.27 QUESTION 7 FOLLOWS ON FROM QUESTION 6 AND ASKED WHAT ARE THE MAIN REASONS FOR VISITING THE TOWN?

This multi selection question received 1,242 responses with 6 respondents not answering the question.

Figure 7 below shows the breakdown of responses based on their reasoning for visiting a town.

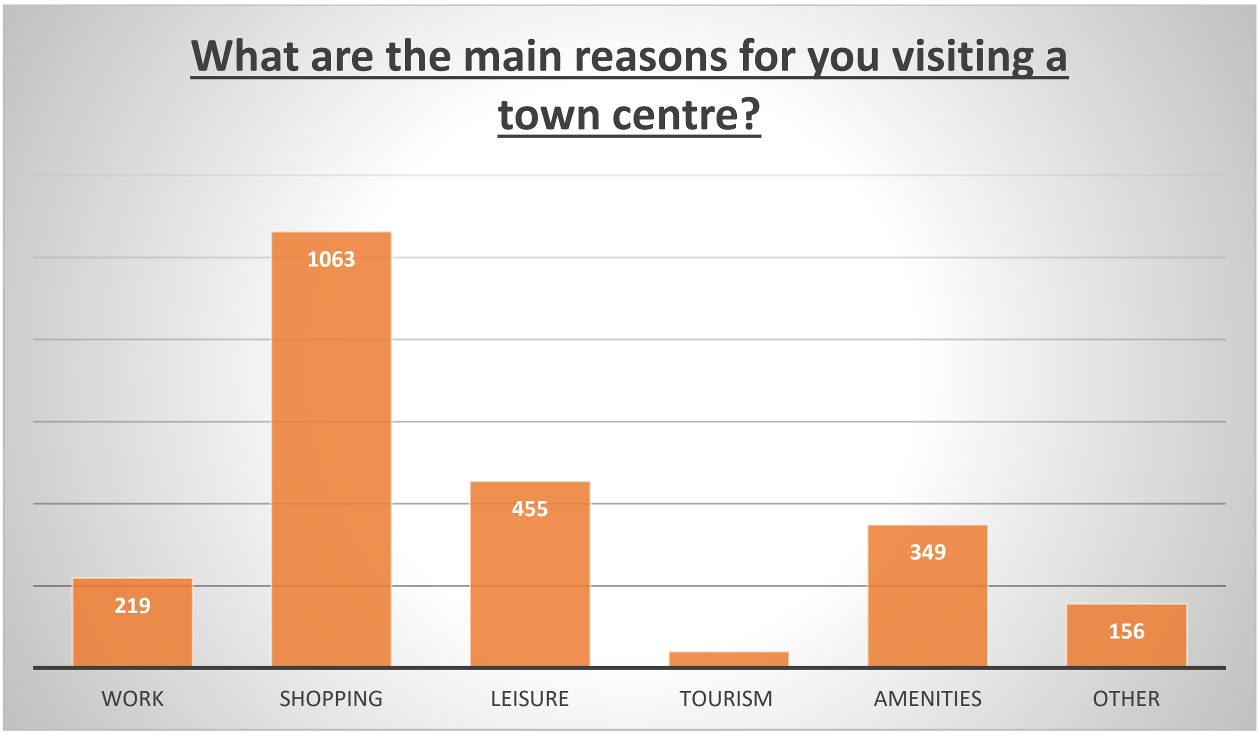


Figure 7 – Reasons for visiting locations in Babergh & Mid Suffolk

The purpose of this question is to understand the reasons why respondents are visiting the town centres. The data received shows that by far the most popular reason respondents chose was shopping which accounted for 1,063 selections. This adds weight to data already received that shows a healthy number of residents still use town centres to shop, again as stated previously very encouraging for the local economy.

3.28 QUESTION 8 ASKED WHAT ARE THE REASONS WHY YOU DRIVE INTO TOWN?

This multi selection question received 1,239 responses with 9 respondents not answering the question.

Figure 8 below shows the breakdown of responses based on the reasons why a car was used to visit the town.

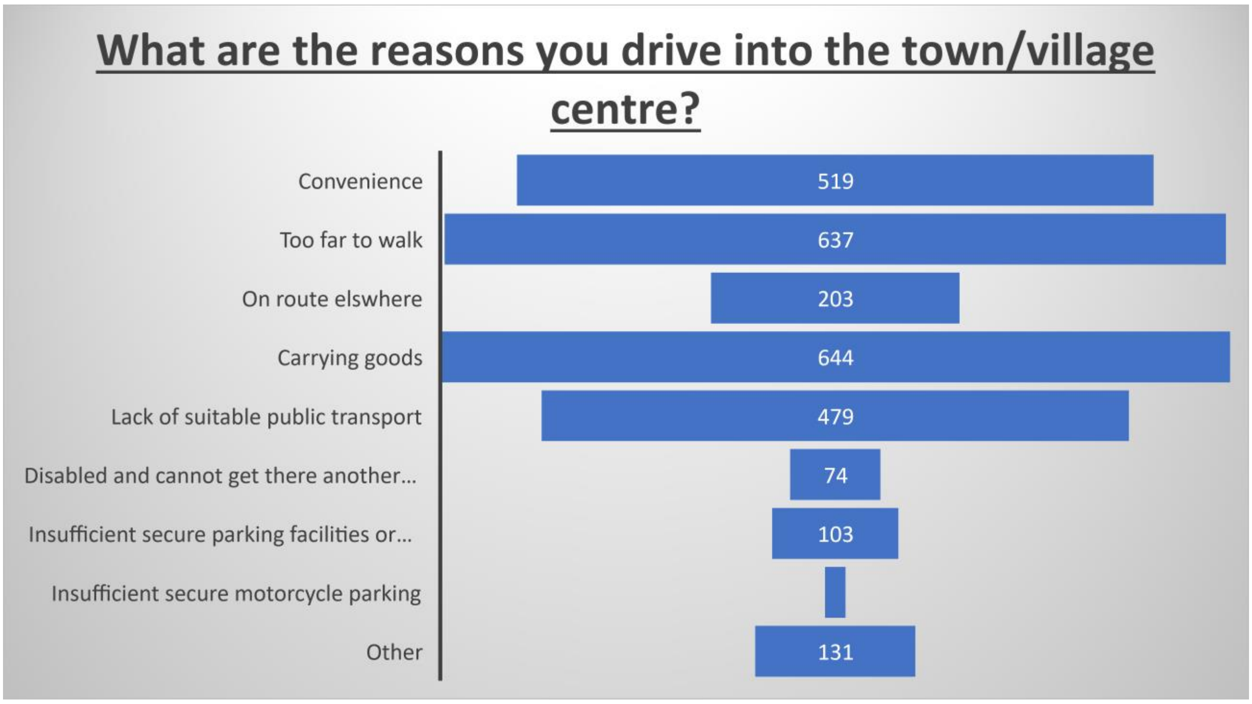


Figure 8 – Reasons for driving

Figure 8 above, shows that there are a wide range of reasons why respondents used vehicles to travel into towns / villages. The most selected response was the reason carrying goods which was selected 644 times, the next most selected response was too far to walk at 637 selections. These are selections which allude to the fact that ease and functionality are key for a lot of respondents when it comes to why they use their vehicles. This highlights that if someone owns a car then they will use it most of the time when given the choice to travel to a town / village centre.

3.29 QUESTION 9 ASKED WHEN YOU DRIVE WHERE DO YOU NORMALLY PARK?

This multi selection question received 1,229 responses meaning 19 respondents did not answer the question.

Figure 9 below shows the breakdown of respondents based on data around where they parked when driving into a town.

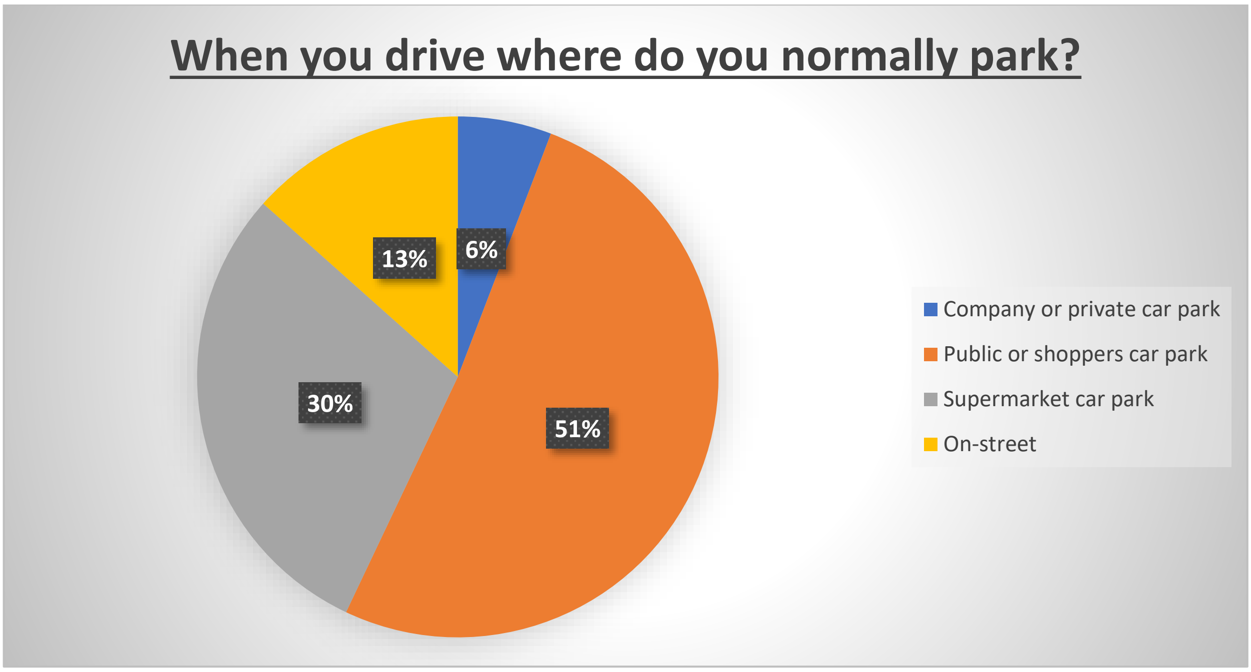


Figure 9 – Locations respondents park

The purpose of this question is to determine where respondents are parking their vehicle when they come into a particular town. This is an important question in that it identifies particular preferences for where respondents like to park. This data can be used to support data that has been collated from car park occupancies and on street vehicle volume numbers. This data helps support the overall conclusions that will be found once all data in analysed and recorded.

3.210 QUESTION 10 ASKED IF YOU PARK ON THE STREET WHAT IS THE MAIN REASON FOR DOING SO?

This multi selection question received 1,100 responses meaning 148 respondents did not answer the question.

Figure 10 below shows the breakdown of respondents based on why they choose to park on-street.

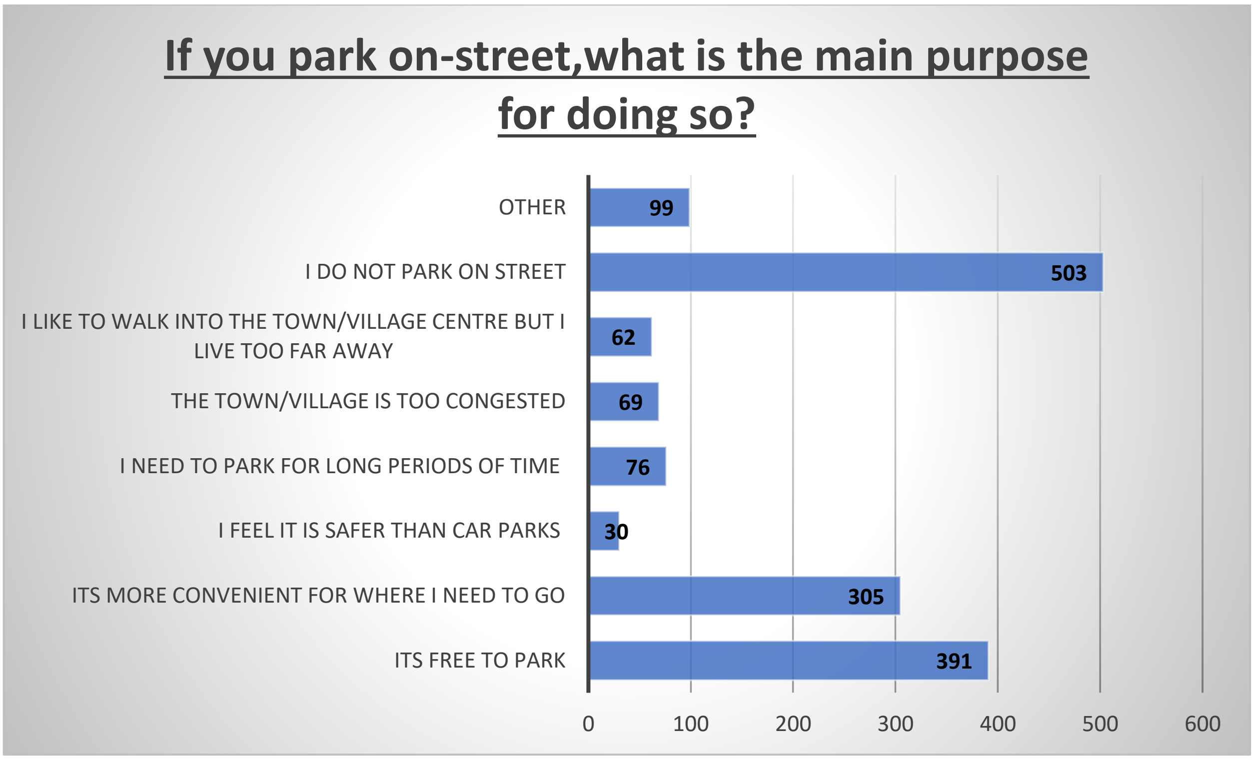


Figure 10 – Purpose for parking on-street

This question was posted to determine the reasons respondents park on-street. There are eight pre-determined responses that the respondent can select and the one selected most was I do not park on street. The next most selected reason was it is free to park. This determines that for a lot of respondents the cost of parking is a big motivator when it comes to the decision to choose where to park. It is important to determine why people who park on-street choose to do this.

3.211 QUESTION 11 ASKED IF YOU CHOOSE PUBLIC OR SHOPPERS CAR PARKS WHICH TOWN/VILLAGE DID YOU USE?

This multi selection question received 1,176 responses meaning 72 respondents not answering the question.

Figure 11 below shows the breakdown of responses based on which town or village centre location they parked when using a public or shoppers car park.

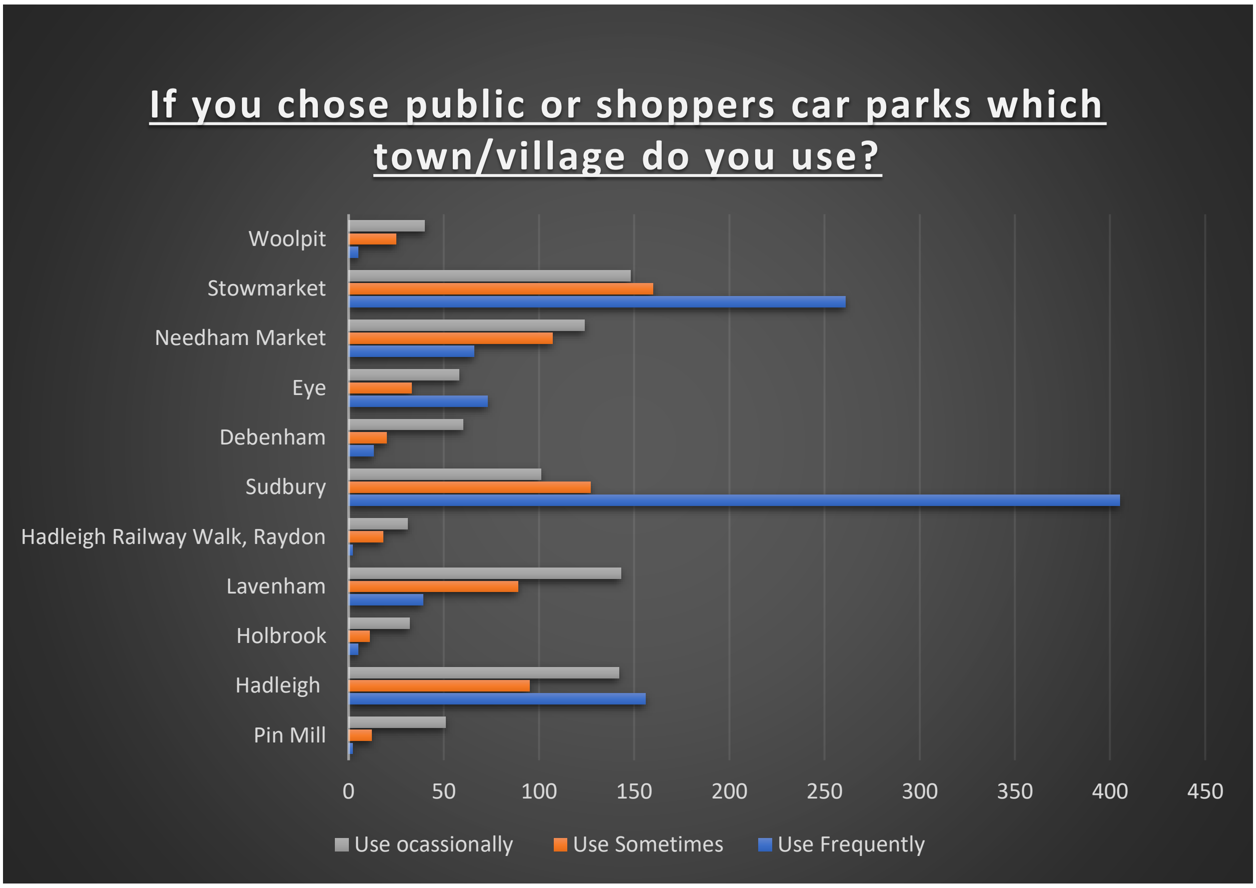


Figure 11 – Locations across Babergh & Mid Suffolk where respondents park

The data above shows where respondents parked when they used shoppers or public car parks. The most frequently used car parks chosen by those respondents that participated were the ones located in Sudbury. This shows that car parking is frequently used in Sudbury by the people that responded. The next most frequently selected as ‘Use frequently’ was Stowmarket. These are both prominent places in Babergh and Mid Suffolk respectively. Overall, the distribution of responses is fairly well spread with all towns and villages having some representation by respondents. It is key to have respondents from all areas of the two districts to give a greater understanding of parking for all.

3.212 QUESTION 12 ASKED HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY PARKING PROBLEMS AT ANY OF OUR CAR PARKS?

This single selection question received 1,218 responses with 30 respondents not answering this question.

Figure 12 below shows the breakdown of responses based on if the respondents have experienced any problems at the car parks.

Figure 12 – Breakdown on parking issues within car parks

The purpose of asking this question is to understand the percentage of users that experience problems in council operated car parks. Traditionally, the higher the percentage stating they experience problems in car parks, the more likely there will be a series of issues as different users will identify different issues. For instance, some users could experience issues with capacity if they visit car parks at peak times, whereas others may experience issues with using payment machines for example.

This question demonstrate that more users do not experience problems compared to those that do.

3.213 QUESTION 13 ASKED WHAT TOWN DOES THE ISSUES FROM QUESTION 12 RELATE TO?

This multi selection question enabled received 601 responses meaning 647 respondents chose not answer this question. It is important to note, that this is in line with the ratio of those that indicated that they had not experienced any issues in car parks as per question 12.

Figure 13 below shows the breakdown of towns where parking issues have been experienced.

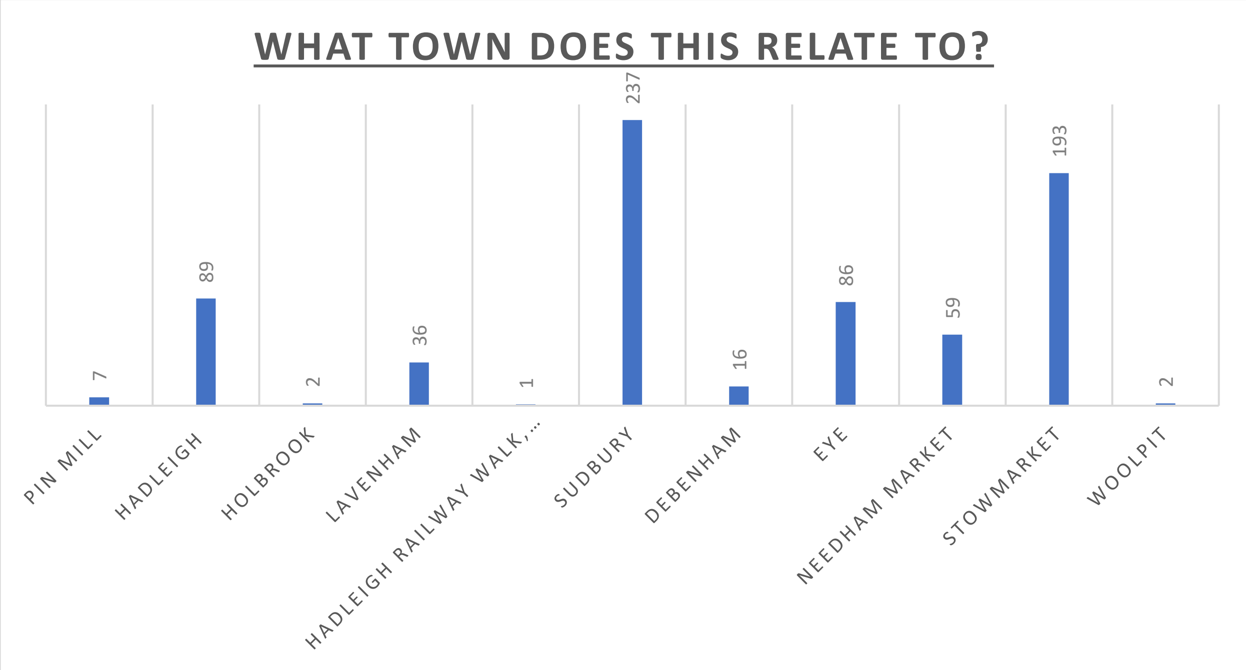


Figure 13 – Breakdown of towns where parking issues experienced

The results of figure 13 illustrate that the two most common towns where issues are experienced are Sudbury and Stowmarket. As the two largest towns, this is not a surprise. Interestingly there are some smaller towns that have a relatively high rate of issues compared to others such as Eye with 86 responses and Hadleigh with 89.

3.214 QUESTION 14 ASKED RESPONDENTS TO IDENTIFY THE ISSUES THAT RELATE TO THEIR VISIT

This multi selection question received 715 responses with 533 respondents not answering this question.

Five pre-determined answers for this question were included for respondents to consider as well as an “other” option, which enabled respondents to provide more detail. Figure 14 provides a breakdown of the pre-determined answers for the question.

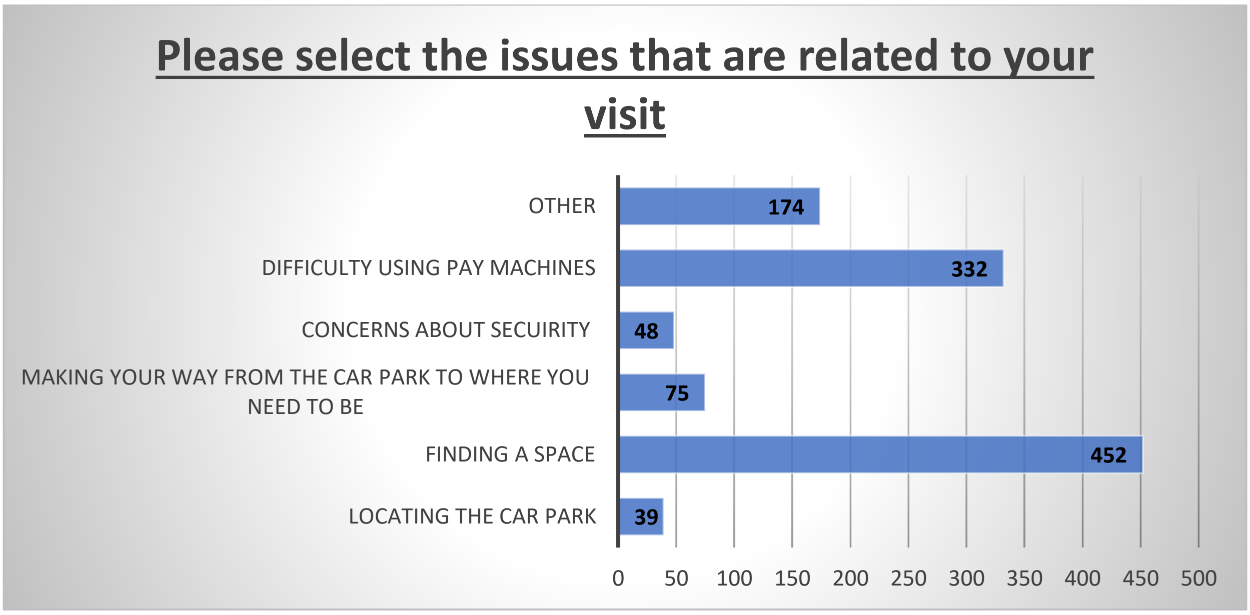


Figure 14 – The issues that cause problems for respondents

Finding a space, is by far the most common issue that respondents have when using the car parks with nearly 65% of respondents selecting this reason. Finding a space is the most common cause for experiencing issues in car parks as at peak periods this has the likelihood to occur. Whilst this may give the indication that there is insufficient parking capacity, in reality, this is only likely to be during peak periods.

The second most common reason for experiencing issues in car parks, is having difficulty using the payment machines. This could involve purchasing a ticket (if required), the understanding the instructions, or locating the payment machines. Over 45% of respondents chose this as an issue.

The third most common reason for experiencing issues in car parks was the “other” option with 174 respondents selecting this option. From the comments received, the majority made reference to the payment machines being old, broken, and in need of replacement. Combing these with the 332 responses that stated this as the pre-defined option, there is a clear thought from stakeholders that the payment machines are not up to the required standard. Other common comments included reference to a lack of disabled parking spaces, the cost of parking, and the length of stay, and a lack of parent child spaces.

3.215 QUESTION 15 ASKED HOW OFTEN THE PROBLEMS ARE EXPERIENCED?

This single selection question allowed respondents to select an option on how often the problems are experienced and gave four options from every visit to only once. This question received 730 responses meaning 518 respondents did not answer this question.

Figure 15 below shows the breakdown of respondents based on the four options.

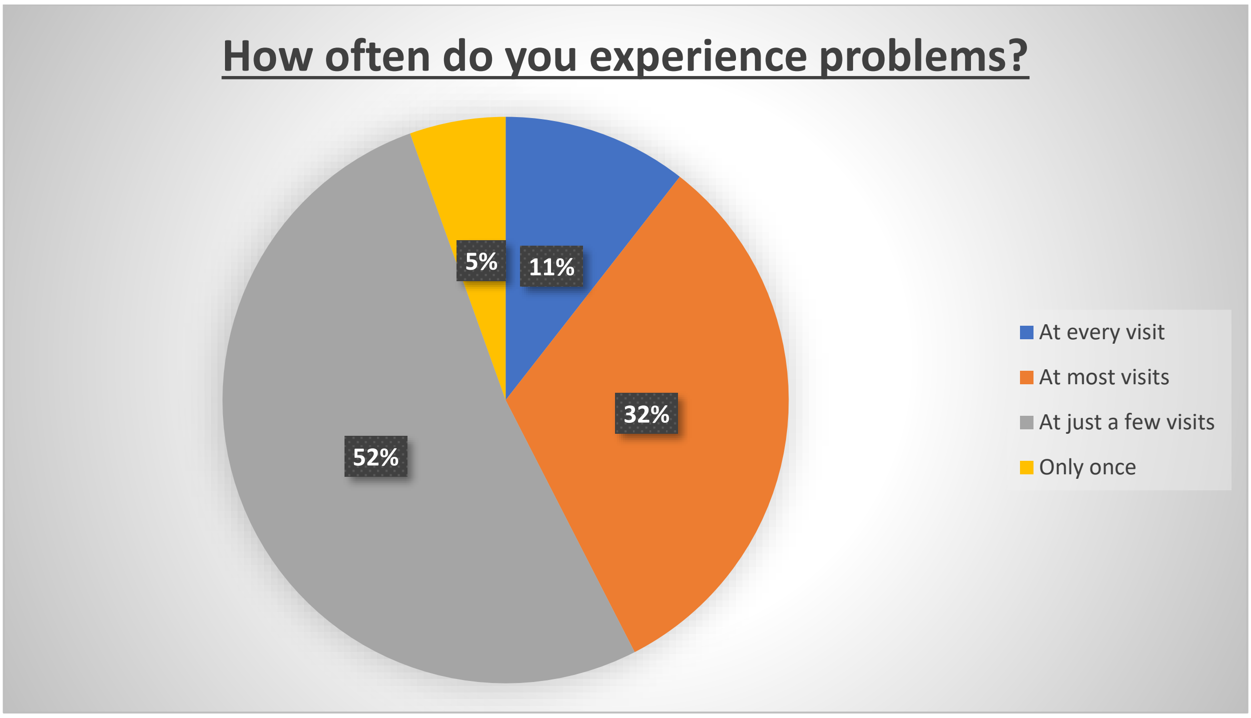


Figure 15 – How often issues are experience in car parks

The results to this question demonstrate that over 50% of respondents only experience issues in car parks at just a few visits. This supports the common issues of locating a parking space and difficulty using payment machines as these can be sporadic issues such as no parking spaces being available during peak periods and payment machines being out of order on occasion. Following on from this option, the second most common response was those choosing "at most visits" with 32% of respondents selecting this. Based on this it could be assumed that if there was a further option in-between these two options, this may be the most common answer. The "every visit" and "only once" options were the two least common answers with only 16% of respondents choosing one of these two.

3.216 QUESTION 16 ASKED RESPONDENTS IF THERE IS ENOUGH OVERALL PARKING ACROSS THE DISTRICTS?

This single selection question allowed respondents to select an option on whether they believe there is enough parking within Babergh and Mid Suffolk. There were three options available- 1) there is always enough parking, 2) usually sufficient parking apart from peak periods, and 3) there is not enough parking generally. An "other" option was also included to allow for comments.

Figure 16 below shows the breakdown of respondents based their thoughts on whether there is enough parking across Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

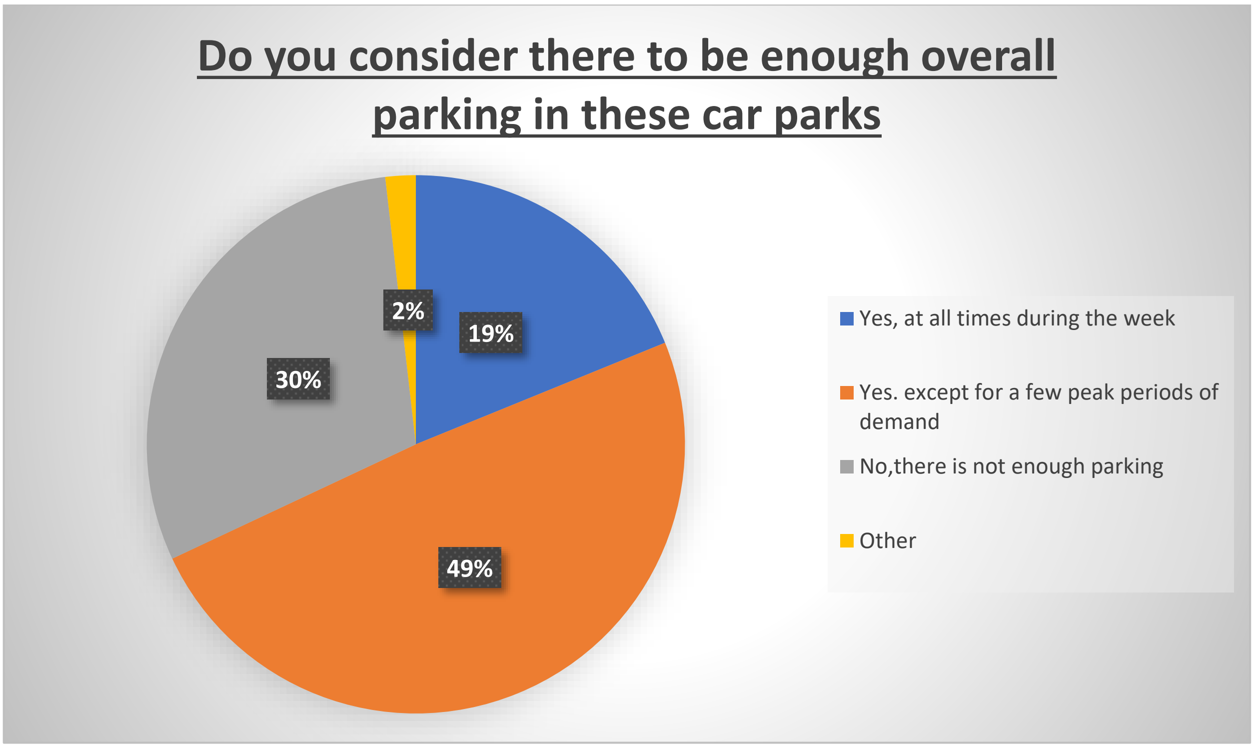


Figure 16 – Respondents views on level of parking in the districts

Figure 16 demonstrates that the majority of respondents believe there is sufficient levels of parking capacity across the districts except for a few peak periods of demand. This response supports the previous questions feedback where finding a parking space was an issue but only at a few visits.

There were 22 comments within the "other" option which made reference to insufficient parking in residential areas, issues with parking on grass verges, and a need to have more parking in public transport stations ie rail and bus.

3.217 QUESTION 17 COMMENCED THE SECTION OF QUESTIONS ON THE PARKING EXPERIENCE AND THE FIRST QUESTION ASKED RESPONDENTS HOW THEY WOULD RATE THE OVERALL QUALITY OF THE OFF-STREET CAR PARKS?

This question was designed to allow respondents to rate the quality of the car parks within the districts. Respondents were able to select an option for each town / village where there are car parks located meaning there could be 11 choices per response. If the respondent does not visit the location specified there was an "N/A" option - this has not been included within the analysis.

Figure 17 illustrates the quality of car parks based on the options described above for each of the towns / villages within Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

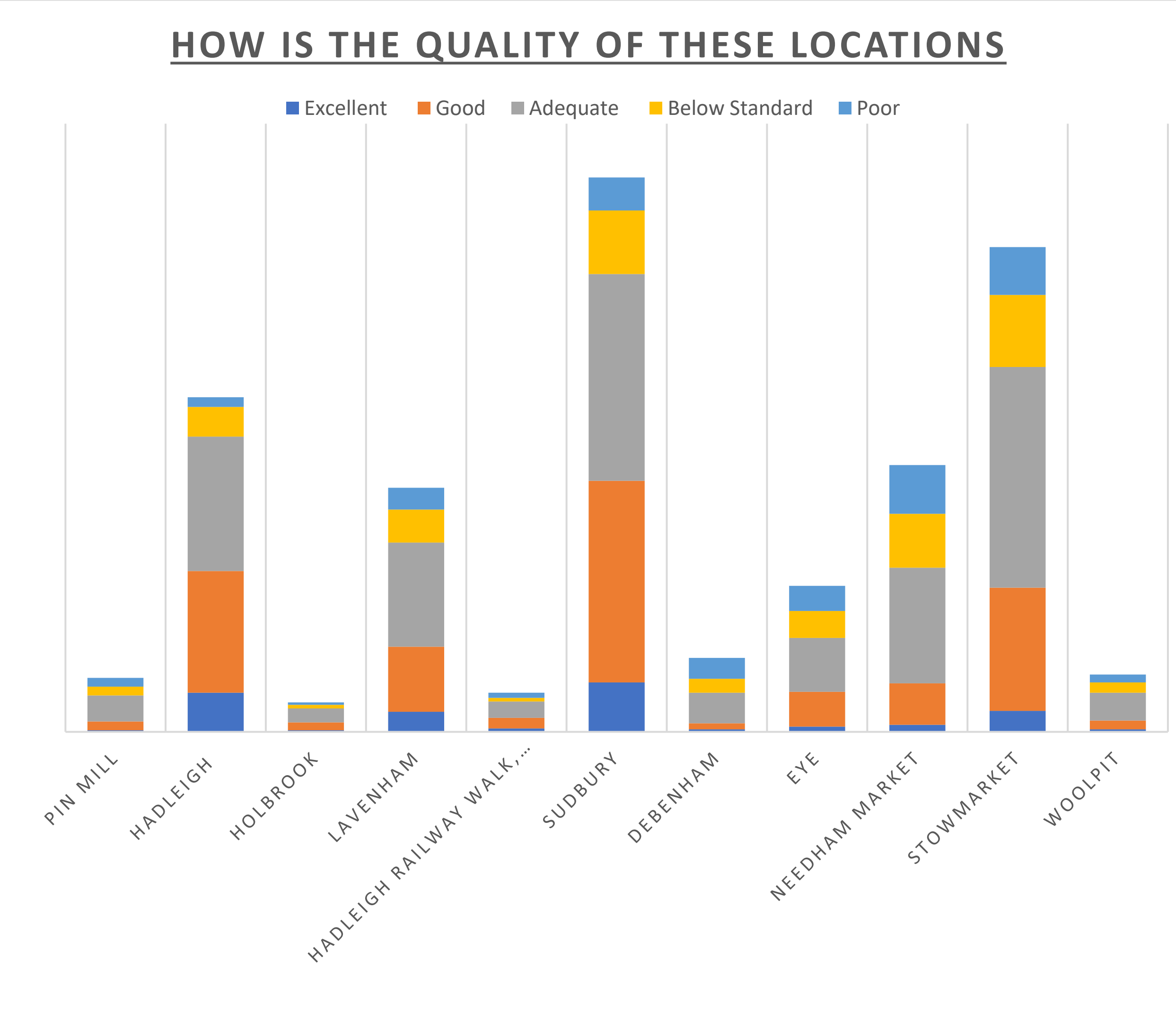


Figure 17 – Feedback on the quality of car parks in Babergh & Mid Suffolk

To provide more clarity on figure 17 above, table 2 provides the raw data to demonstrate the response rate for each of the towns / villages.

Answer Choices	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Below standard	Poor
Pin Mill	0.49% 2	2.43% 10	7.28% 30	2.43% 10	2.43% 10
Hadleigh	7.40% 45	23.03% 140	25.49% 155	5.59% 34	1.81% 11
Holbrook	0.51% 2	2.28% 9	4.06% 16	1.02% 4	0.76% 3
Lavenham	4.42% 23	14.42% 75	23.08% 120	7.31% 38	4.81% 25
Hadleigh Railway Walk South	1.01% 4	3.04% 12	4.81% 19	1.01% 4	1.52% 6
Sudbury	7.01% 57	28.54% 232	29.27% 238	8.98% 73	4.67% 38
Debenham	0.73% 3	1.70% 7	8.52% 35	3.89% 16	5.84% 24
Eye	1.26% 6	8.40% 40	13.03% 62	6.51% 31	6.09% 29
Needham Market	1.55% 8	9.32% 48	25.83% 133	12.04% 62	10.87% 56
Stowmarket	3.37% 24	19.94% 142	35.67% 254	11.66% 83	7.72% 55
Woolpit	0.77% 3	2.56% 10	8.18% 32	3.07% 12	2.30% 9

Table 2 – Raw data for question 17

The results from figure 17 / table 2 illustrate that the most common responses to this question fall within the “adequate” or “good” categories meaning that the car parks are usable and there are not many issues with the day-to-day operation such as appearance, safety, accessibility, and location. As demonstrated in other questions, Sudbury, and Stowmarket are the most common towns selected by respondents. Both these locations have a similar breakdown of quality categories.

Sudbury achieved the overall best score for this question with over 35% of responses falling within the excellent category (7%) or good category (29%). Hadleigh and Stowmarket were the next highest with Needham Market rated poorly overall.

3.218 QUESTION 18 ASKED RESPONDENTS WHAT THEY LIKE MOST ABOUT THE PARKING FACILITIES?

This single selection question allowed respondents to select what their most favoured part of the parking facilities were from the pre-determined list of options. There was also an "other" option to capture any comments on the list. There were 1,169 responses to this question meaning 79 respondents did not answer the question.

Figure 18 demonstrates the breakdown of responses for this question.

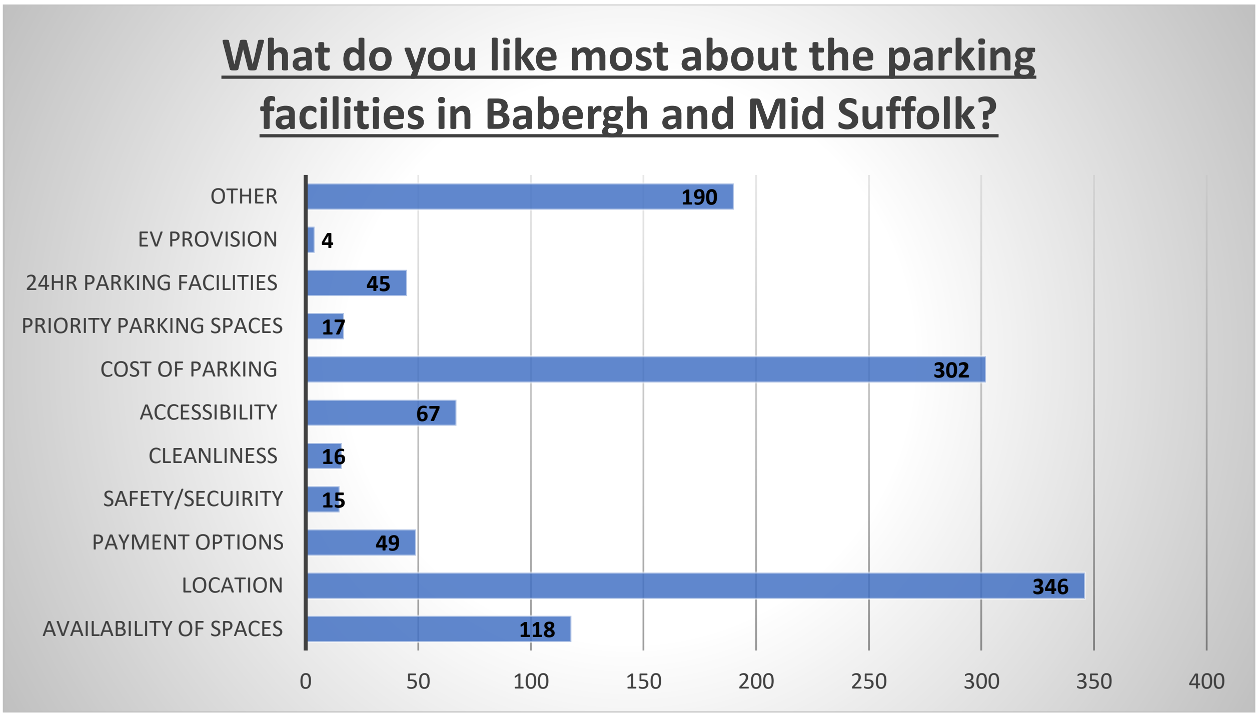


Figure 18 – Breakdown of responses for respondents most favoured part of parking

The results demonstrate that the location of parking across Babergh and Mid Suffolk is the most liked aspect of the parking facilities with 346 respondents (30%) choosing this option. This would suggest that respondents feel the parking facilities are located near to the key trip generators such as town centres, which can be considered the most important consideration for a strong local economy. The second most liked aspect of the parking facilities was the cost of parking with 302 respondents (26%) choosing this option.

The third most liked aspect of the parking facilities was classified as the "other" option with 190 respondents choosing this. The majority of comments within this field are related to the free parking. If these were added to the cost of parking option, this would probably become the most liked option within the question.

3.219 QUESTION 19 ASKED RESPONDENTS WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE IMPROVED WITHIN BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK CAR PARKS?

This single selection question allowed respondents to select what they would like to see improved within car parks in Babergh and Mid Suffolk. There was also an "other" option to capture any comments on the list. There were 1,024 responses with 224 respondents who did not answer the question.

Figure 19 demonstrates the breakdown of responses for this question.

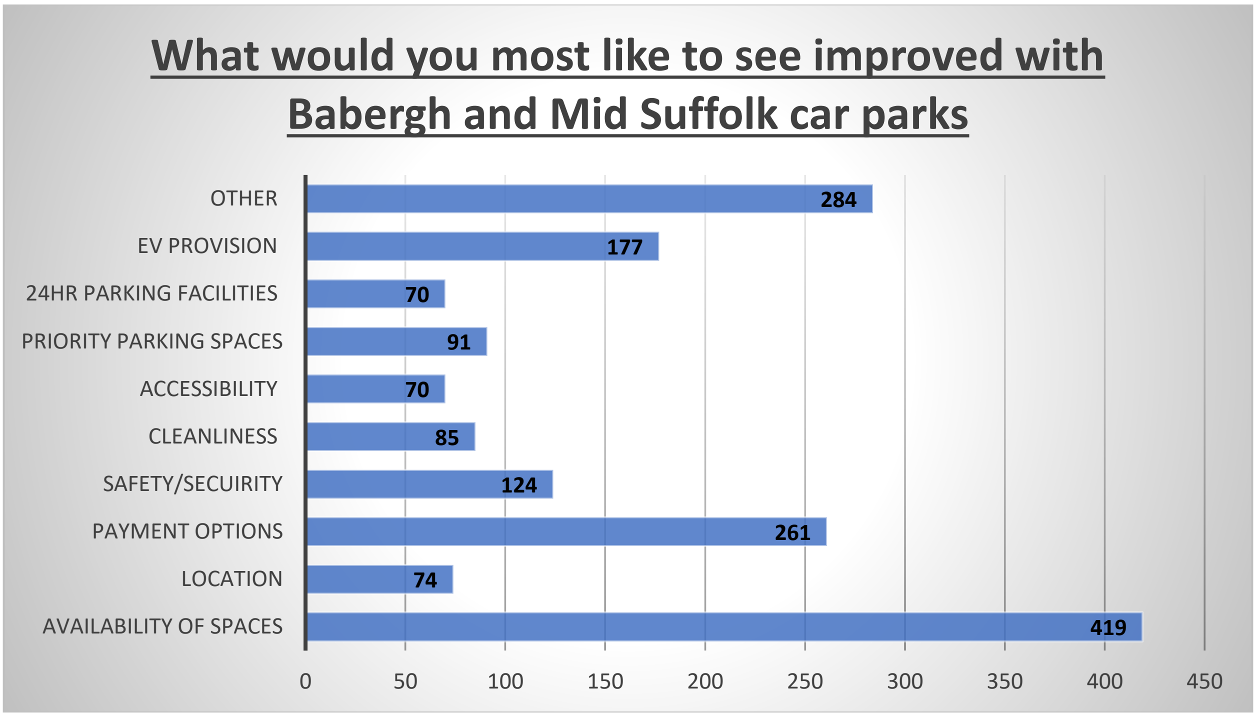


Figure 19 – Breakdown of responses based on most required improvements

Interestingly, the most common option for what should be improved in our car parks is the availability of spaces, with 419 choosing this as their favoured option. Section 4 provides a breakdown of responses based on Babergh and Mid Suffolk, which will determine if this is a district level point or specific to towns and villages.

The second most common option was the "other" option with 284 comments provided. The majority of these comments were used for reference to the need for free parking in Babergh to remain. Other comments included requests for parking tariffs to be made cheaper, the requirement for residents parking, and to fix broken payment machines.

3.220 QUESTION 20 ASKED RESPONDENTS HOW THEY WOULD RATE SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF THE OFF-STREET CAR PARKS?

This question required respondents to choose one option from 12 rows that included a variety of parking aspects based on the criteria developed to rate each car park as part of the investigation stage of the parking strategy. There were 1,167 responses received with 81 respondents not answering the question.

Figure 20 demonstrates the breakdown of responses for this question.

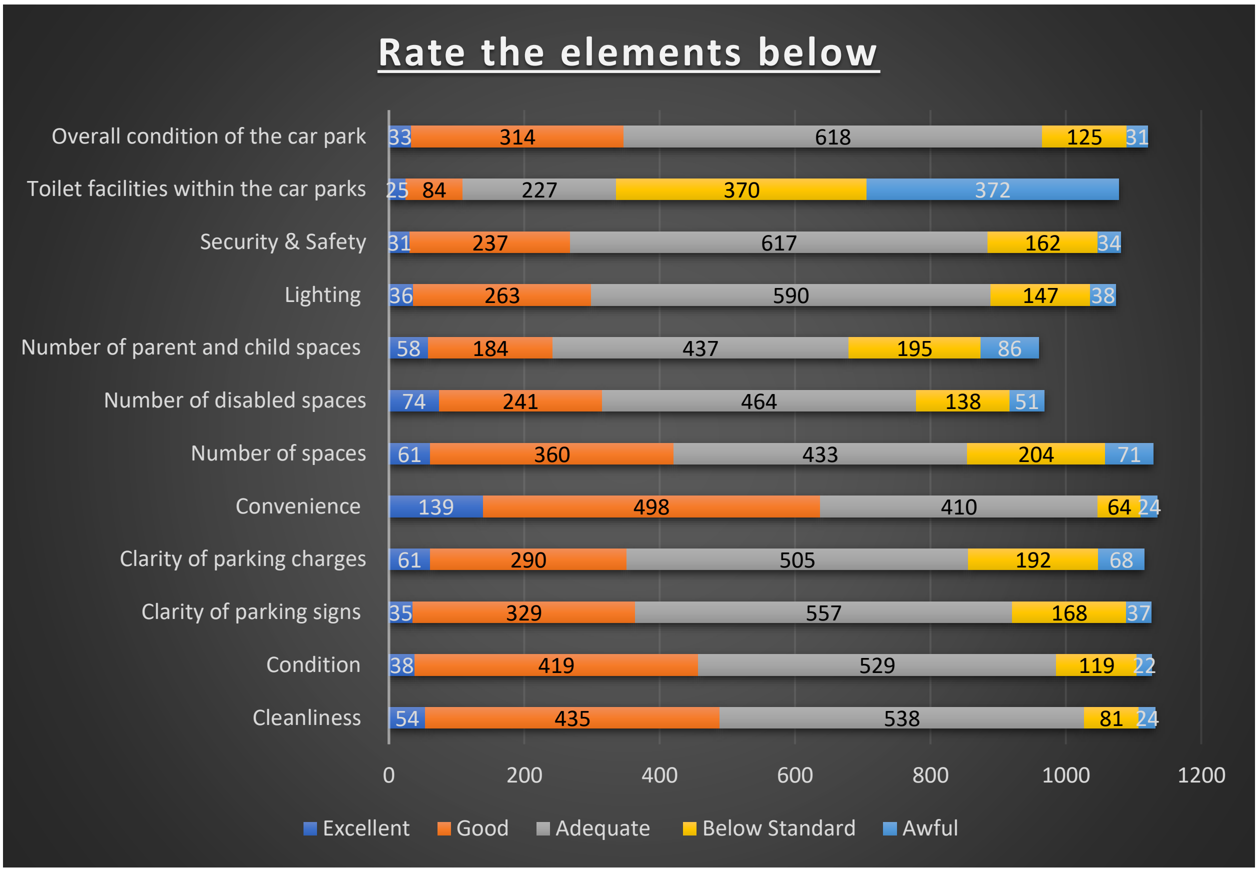


Figure 20 – Rated aspects of car parks in Babergh and Mid Suffolk

To provide more clarity on figure 20 above, table 3 provides the raw data to demonstrate the response rate for each of aspects included in the question.

Answer Choices	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Below standard	Awful
Cleanliness	4.77% 54	38.43% 435	47.53% 538	7.16% 81	2.12% 24
Condition	3.37% 38	37.18% 419	46.94% 529	10.56% 119	1.95% 22
Clarity of parking signs	3.11% 35	29.22% 329	49.47% 557	14.92% 168	3.29% 37
Clarity of parking charges	5.47% 61	25.99% 290	45.25% 505	17.20% 192	6.09% 68
Convenience	12.25% 139	43.88% 498	36.12% 410	5.64% 64	2.11% 24
Number of spaces	5.40% 61	31.89% 360	38.35% 433	18.07% 204	6.29% 71
Number of disabled spaces	7.64% 74	24.90% 241	47.93% 464	14.26% 138	5.27% 51
Number of parent & child parking spaces	6.04% 58	19.17% 184	45.52% 437	20.31% 195	8.96% 86
Lighting	3.35% 36	24.49% 263	54.93% 590	13.69% 147	3.54% 38

Security & Safety	2.87% 31	21.92% 237	57.08% 617	14.99% 162	3.15% 34
Toilet facilities within the car parks	2.32% 25	7.79% 84	21.06% 227	34.32% 370	34.51% 372
Overall condition of the car park	2.94% 33	28.01% 314	55.13% 618	11.15% 125	2.77% 31

Table 3 – Raw data for question 20

Convenience is the most liked aspect of parking in Babergh and Mid Suffolk and supports the responses in question 18 where the location of car parks was the most favoured aspect of parking. Cleanliness also rated highly with 38% of respondents selecting “good”.

Toilet facilities within the car parks was the worst scoring aspect of parking facilities with nearly 35% of respondents choosing this option as “awful” and 34% choosing the option as “below standard” suggesting that respondents may welcome more toilet facilities within car parks. The number of parent child spaces was also scored poorly with 9% choosing this option as “awful” and 20% choosing the option as “below standard” again reinforcing comments elsewhere in the consultation that state there is insufficient parent child spaces.

3.221 QUESTION 21 ASKED HOW YOU WOULD RATE THE QUALITY OF SIGNAGE PROVIDING DIRECTIONS TO THE VARIOUS DIFFERENT CAR PARKING OPTIONS?

This slider scale selection question enabled a simple tabulation of responses. This question received 1,248 responses with no respondents declining to answer this question.

Figure 21 below shows the breakdown of respondents rated the quality of signage providing directions to the various car parking options.

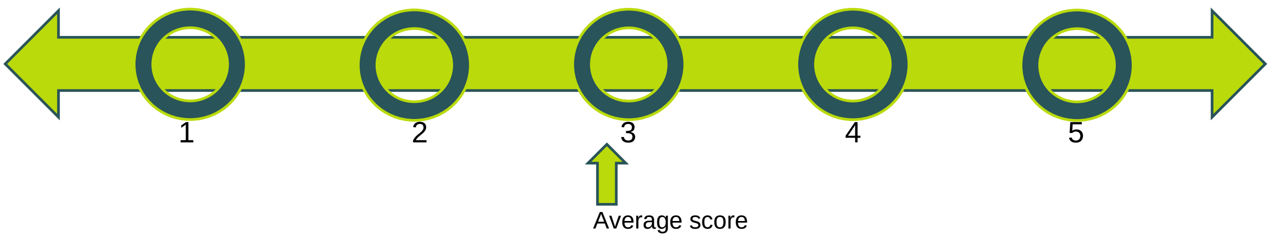


Figure 21 – Average score for quality of signage to parking

The purpose of this question is to understand the functionality of the existing car park signage which exists in their area. The average response recorded was 2.96 which shows that signage is sufficient to a degree but changes could be made to improve user experience.

3.222 QUESTION 22 ASKED PLEASE RANK HOW IMPORTANT EACH OF THE FOLLOWING ISSUES ARE TO YOU?

This question provided respondents with the opportunity to rank five parking priorities based on preference from 1-5. Respondents ranking the priorities generated a score, which in turn provided a total score across the consultation. This question received 1,219 responses with 29 respondents not answering this question.

Table 4 below shows the total score and the overall rank for each priority based on how important respondents felt the particular priority was.

Priority	Total Score	Overall Rank
Convenient, well-located parking close to shops and amenities	4904	1
Fairly-priced car parking that helps manage demand	4151	2
Safety and security of car parks	3943	3
Information provided prior to the car parks such as signs and spaces available	2709	4
Useful town centre car parking information contained on Council website such as locations, & pricing	2577	5

Table 4 – Parking priorities score by rank

The score was generated by allocating a number of points to each response:

- 5 points to every response that was ranked 1st
- 4 points to every response that was ranked 2nd
- 3 points to every response that was ranked 3rd
- 2 points to every response that was ranked 4th
- 1 point to every response that was ranked 5th.

The results demonstrate that convenient well-located parking close to shops and amenities was the greatest priority for respondents. This scored considerably higher than the second-place priority, which was fairly priced car parking that helps manage demand. These two highest scoring priorities support feedback from other questions within the consultation on what is important to respondents. Safety and security of car parks scored similarly to fair pricing but much higher than the last two options, with a score over 1,000 higher. This suggests that these two options are not a high priority to respondents.

3.223 QUESTION 23 ASKED WHEN WOULD YOU PREFER TO PAY FOR YOUR PARKING?

This single selection question received 1,168 responses with 80 respondents not answering this question.

Figure 22 below shows the breakdown of respondents based on at what time they would prefer to pay for their parking.

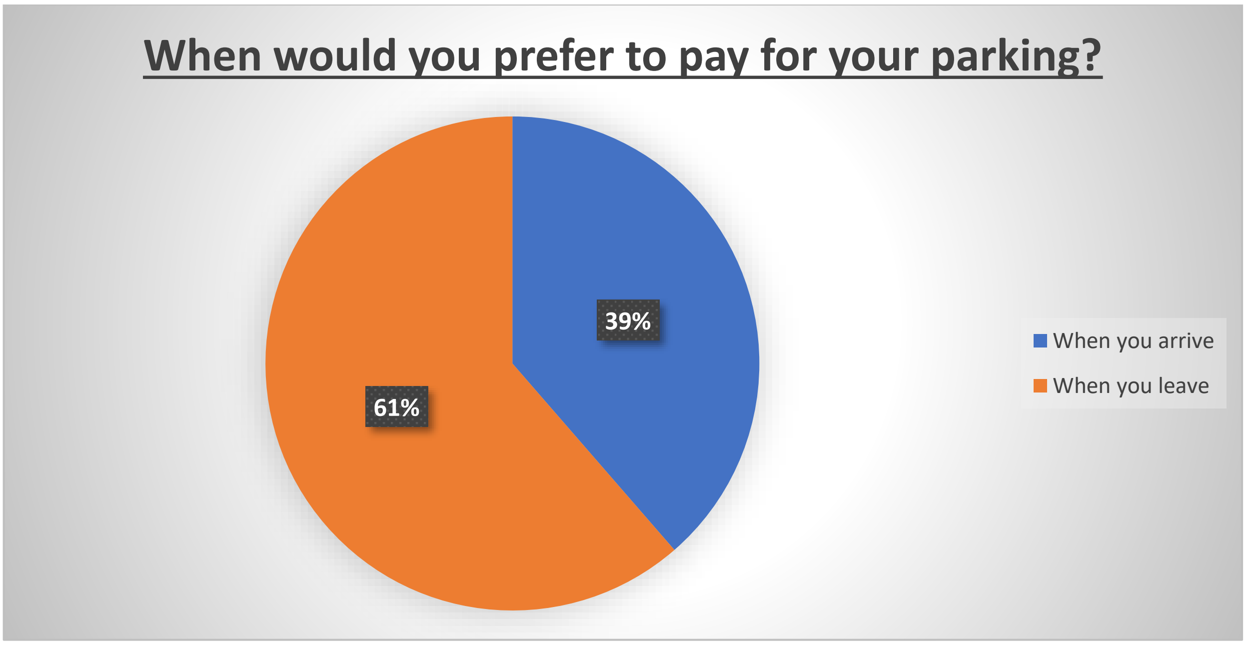


Figure 22 – Preference on respondents paying for parking

It is widely acknowledged that there is a greater preference to pay for parking when leaving the destination rather than paying upon arrival. Whilst there are currently no car parks within Babergh or Mid Suffolk where users can pay for parking when leaving, there is a benefit in asking this question to understand whether this is technology that could be introduced into car parks where there are parking charges.

The results have found that 61% of the overall respondents declared that they would choose to pay when they leave the car park whereas 39% of respondents would prefer to pay on arrival. This information coupled with data collected already can be used to support changes or installation of improved infrastructure.

3.224 QUESTION 24 ASKED HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO PAY FOR YOUR PARKING?

This multi selection question received 1,179 responses meaning 69 respondents did not answer the question.

Figure 23 below shows the breakdown of respondents based how they would like to pay for their parking.

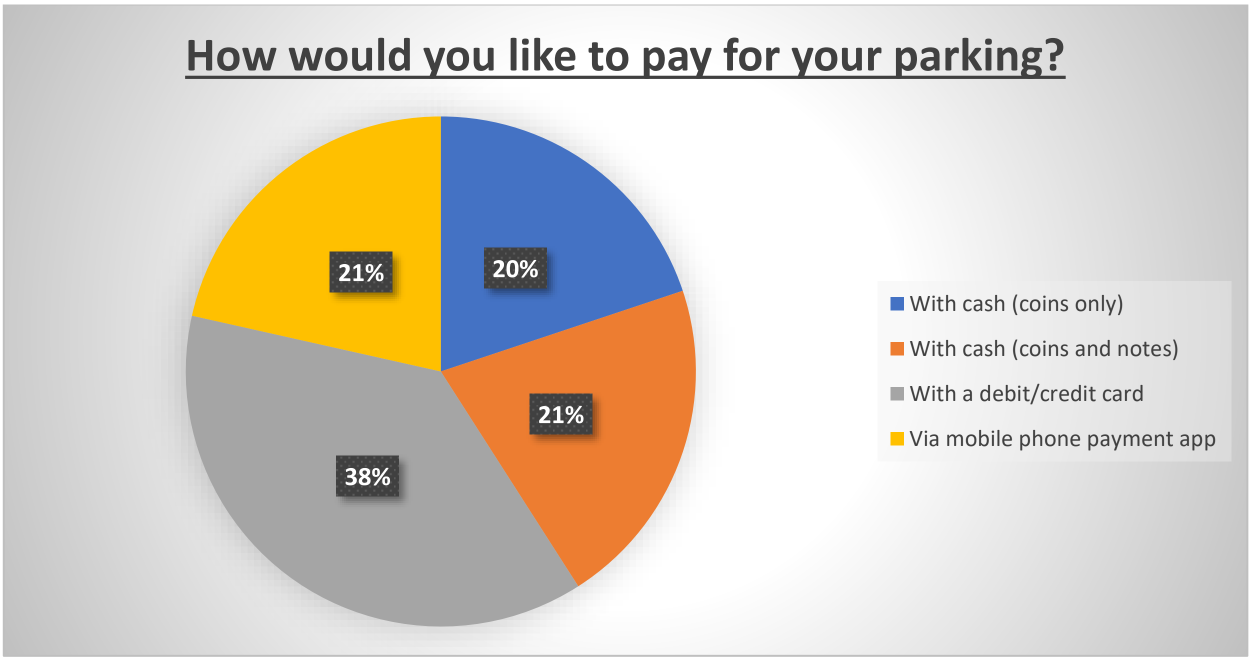


Figure 23 – Preference on methods to pay for parking

The method of paying for parking needs to be efficient and easy to use. It is important to offer a wide selection of payment methods to ensure everyone's needs are met. The purpose of this question is to understand the popularity of each payment method and use this data to contribute to a possible improvement in service.

The results show that the method of debit or credit card was the most selected option at 38% of the overall respondents. The next most selected response was a joint placement at 21% of both cash (coins and notes) and via a mobile phone app. The final method was cash (coins only) which was selected by 20% of the respondents. The data collected from this question shows that all payment methods seem important in offering the largest selection of people the correct facility to be able to pay for their parking.

3.225 QUESTION 25 ASKED HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE AMOUNT CURRENTLY CHARGED FOR LONG STAY PARKING IN CAR PARKS THAT CHARGE?

This single selection question received 384 responses with 864 respondents choosing not to answer this question.

Figure 24 below shows the breakdown of respondents based on how they felt about the amount currently charged for long stay parking in car parks that charge.

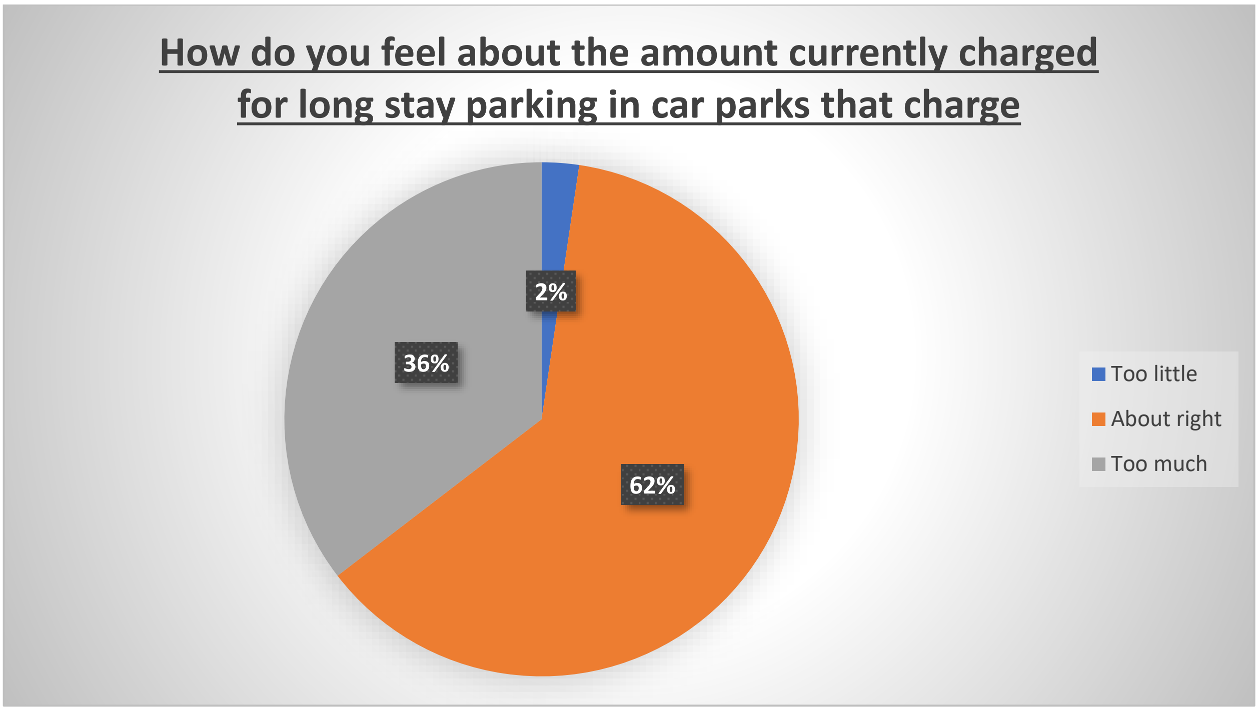


Figure 24 – Breakdown of responses views on long-stay parking charges

The purpose of this question is to understand how respondents feel about the amount that is charged for long term parking in the car parks. This data helps to understand if the right amount is charged in car parks. The results found that 62% of respondents believed the long-term charges to be about right. The next most selected response was too much at 36% and then finally too little at 2%. This shows that nearly two thirds of respondents believe the current charges for long-term parking to be about right.

Based on the experience of 2020 Consultancy in undertaking parking consultations, a question on parking charges usually results in a 50/50 ratio when charges are considered about right. Therefore, the ratio shown in figure 24 would suggest that respondents would potentially accept a small increase in parking charges if a tariff was increased. This assumption is only based on previous data collection and consultation exercises on parking.

3.226 QUESTION 26 ASKED HOW DO YOU THINK THE CURRENT PARKING CHARGES COMPARE TO NEIGHBOURING TOWNS AND CITIES?

This single selection question received 1,191 responses with 57 respondents not answering this question.

Figure 25 below shows the breakdown of respondents on how they perceive the parking charges compare to neighbouring towns and cities.

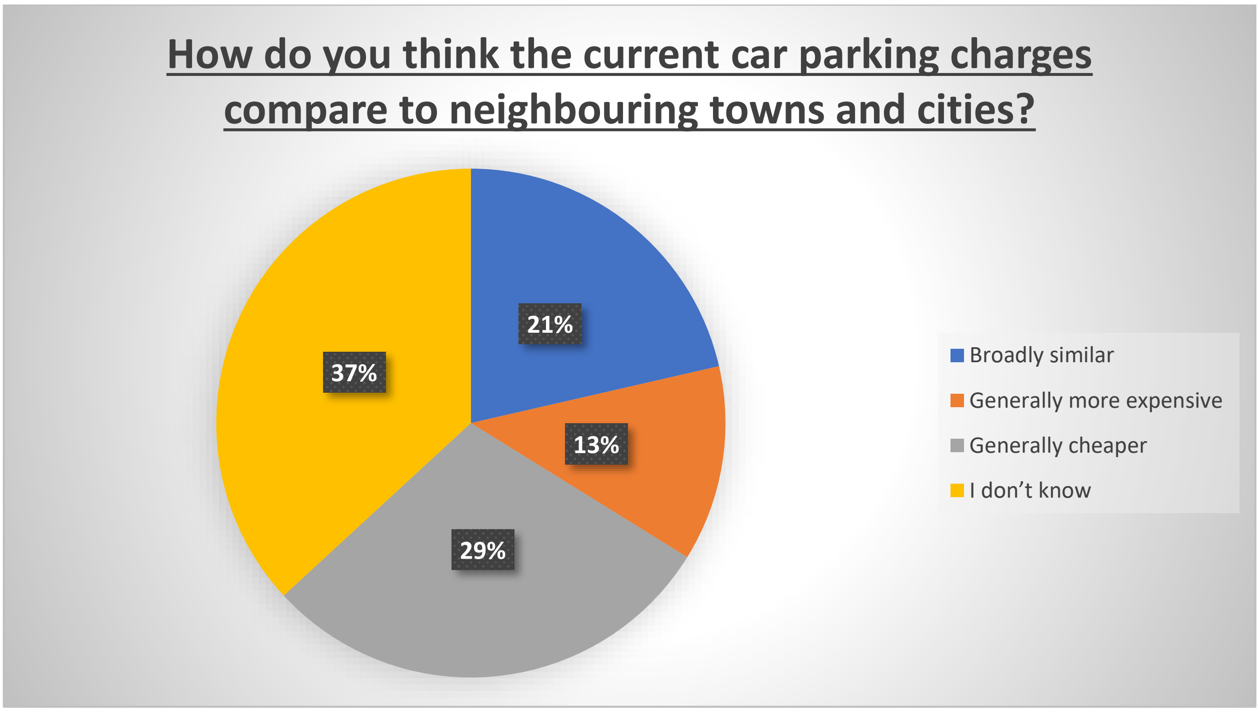


Figure 25 – Breakdown of responses based on comparison to nearby towns / cities

The purpose of this question is to gather understanding on how the current parking charges in Babergh and Mid Suffolk compare to neighbouring towns. It is important in maintaining a competitive and fair charge for parking for all and to maintain a good understanding of the surrounding areas offering so as not to lose any commercial attractiveness.

The results have found that 37% of the respondents do not know how the charges compare. The next most selected response was that it is generally cheaper at 29%. Broadly similar was selected most next at 21% and then finally generally more expensive at 13%.

3.227 QUESTION 27 ASKED DO YOU HAVE A DISABILITY OR LIMITED MOVEMENT?

This single selection question received 1,187 responses meaning 61 respondents did not answer this question.

Figure 26 below shows the breakdown of respondents based on if they have a disability or limited movement.

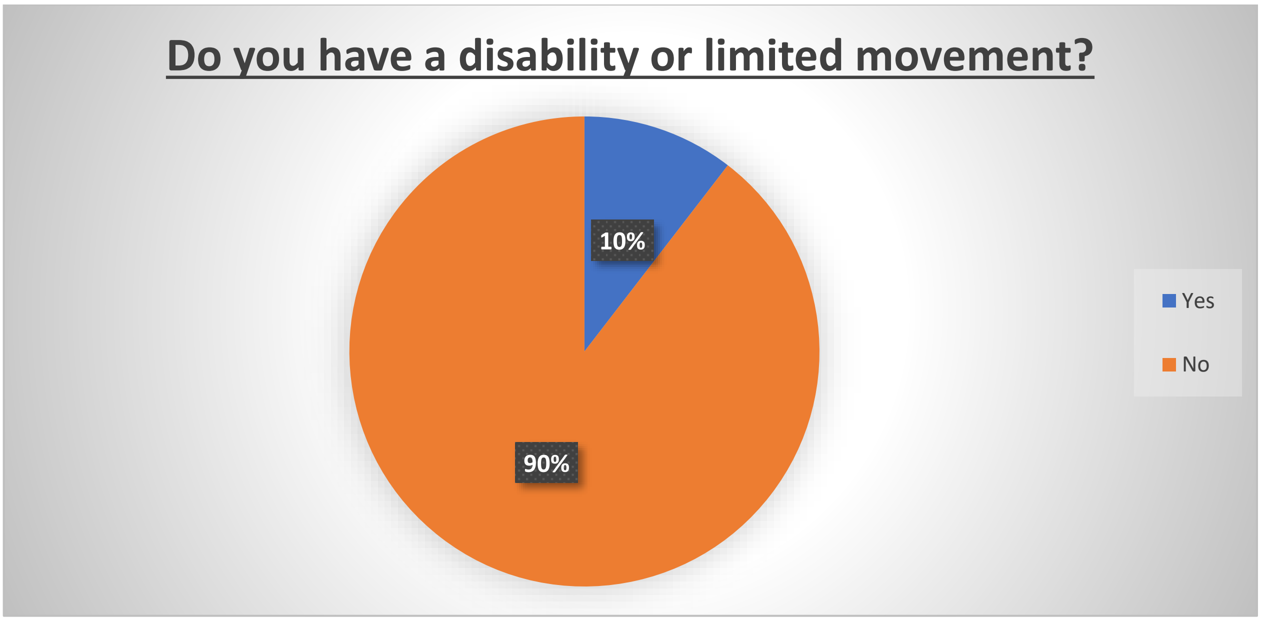


Figure 26 – Breakdown of respondents with disability or limited movement

This question was asked to gain an understanding of how many respondents have limited movement. This information helps contribute to a dataset that can help support any changes that may be required. It is important for a location to offer the correct number of disabled spaces based upon the general need. The results show that 90% of the total 1,187 respondents do not have a disability or limited movement compared to 105 respondents (apx 10%) that do have a disability or limited movement. This information will help calculate the correct number of spaces required for a particular area / the districts.

3.228 QUESTION 28 ASKED HOW EASY DO YOU FIND IT TO LOCATE A BLUE BADGE PARKING SPACE IN ANY OF THE CAR PARKS IN TOWN CENTRE?

This single selection question received 256 responses with 992 respondents not answering this question.

Figure 27 below shows the breakdown of respondents on how easy they find it to locate a blue badge space.

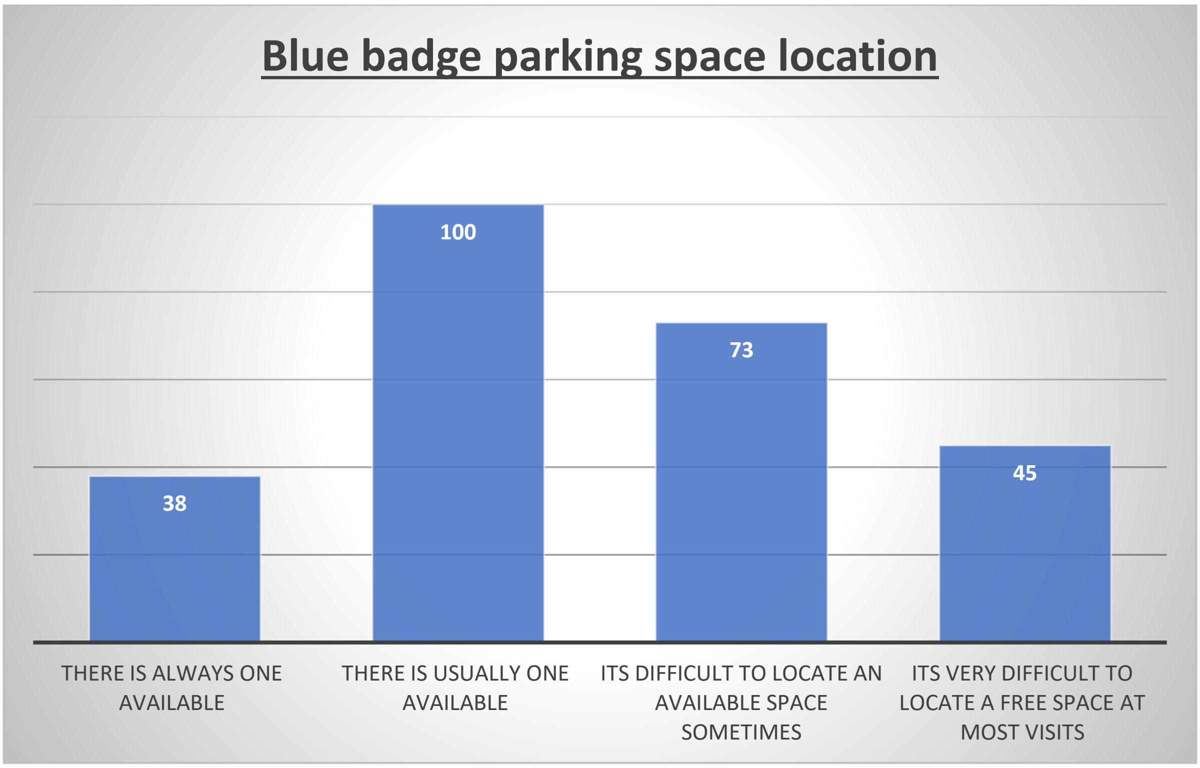


Figure 27 – Respondents views on blue badge parking

The purpose of this question is to identify if the Blue Badge space offering across the districts is sufficient for the demand. This gives valuable data in understanding the broad overview of priority spaces and the problems that may be faced in locating a space. The results show that there is usually a space available which accounted for 100 respondents of the 256 that were submitted.

3.229 QUESTION 29 ASKED DO YOU DRIVE AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE ON A REGULAR BASIS?

This single selection question received 1,191 responses meaning 57 did not answer this question.

Figure 28 below shows the breakdown of respondents based on whether they drive an electric vehicle on a regular basis.

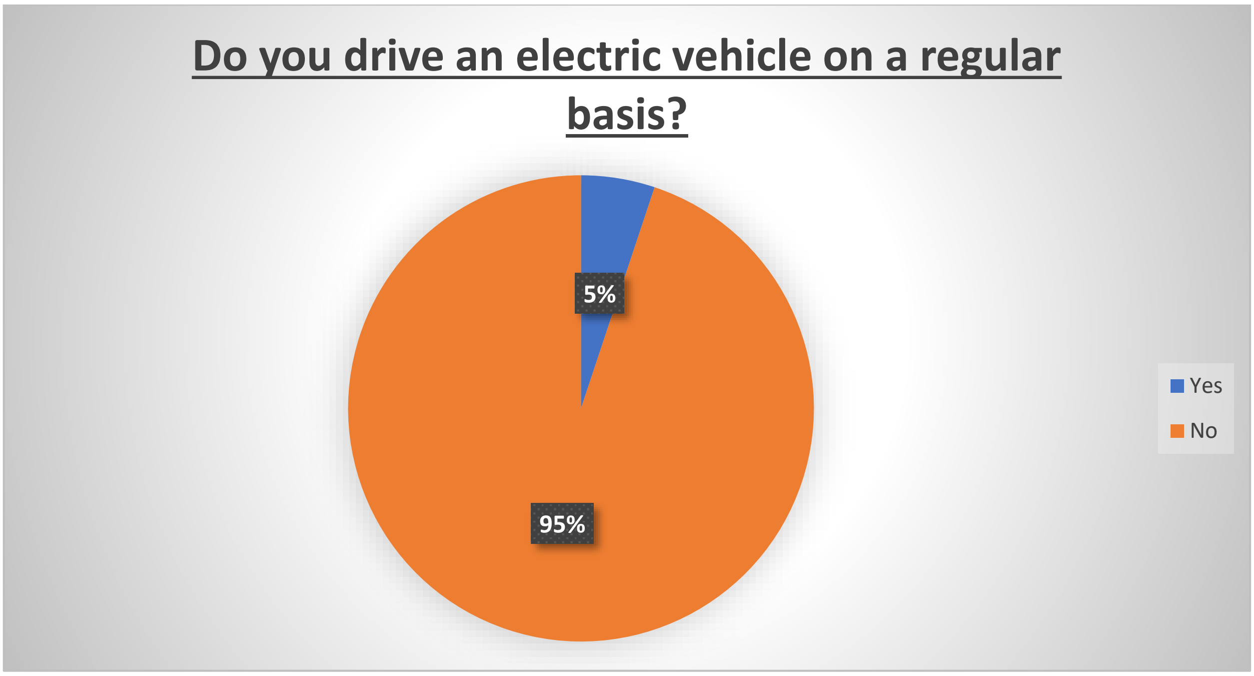


Figure 28 – Respondents who drive an EV

The purpose of this question is to gain an understanding of existing ownership of electric vehicles within Babergh and Mid Suffolk and to understand if there is sufficient provision for charging within car parks. The results found that 95% of the 1,191 respondents do not drive an electric vehicle meaning that 5% (61 respondents) do. Sustainable forms of traffic are becoming more and more popular and the EV Charge point offering is fundamental in supplying sustainable infrastructure.

Whilst the 5% figure appears low, it is worth noting that this is likely to start to increase at a far greater rate over the next five years as some mainstream car manufacturers have confirmed their intention to only make electric vehicles by specific years.

3.230 QUESTION 30 ASKED IF SO, WOULD YOU USE CHARGE POINTS IN TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKS?

This single selection question received 213 responses meaning 1,035 respondents skipped this question.

Figure 29 below shows the breakdown of respondents based on if they would use charge points in the town centre.

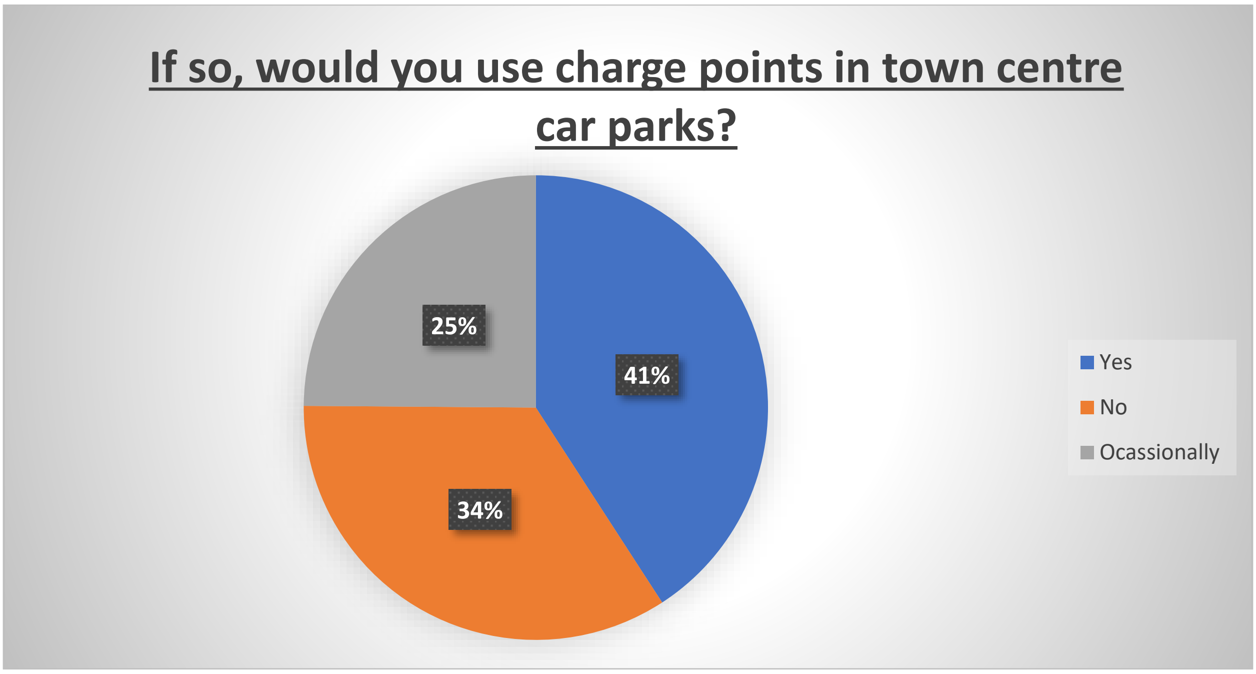


Figure 29 – Breakdown of respondents that would use EV charge points

This question was asked to gain a further understanding of the results from question 29. There was only 213 responses of the overall 1,248 responses, which is a smaller sample size than desired. The results found that 41% of the respondents would use charge points in the town centre, 25% of respondents would use the town EV facilities occasionally and the remaining 34% of respondents would not use the EV charge points on offer.

These results provide justification for investigating whether there is sufficient opportunity within the districts to charge vehicles in car parks as two thirds of respondents stated they would use the infrastructure either frequently or occasionally. As referred to section 3.230 EV charging infrastructure is likely to increase over coming years, which provides strong support for planning for this growth in the short-term.

3.231 QUESTION 31 ASKED WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE EV POINTS INSTALLED WITHIN BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK?

This single selection question received 1,039 responses with 209 respondents not answering this question.

Figure 30 below shows the breakdown of respondents based on if they would like to see more EV charge points installed within Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

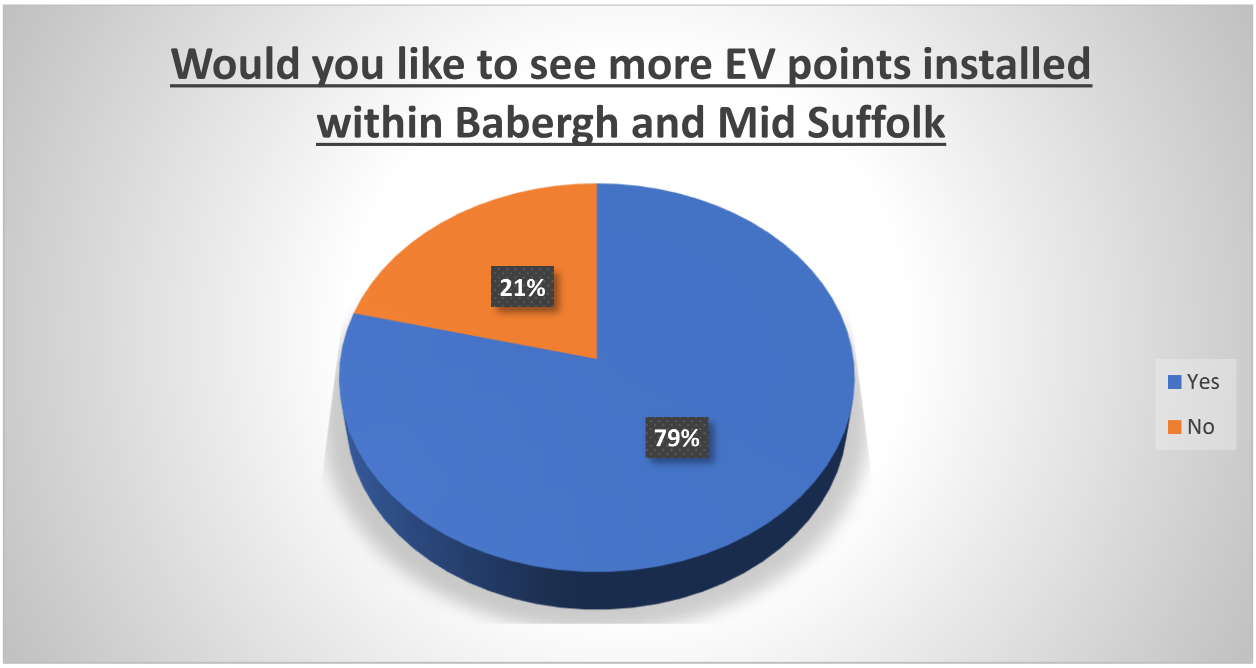


Figure 30 – Breakdown on the need for additional EV charge points

The purpose of this question is to understand the general need from respondents for increased numbers of EV charging points. This information is important in being able to futureproof Babergh and Mid Suffolk with regard to EV Charging provision. The need to supply the correct number of charging points is critical in striking the balance between conceding general use spaces and having the correct amount of EV points.

The results show that 79% of respondents would like to see more EV charge points in Babergh and Mid Suffolk. This is a large majority and shows that the need for investment in EV points is important and supports initial thoughts generated by questions 29 and 30.

3.232 QUESTION 32 PROVIDED RESPONDENTS WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPLY ANY SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS RELATED TO PARKING IN BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK

This was a free text box that allowed respondents the opportunity to provide additional information about off-street and on-street parking within Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

590 respondents provided comments. The comments provided have been reviewed in detail and included within the overall analysis. Due to the number of comments received, these have not been included within this report. However, it has been established that the majority of comments fall within specific themes. The most common themes (with at least 10 comments) are shown below in table 5.

Type of Comment	Number of Comments
Parking Charges specifically in the Babergh district	178
Overall more spaces required in various locations	33
Residential on-street parking issues	28
Payment machines in poor state and needing repair	25
The need for a wide range of payment options	18
Access and exit issues	17
Commuter parking in Sudbury	16
Lack of Parent and child priority spaces	13
Parking bay sizes are too small and need to be widened	12
Disabled Parking spaces poor positioned	11

Table 5 – Comment themes from supplementary free text box for Q32

4.0 LOCAL PREFERENCE

4.1 ANALYSIS

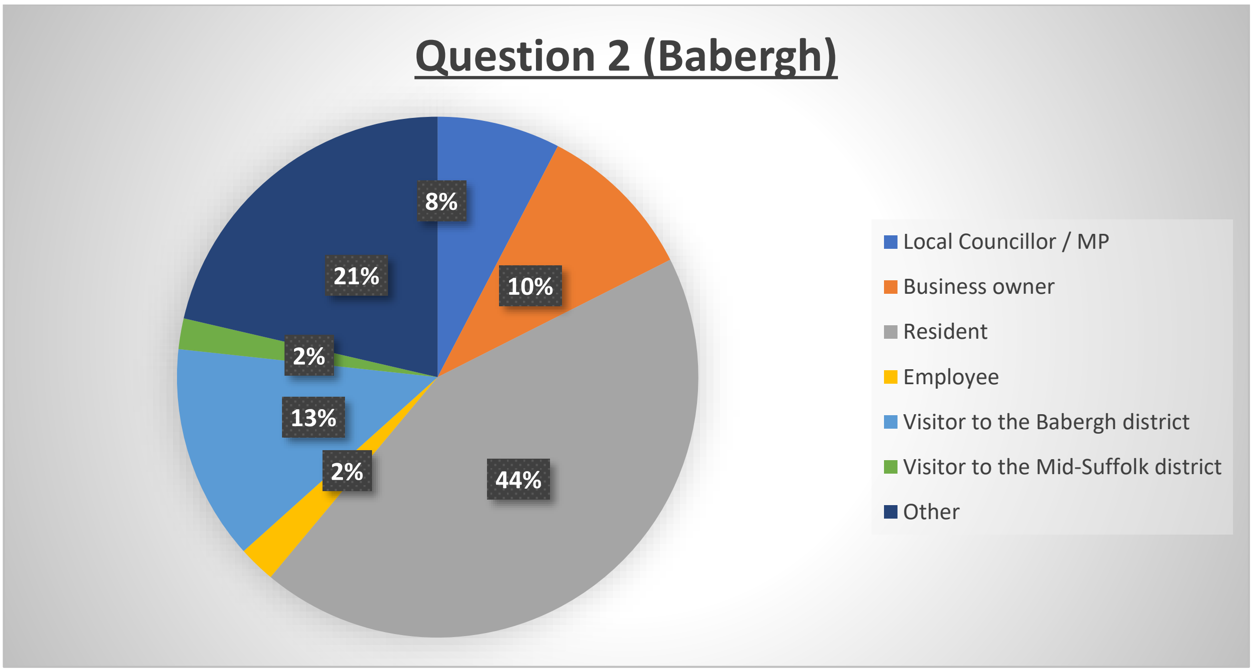
Section 3 focused on the overall responses that were received across both Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts. As part of this section, closer analysis has been undertaken to determine views from each district separately.

To compare the results of the questionnaire, postcodes have been used as a filter to provide the results which can be shown in graph format. The following questions have been specifically selected as they offer the best data analysis opportunities when looking at each district.

4.11 QUESTION 2 – ARE YOU RESPONDING AS?

The data obtained is conducive of allowing for further analysis from a district level. This information allows for further analysis into the positions that are represented by the responses. It is important to gain responses from a wide range of positions to obtain the broadest possible understanding of parking experiences in the specific districts.

Figure 31 below shows the results of the questionnaire for question 2 for both Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts.



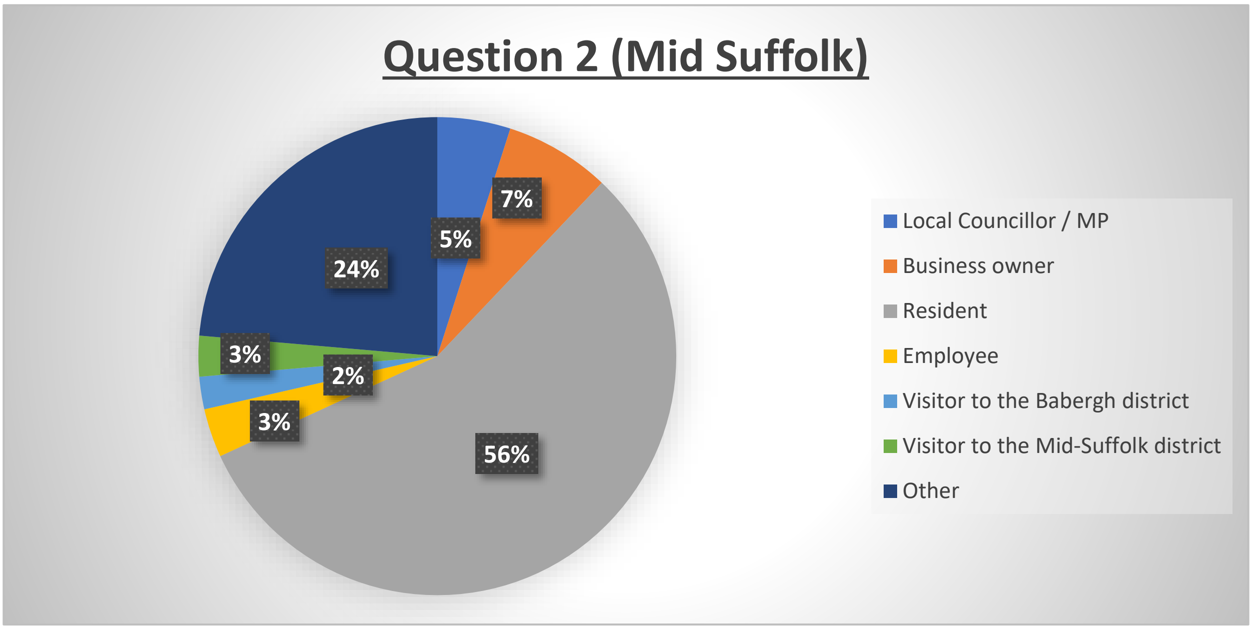


Figure 31 – Comparison of question 2

The results of this breakdown show a fairly even distribution of responses across all positions. In Babergh 44% of responses came from residents and in Mid Suffolk this was 56%. The remaining results are broadly similar in total responses with the most considerable difference being visitors. In Babergh, the responses from visitors to Babergh made up 13% of the overall response whereas in Mid Suffolk district this was 3%.

4.12 QUESTION 6 – GENERALLY HOW OFTEN DO YOU TRAVEL INTO A TOWN CENTRE BY CAR?

This question asks how often the respondent travels into the town centre. It is important to be able to compare the districts on travel habits and other key issues.

Figure 32 below shows two graphs that depict the results for both Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts.

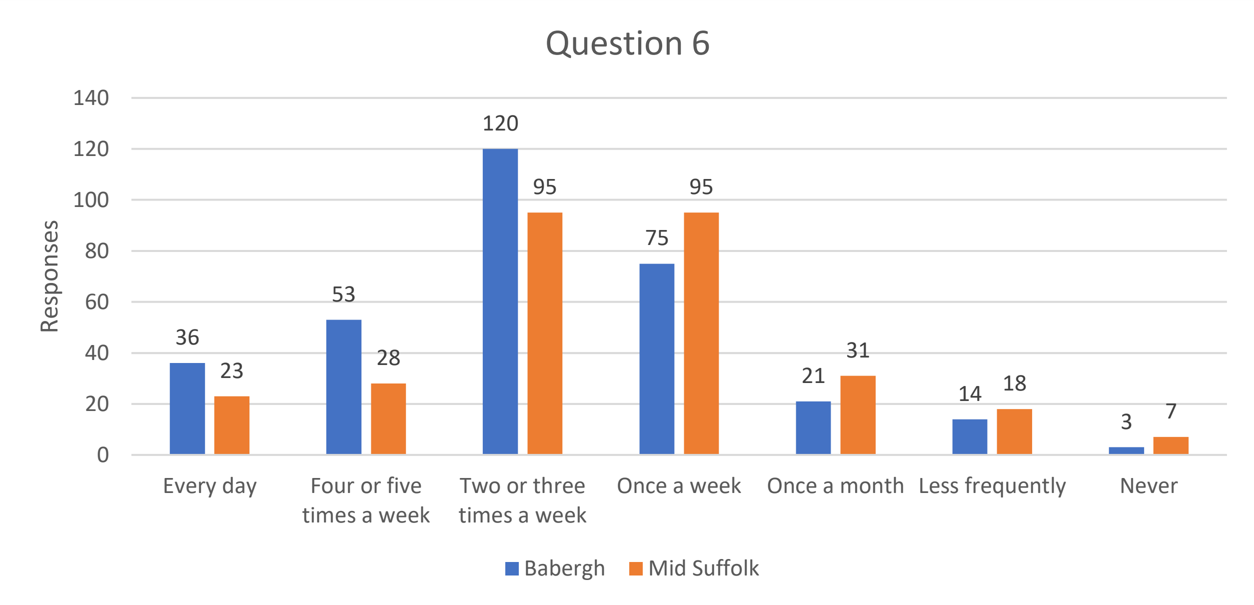


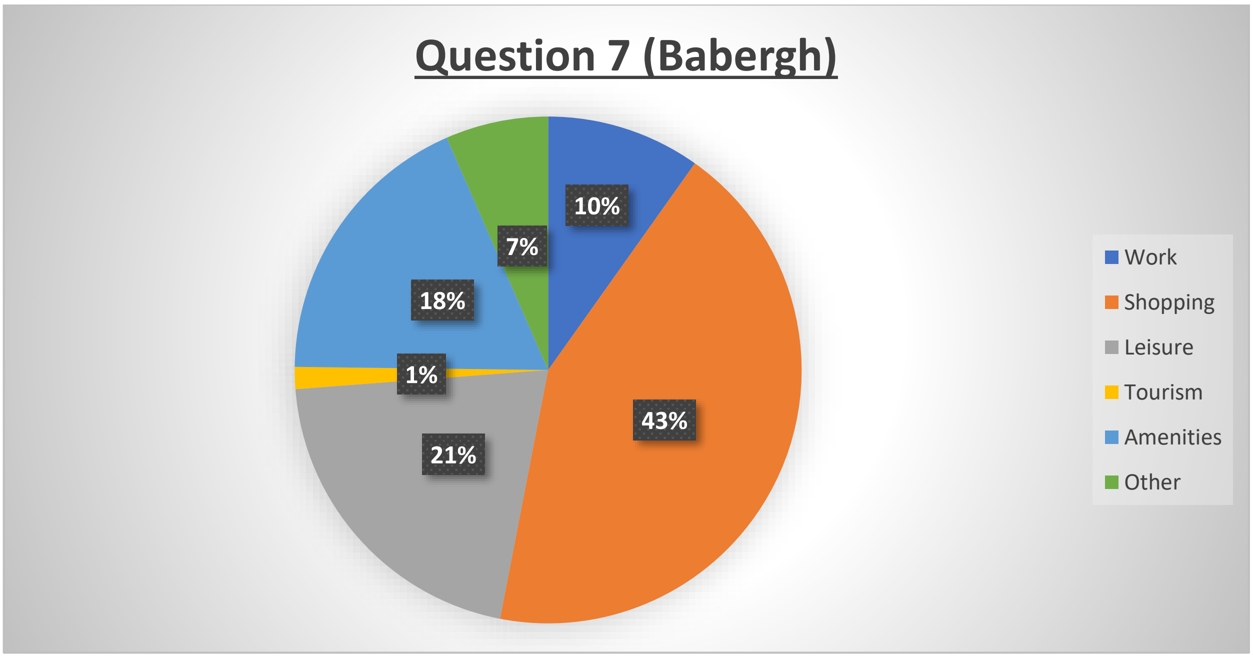
Figure 32 – Comparison of question 2

There are similarities in the two districts in that the two most popular options were two or three times a week and once a week. This is a positive number of trips into the town centres for local and district economies and means that even with the Covid-19 pandemic the town centres are fairly well supported by visits from residents and others. It also highlights that a higher volume of trips is made in Babergh compared to Mid Suffolk.

4.13 QUESTION 7 – WHAT ARE THE MAIN REASONS FOR VISITING THE TOWN CENTRE?

The breakdown for this question allows for analysis at a district level and helps support the districts individual attributes.

Figure 33 below shows the breakdown of responses for question 7 for both Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts.



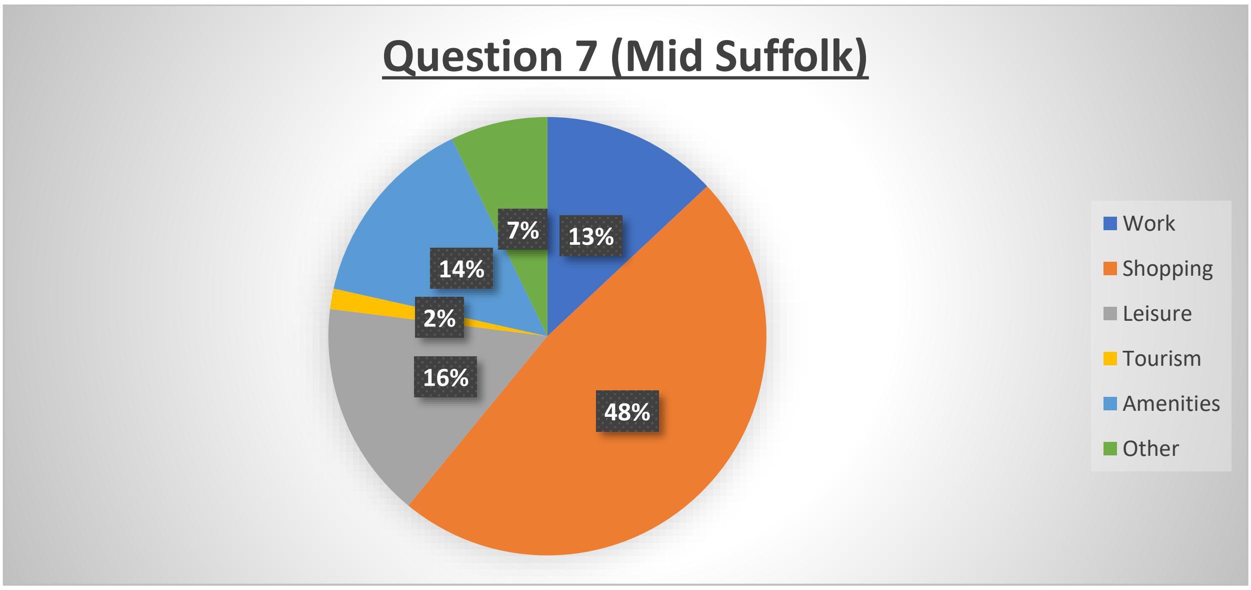


Figure 33 – Comparison of question 7

The results of this district breakdown show that the range of different reasons for travelling into town centres is well supported. The most popular reason to visit town / village centres for both Babergh and Mid Suffolk is shopping with 43% and 48% respectively. The next most popular reason for visiting the town centres is for leisure reasons with 21% for Babergh and 16% for Mid Suffolk. The similarities in total selection percentage continues for the remaining selections.

The data that is obtained from district breakdown of question 7 allows gives information that can determine the need for particular aspects of car parking to be improved.

4.14 QUESTION 8 – WHAT ARE THE REASONS WHY YOU DRIVE INTO A TOWN CENTRE?

This question helps determine why the reasons for driving into the town centre is a popular modal choice. The responses could lead to further analysis that may contribute to changes that will support alternative means of travel via improved facilities or general safety improvements.

Figure 34 below show the breakdown of responses for each district.

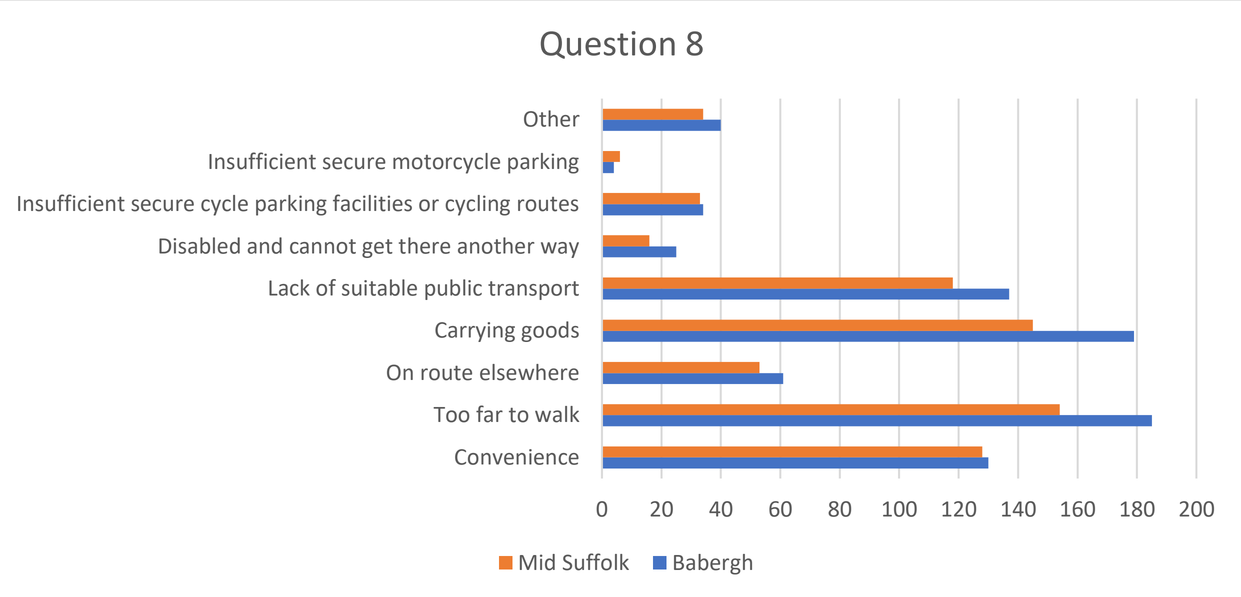


Figure 34 – Comparison of question 8

The results of this district breakdown show that the two most popular reasons for why respondents drive into the town centres is for carrying goods and that it is too far to walk. This is the case for both districts and the next most popular reasons are lack of suitable transport and convenience. The reasons for the use of cars as a means to get into town can be generally attributed to user habit and choice therefore would be hard to introduce or improve infrastructure that would improve this.

4.15 QUESTION 10 – IF YOU PARK ON-STREET, WHAT IS THE MAIN PURPOSE FOR DOING SO?

This question is fundamental in supplying the indication as to the purpose for parking on-street is favourable over the option to park off-street. The data has been filtered into the postcodes that fit into each district and the results have been condensed into a graph below.

Figure 35 below shows the results of question 10 from Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

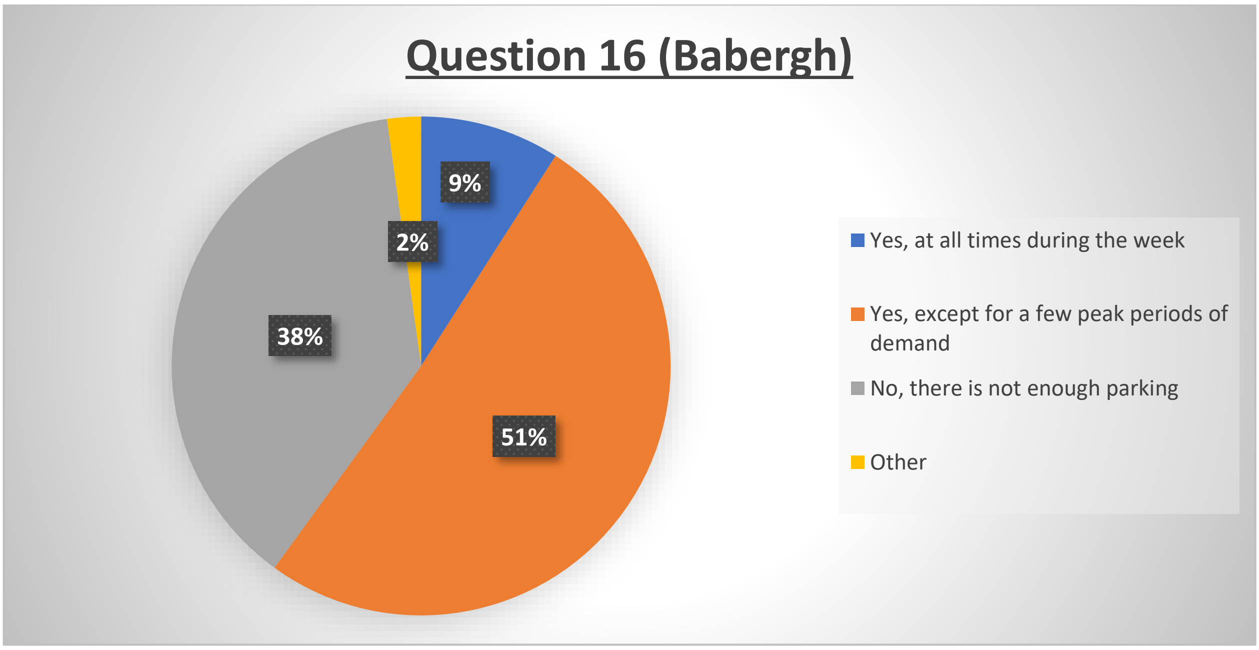
Figure 35 – Comparison of question 10

The results for each district above show that a high proportion of respondents selected *"I do not park on-street"* with 109 responses for Babergh and 108 for Mid Suffolk. The next most selected option was *"it is free to park"* which shows cost of parking is a driving factor for where a particular person decides to park. Continuing from this, the next most selected option for both districts was *"its more convenient for where I need to go"*. This information shows that convenience of onward travel is key in the decision making of the location for parking for many respondents. It is key to acknowledge that the option *"the town is too congested"* was low for both districts which is encouraging when looking at potential car volume levels in the town centres.

4.16 QUESTION 16 – DO YOU CONSIDER THERE TO BE ENOUGH OVERALL PARKING IN THESE CAR PARKS

This question gives a view on the volume of traffic or perceived infrastructure capabilities based on respondents' experiences. This information is important in gaining an understanding on the level of use coupled with occupancy data already collected.

Figure 36 below shows two number graphs depicting the results for question 16 broken into district region.



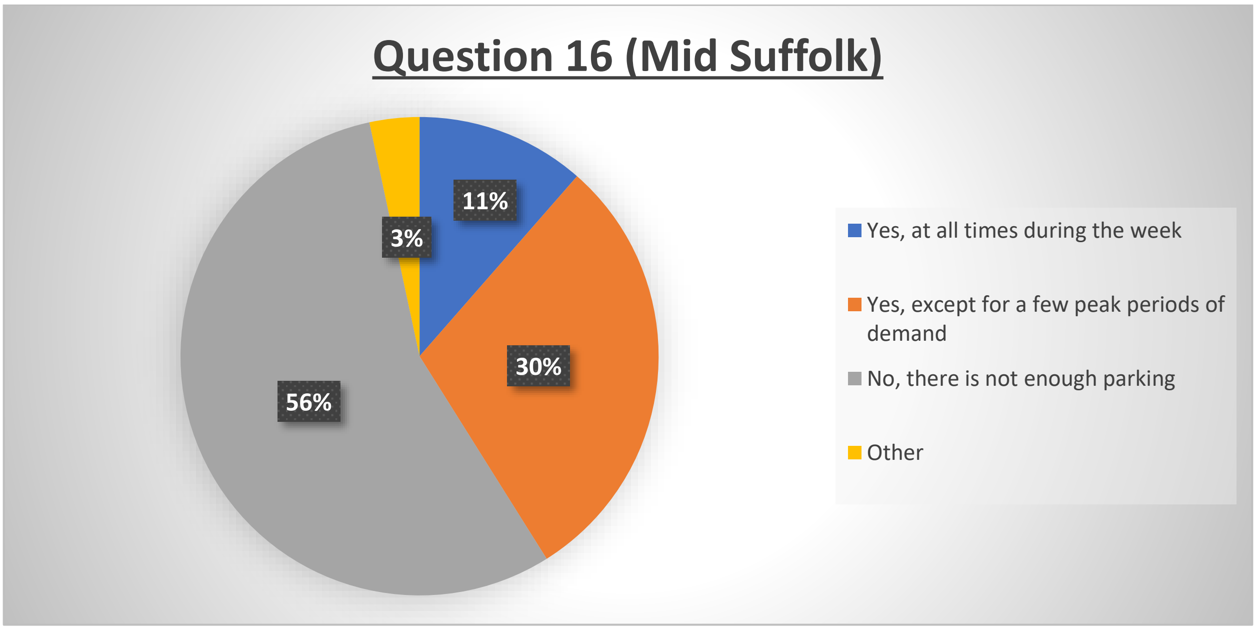


Figure 36 – Comparison of question 16

The results above show that 38% of respondents for Babergh believe that there is not enough parking compared with 56% in Mid Suffolk. In Babergh, 56% of respondents believe that there to be enough parking capacity apart from a few peak periods, in Mid Suffolk the response was 30.

4.17 QUESTION 18 – WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE PARKING FACILITIES YOU HAVE USED IN BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK

The purpose of this question is to get an understanding on whether the respondents believe that the parking facilities they have used are of an acceptable standard. This information is important to gain data that can help support the need for changes.

Figure 37 below shows a graph for both Babergh and Mid Suffolk and the breakdown of responses for each selection.

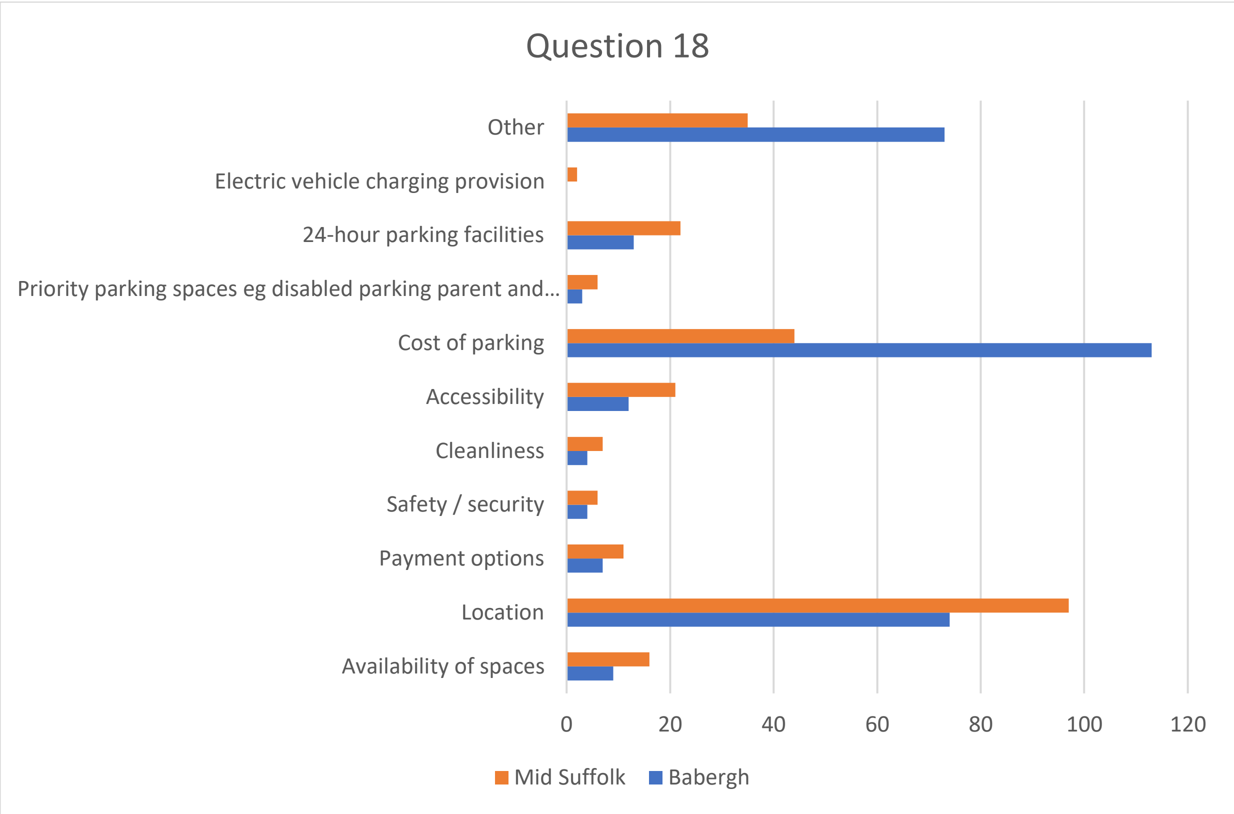


Figure 37 – Comparison of question 18

The results for Babergh and Mid Suffolk have been transposed into the above graph. For both districts, the most liked elements of car parking facilities were the cost of parking and location. This demonstrates that parking in both districts is well located as a popular choice for all respondents.

A point to note, that the remaining selections were quite evenly selected by respondents which can support the notion that car park facilities are of a good standard in that most of the facilities have been selected well by respondents.

4.18 QUESTION 19 – WHAT WOULD MOST LIKE TO SEE IMPROVED WITH BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK CAR PARKS

The purpose of this question is to understand from respondents a breakdown of what they would most like to see improved. These can be accurately broken down into districts and data further analysed.

Figure 38 below shows a graph that depicts the results from question 19 into the two districts.

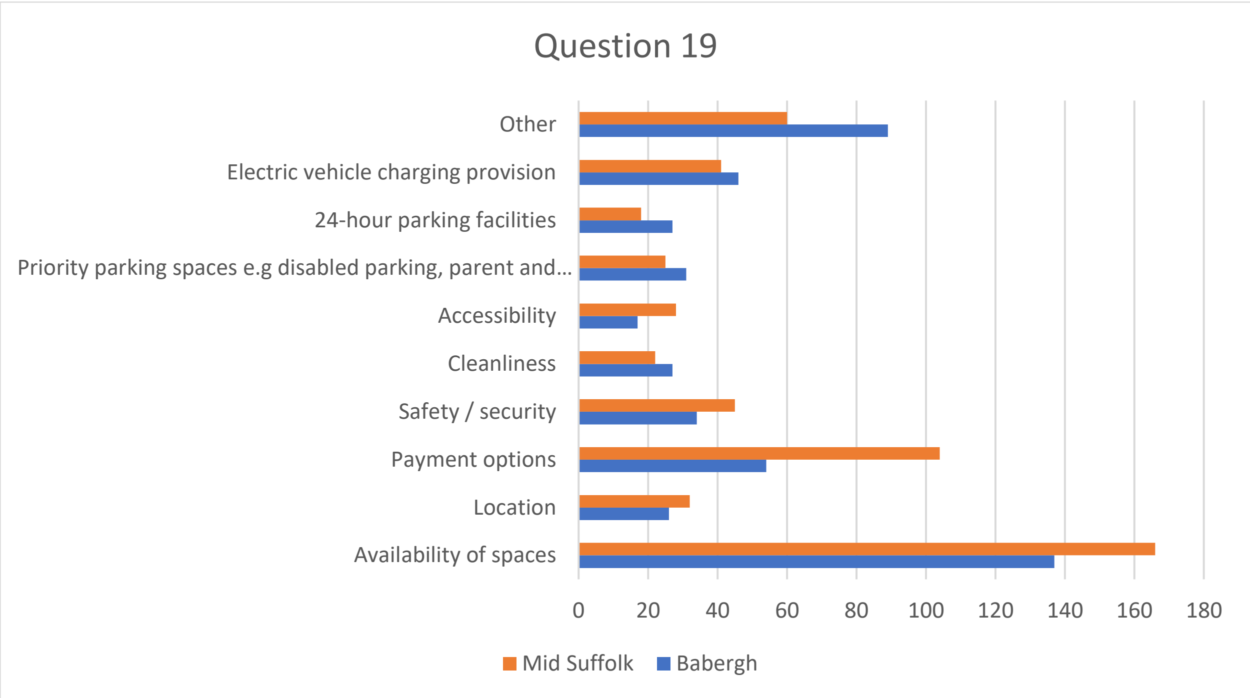


Figure 38 – Comparison of question 19

The results for both districts as shown above demonstrates that the offering respondents would most like to see improved is the availability of spaces. This was selected by 137 respondents in Babergh and 166 tin Mid Suffolk indicating that respondents in both districts feel that there is a need for improvements to be made to the availability of spaces. This is slightly against other questions where the availability of spaces (in Babergh) was not considered to be a major issue. Outside of this question, there is a good spread of respondents wishing for improvement in all areas meaning there is not an obvious issue.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

This consultation exercise has been undertaken to enable the 2020 Consultancy project team gain an understanding of the current situation with regards to off-street and on-street parking within the districts to support the parking strategy. The feedback received from stakeholders will assist the project team to identify potential interventions that can be made to both council's parking services and operations.

A series of potential interventions will now be refined based on the investigation and survey work carried out into parking across the Babergh and Mid Suffolk district, and feedback received as part of this consultation. This will result in a list of potential interventions that will form part of the Councils parking strategy.

There will be a further consultation exercise, which will enable stakeholders to view potential interventions and provide feedback. This will further enable the development of prioritised interventions that can be implemented subject to approval processes by the Councils and Suffolk County Council as the highways authority.

The next phase of consultation will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to meet with the project team face to face, to discuss interventions in greater detail and provide feedback. This is subject to guidance provided by central government on restrictions due to Covid-19.

Table 6 provides a high-level summary of the next steps involved in this project.

Task	Estimated Completion Date
Stage 1 (Existing situation) consultation	Complete
Stage 2 (parking strategy intervention) consultation	February 2022
Reporting of stage 2 consultation	May 2022

Table 6 – Key milestones for parking strategy

6.0 CONCLUSION

This stage 1 public consultation has given stakeholders an opportunity to express their views about off-street and on-street parking across Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts that will feed into the development of the parking strategy currently in the investigation stage. There were six virtual stakeholder workshops held during the consultation process which enabled stakeholders to raise queries and gain a better understanding of parking and the impact for the Babergh and Mid Suffolk population.

Across the six virtual stakeholder workshops, 40 stakeholders attended. From the feedback received during the stakeholder workshops, it was felt that they were useful and informative for those who attended. Some concerns were raised with regards to the structure of the events and that it did not provide sufficient detail for each location. It was explained that the strategy is being developed at a strategic level meaning individual location questions would not be suitable.

There were 1,248 completed questionnaires submitted during the consultation period, these were completed either online or via paper copies sent out in the post. There was a further 393 questionnaires that were incomplete, which have not been included in the analysis to avoid a potential bias to certain questions. Taking into account, the purpose of the consultation and the stage of the project, combined with the efforts to publicise the public consultation, participation is considered to have been very good. The target engagement for the questionnaire was 1,000 completed responses and this was exceeded by 248 responses.

The results of the questionnaire demonstrate that shopping trips are by a considerable distance the most common reason for respondents to park in towns and villages across Babergh and Mid Suffolk. The choice to use a vehicle is broadly based on the goods that need to be collected and being too far to walk. Finding a parking space is generally the most likely issue that respondents will encounter, which is the same for both Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts. Both districts also have concerns with parking in residential areas.

The location of parking spaces scored well across both districts, which is encouraging as this is vitally important for town and village economies.

APPENDIX A – CONSULTATION LEAFLET

APPENDIX B – COPY OF THE WORKSHOP PRESENTATION

INTRODUCTION

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have commissioned 2020 Consultancy to produce a new car parking strategy to provide a comprehensive route map that guides the long-term approach to off-street parking and on-street parking provision across the two districts.

As part of the development of the car park strategy, it's important to engage with stakeholders on the existing car park provision to understand views and identify where potential improvements can be made to enhance the parking experience for residents, businesses, and visitors.

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK PARKING STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

PURPOSE OF PROJECT & OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project is to:

- Understand the existing parking provision in town centres (off-street and on-street) across the two districts;
- Evaluate and interpret current car parking behaviours;
- Understand the role each car park plays in the districts offering;
- Ensure Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts are providing the correct level of parking provision in the locations that people want and need it;
- Recognise the potential impact Covid-19 may have had on town centre car parks;
- Identify improvements that will achieve a better parking experience which will safeguard local businesses and tourism;
- Protect future investment in car parking infrastructure through use of technological advances;
- Support the Councils aims to achieving a more sustainable provision such as Electric Vehicle charging in car parks;
- Develop recommendations that are supported with a robust evidence base.

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK PARKING STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

PURPOSE OF PROJECT & OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the project is to:

- Support the relevant overarching strategies and polices;
- Ensure that parking supports economic growth aspirations including regeneration opportunities;
- Provide appropriate parking provision that meets the different needs of residents, shoppers, commuters and businesses and takes into account the variable seasonal demand and population growth over the next 20 years;
- Ensure car parking information is available for users when they need it;
- Support initiatives to promote sustainable modes of travel;
- To ensure that car parks are easy to locate and access, reducing the need for traffic circulation;
- Provide opportunities for disabled people to park in convenient locations close to their end destination;
- Ensure the on-street parking provision is utilised in the most appropriate way to protect key areas across the districts.

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK PARKING STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

EXISTING CAR PARKS IN BABERGH

There are 24 car parks within Babergh that have been reviewed as part of the baseline assessment.


The Station car park


Station Road car park


Great Eastern Road car park


Stour Street car park


The Cock Horse Inn car park


Pin Mill car park


Magdalen Road car park


High Street car park

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK PARKING STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

EXISTING CAR PARKS IN MID SUFFOLK

2020

There are 13 car parks within Mid Suffolk that have been reviewed as part of the baseline assessment.


Meadow Central car park


Milton Road car park


Union Street West car park


Ipswich Road car park


Cross Street car park


Station Yard car park


Cross Green car park


The Steet car park

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK PARKING STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

EXISTING CAR PARKS IN BABERGH

2020

Name of Car Park	Area	Accessibility	Surveillance and CCTV	Boundaries and Perimeters	Road Markings	Lighting	Pedestrian Access	Vehicular Access	Signage (Car Park)	Signage (further destinations)	Overall Condition	Offering Electric Facilities	Priority Spaces	24hr Facility	Total
Ballingdon Street	Sudbury	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	NO	1DIS 0	0	24
Blackfriars (North)	Sudbury	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	NO	NO	0	27
Blackfriars (South)	Sudbury	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	NO	NO	0	27
Girling Street	Sudbury	2	1	2	1	0	1	2	2	2	2	NO	2DIS 2	0	15
Great Eastern Road "Roy's"	Sudbury	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	1	NO	10DIS 1	0	15
Mill Lane	Sudbury	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	3	3	2	NO	2DIS 1	0	22
North Street	Sudbury	1	1	2	1	1	1	0	1	2	1	NO	11DIS 3	0	11
Quay Lane	Sudbury	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	NO	NO	0	25
Station Road (Kingfisher)	Sudbury	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	2	1	YES	6DIS 3	0	8
Station Road (Lorry Park)	Sudbury														
Stour Street	Sudbury	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	NO	1DIS 0	0	23
The Station (Railway Station)	Sudbury	1	0	1	1	2	1	0	2	3	2	NO	3DIS 0	0	13
Prentice Street	Lavenham	1	2	1	0	1	1	2	3	3	1	YES*	2DIS 1	0	15
The Cock Horse Inn	Lavenham	1	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	YES 2	2DIS 0	3	23
High Street (Barclays Bank)	Hadleigh	1	0	1	2	1	1	1	2	3	1	NO	3DIS 0	0	13
Magdalen Road (Long)	Hadleigh	2	1	3	3	1	1	2	2	3	2	NO	3DIS 0	0	20
Magdalen Road (Short)	Hadleigh	2	1	3	3	1	1	2	2	3	2	NO	4DIS 1	3	20
Maiden Way	Hadleigh	1	3	2	2	1	1	1	3	3	2	YES 2	1DIS 0	0	19
Railway Walk - North	Hadleigh	2	3	2	1	3	1	1	3	1	2	NO	NO	0	19
Stonehouse Road	Hadleigh	2	0	1	3	2	2	2	1	3	2	NO	2DIS 0	0	18
Toppesfield Hall	Hadleigh	2	3	2	1	1	2	2	3	3	2	NO	3DIS 0	0	21
Railway Walk - South	Raydon	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	NO	NO	0	27
Pin Mill	Chelmondiston	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	NO	NO	0	23
Lower Holbrook	Holbrook	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	NO	NO	0	27

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK PARKING STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

EXISTING CAR PARKS IN MID SUFFOLK

2020

Name of Car Park	Area	Accessability	Surveillance and CCTV	Boundaries and Perimeters	Road Markings	Lighting	Pedestrian Access	Vehicular Access	Signage (Car Park)	Signage (further destinations)	Overall Condition	Offering Electric Facilities	Priority Spaces	24hr Facility	Total
Cross Green	Debenham	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	NO	1DIS 1	0	24
Buckshorn Lane	Eye	1	3	1	3	0	2	3	3	2	2	NO	3DIS 0	0	20
Cross Street	Eye	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	3	3	1	YES 2	3DIS 1	0	16
Hurstlea Road	Needham Market														
Station Yard	Needham Market	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	3	2	NO	1DIS 0	0	22
Needham Lakes Visitors	Needham Market	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	NO	4DIS 1	0	26
Bury Street	Stowmarket	2	1	1	3	1	2	2	2	3	2	NO	NO	0	19
Gipping Way Coach & Lorry Park	Stowmarket														
Lliffe Way	Stowmarket	2	3	2	3	1	2	2	2	3	2	NO	NO	0	22
Ipswich Road/ Regal Theatre	Stowmarket	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	3	0	YES 2	4DIS 4	0	9
Meadow Centre/ Asda	Stowmarket	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	NO	16DIS 16	0	7
Milton Road/Morrisons	Stowmarket	1	1	1	2	0	0	1	1	2	1	NO	8DIS 6	0	10
Union Street	Stowmarket	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	NO	NO	0	22
Union Street West	Stowmarket	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	NO	4DIS 4	0	8
The Street	Woolpit	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	NO	NO	0	30

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK PARKING STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

CAR PARKING QUESTIONNAIRE

A car parking questionnaire has been developed to allow us to understand stakeholder views on parking within Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts and what improvements should be considered.

The questionnaire contains 31 questions. The topics covered include:

- The location(s) of the car park or road you use;
- Finding a space and any issues in doing so;
- Whether there is sufficient parking;
- The parking experience including directional signage, safety, and locations;
- The cost of parking;
- When and how you would like to pay for parking;
- How Babergh & Mid Suffolk compare to neighbouring districts / areas.

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK PARKING STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

CAR PARKING QUESTIONNAIRE

To date, there has been 1189 completed questionnaires. The key headlines include:

Approximately 70% of respondents state they have access to off-street parking, either a drive or garage

Parked vehicles near junctions and causing obstructions to traffic flow the most common issues in residential streets

Carrying goods (52%) and too far to walk (51%) most common reasons for using car parks in the town centres

More respondents (52%) haven't experienced parking problems in car parks compared to those who have (48%)

Respondents believe Sudbury provides highest quality car parks (33%) followed by Hadleigh (30%). Needham Market has the worst

29% of respondents who are aware of parking charges in nearby towns believe charges are generally cheaper in Babergh and Mid Suffolk (13% more expensive)

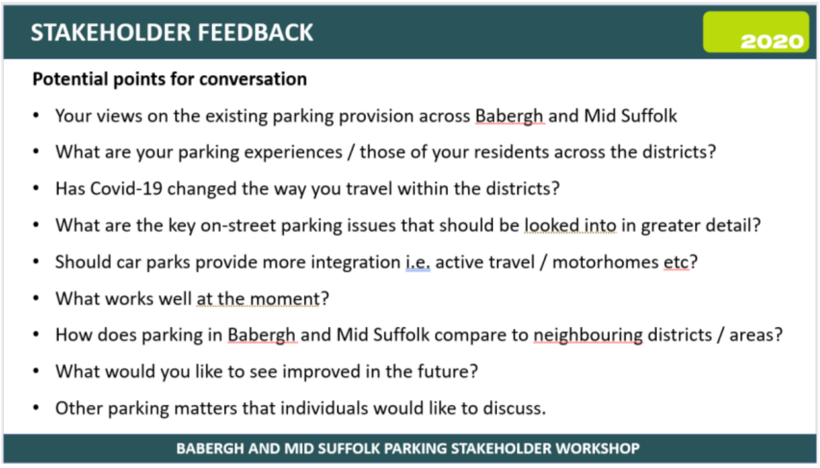
BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK PARKING STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- Car parking consultation extended until October 15th 2021;
- Detailed analysis of completed questionnaires will follow, which will be summarised in a feedback report;
- 2020 Consultancy will produce the draft car park strategies, which will include recommendations based on the findings of our investigation studies and results of the consultation process;
- Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council will review the draft strategies, providing feedback to 2020 Consultancy;
- Draft parking strategies will be subject to consultation with stakeholders as part of a second consultation, which is likely to occur in late winter early spring 2022;
- The draft parking strategies will be updated and issued to Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council for final review;
- Finalised strategies will be approved by both Councils.

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK PARKING STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP


THE PARKING STRATEGY
2020
Sustainable integration
Parking designation
Land use
Parking charges
Parking technology
Parking capacity
CAR PARK STRATEGY
Enforcement
BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK PARKING STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP


STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK
2020
Potential points for conversation
• Your views on the existing parking provision across Babergh and Mid Suffolk
• What are your parking experiences / those of your residents across the districts?
• Has Covid-19 changed the way you travel within the districts?
• What are the key on-street parking issues that should be looked into in greater detail?
• Should car parks provide more integration i.e. active travel / motorhomes etc?
• What works well at the moment?
• How does parking in Babergh and Mid Suffolk compare to neighbouring districts / areas?
• What would you like to see improved in the future?
• Other parking matters that individuals would like to discuss.
BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK PARKING STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

2020
HIGHWAY & TRANSPORTATION CONSULTANTS

APPENDIX C – COPY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Working Together

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Parking Consultation

1.

Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils are producing a new parking strategy which needs to identify parking demand and supply across the districts for the next 5–10 years. It will help ensure suitable levels of car and other vehicle type parking facilities are available to support town centre regeneration (both commercial and residential) and enable access to towns as well as rural villages. To do this usefully the strategy must take into account private as well as public parking provision, public transport, and transport trends.

As part of this work, the councils want to hear from you – their residents, businesses, and visitors about your experiences of parking in the districts.

The questionnaire contains 31 questions with majority being multiple choice and should take no longer than about 10-15 minutes to complete unless you have further comments. The topics covered include:

- Reasons for visiting and mode of transport;
- The location(s) of the car park or road you use;
- The type of vehicle you wish to park (car, motorcycle, bike, caravan, etc.)
- Finding a space and any issues in doing so, such as a disability;
- Whether there is sufficient parking in the town centres;
- The parking experience including directional signage, safety, and locations;
- The cost of parking;
- When and how you would like to pay for parking;
- How the towns in Babergh & Mid Suffolk compare to neighbouring towns.

If the survey is not submitted, it will not be possible to include the feedback within the review that will occur after the consultation.

Survey Privacy Notice
Any personal information shared with Babergh and Mid-Suffolk District Councils whilst completing this survey will be processed, protected and disposed of in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act 2018. In some circumstances however we may need to disclose your personal details to a third party in order to deliver the service to you (for example analyse the survey results), and in limited circumstances we may disclose your information for other lawful purposes. Any information about you that we pass to a third party will be held securely by that party. For more information on how we do this and your rights in regards to your personal information and how to access it, visit our website: Your Right to Information

1. Please provide your postcode below so we have an idea of where you are responding from. *

2. Are you responding as? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Local Councillor / MP
- ☐ Business owner
- ☐ Resident
- ☐ Employee
- ☐ Visitor to the Babergh district
- ☐ Visitor to the Mid-Suffolk district
- ☐ Other (please specify):

3. Where do you currently park your vehicle(s) at the following times? (Tick all that apply)

	On the road	On my drive	In a garage	In a marked disabled bay	In an allocated parking space	My vehicle is normally at work	I do not have a vehicle
Monday to Friday during the day	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Monday to Friday after 5pm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Weekends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. How would you rate the following issues regarding parking in your street?

	It's a big problem	It's quite a big problem	It's not really a problem	It's not a problem at all
Parked vehicles causing an obstruction at junctions	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parked vehicles obstructing driveways	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vehicles obstructing bus stops	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parked vehicles obstructing traffic flow	☐	☐	☐	☐
Enforcement of existing parking restrictions	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your ability to park close to your home	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ability of visitors to park close to your home	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. Do you think the Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way you travel into the Babergh and Mid Suffolk regions and how often you visit the town centres?

- ☐ Yes - I will travel into the towns more but will use my car less
- ☐ Yes - I will travel into the towns less but will use my car more
- ☐ Yes - I will travel into the towns more and use my car more
- ☐ Yes - I will travel into the towns less and use my car less
- ☐ No - I will visit the towns the same using the same transport

2. YOUR VISIT

6. Generally how often do you travel into a town centre by car? (tick one box only)

- ☐ Every day
- ☐ Four or five times a week
- ☐ Two or three times a week
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Less frequently
- ☐ Never

7. What are the main reasons for you visiting a town centre? (tick as many as apply)

- ☐ Work
- ☐ Shopping
- ☐ Leisure
- ☐ Tourism
- ☐ Amenities
- ☐ Other (please specify):

8. What are the reasons why you drive into a town centre/village centre? (tick as many as apply)

- ☐ Convenience
- ☐ Too far to walk
- ☐ On route elsewhere
- ☐ Carrying goods
- ☐ Lack of suitable public transport
- ☐ Disabled and cannot get there another way
- ☐ Insufficient secure cycle parking facilities or cycling routes
- ☐ Insufficient secure motorcycle parking
- ☐ Other (please specify):

9. When you drive where do you normally park? (tick as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ Company or private car park e.g. rail or bus station
- ☐ Public or shoppers car park
- ☐ Supermarket car park
- ☐ On-street (please list road name in comments field)

Comments:

10. If you park on-street, what is the main purpose for doing so? (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ It's free to park
- ☐ It's more convenient for where I need to go
- ☐ I feel it is safer than car parks

- [ ] I need to park for long periods of time
- [ ] The town/village is too congested
- [ ] I like to walk into the town/ vilage centre but I live too far away
- [ ] I do not park on-street
- [ ] Other (please specify):

11. If you chose public or shoppers car parks which town / village centre do you use? (tick as many boxes as apply)

Please note - full details of all the Councils car parks including location maps can be located on our website - www.babergh.gov.uk/environment/parking/babergh-car-and-lorry-parks or www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/environment/parking/babergh-car-and-lorry-parks

	Use frequently	Use sometimes	Use occasionally
Pin Mill	☐	☐	☐
Hadleigh	☐	☐	☐
Holbrook	☐	☐	☐
Lavenham	☐	☐	☐
Hadleigh Railway Walk, South (Raydon)	☐	☐	☐
Sudbury	☐	☐	☐
Debenham	☐	☐	☐
Eye	☐	☐	☐
Needham Market	☐	☐	☐
Stowmarket	☐	☐	☐
Woolpit	☐	☐	☐

3. FINDING A SPACE

12. Have you experienced any parking problems at any of our car parks? (If not go to Q16)

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

13. If yes, which town/village location does this relate to? (tick as many that apply)

- [ ] Pin Mill
- [ ] Hadleigh
- [ ] Holbrook
- [ ] Lavenham
- [ ] Hadleigh Railway Walk (South)
- [ ] Sudbury
- [ ] Debenham
- [ ] Eye
- [ ] Needham Market
- [ ] Stowmarket
- [ ] Woolpit

14. Please select the issues that are related to your visit (tick all that apply)

- [ ] Locating the car park
- [ ] Finding a space
- [ ] Making your way from the car park to where you need to be
- [ ] Concerns about security
- [ ] Difficulty using pay machines i.e. purchasing a ticket, understanding the instructions, or locating the paymer
- [ ] Other (please specify):

15. How often do you experience problems?

- [ ] At every visit
- [ ] At most visits
- [ ] At just a few visits
- [ ] Only once

16. Do you consider there to be enough overall parking in these car parks? (tick one box only)

- [ ] Yes, at all times during the week
- [ ] Yes, except for a few peak periods of demand
- [ ] No, there is not enough parking
- [ ] Other (please specify):

4. QUALITY OF PARKING EXPERIENCE

17. How would you rate the overall quality of our off-street car parks in the following locations? Overall quality will include the appearance, safety, accessibility, location, shelter, and payment options of the car park. Please select one answer for each row.

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Below standard	Poor	N/A
Pin Mill	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hadleigh	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Holbrook	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lavenham	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hadleigh Railway Walk South	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sudbury	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Debenham	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Eye	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Needham Market	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stowmarket	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Woolpit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. What do you like most about the parking facilities you have used in Babergh and Mid Suffolk?

- ☐ Availability of spaces
- ☐ Location
- ☐ Payment options
- ☐ Safety / security
- ☐ Cleanliness
- ☐ Accessibility
- ☐ Cost of parking
- ☐ Priority parking spaces eg disabled parking parent and child parking
- ☐ 24-hour parking facilities
- ☐ Electric vehicle charging provision
- ☐ Other (please specify):

19. What would you most like to see improved within Babergh and Mid Suffolk car parks?

- ☐ Availability of spaces
- ☐ Location
- ☐ Payment options
- ☐ Safety / security
- ☐ Cleanliness
- ☐ Accessibility
- ☐ Priority parking spaces e.g disabled parking, parent and child parking
- ☐ 24-hour parking facilities
- ☐ Electric vehicle charging provision
- ☐ Other (please specify):

20. How would you rate the following elements of the off-street car parks? If you have any specific comments regarding this question, please use the box below.

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Below standard	Awful
Cleanliness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Condition	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Clarity of parking signs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Clarity of parking charges	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Convenience	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Number of spaces	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Number of disabled spaces	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Number of parent & child parking spaces	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lighting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Security & Safety	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Toilet facilities within the car parks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Overall condition of the car park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments:

21. How would you rate the quality of signage providing directions to the various different car parking options?

(1 = poor, 5 = excellent)

22. Please rank how important each of the following issues are to you (rank 1 = most important, 5 = least. Please note, the options will move as you rank the answers)

Convenient, well-located parking close to shops and amenities
Safety and security of car parks
Useful town centre car parking information contained on Council website such as locations, & pricing
Information provided prior to the car parks such as signs and spaces available
Fairly-priced car parking that helps manage demand

5. PARKING CHARGES

23. When would you prefer to pay for your parking?

- [ ] When you arrive
- [ ] When you leave

24. How would you like to pay for your parking (tick all that apply)

- [ ] With cash (coins only)
- [ ] With cash (coins and notes)
- [ ] With a debit/credit card
- [ ] Via mobile phone payment app

25. How do you feel about the amount currently charged for long stay parking in car parks that charge?
(Please see FAQs for car park prices)

- [ ] Too little
- [ ] About right
- [ ] Too much

26. How do you think the current car parking charges compare to neighbouring towns and cities?

- [ ] Broadly similar
- [ ] Generally more expensive
- [ ] Generally cheaper
- [ ] I don't know

Comments:

6. DISABLED PARKING

27. Do you have a disability or limited movement? (If no please ignore next question)

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

28. How easy do you find it to locate a blue badge parking space in any of the car parks in the town centres (note this question relates only to off-street car parks and does not include on-street parking)?

- [ ] There is always one available
- [ ] There is usually one available
- [ ] Its difficult to locate an available space sometimes
- [ ] It's very difficult to locate a free space at most visits

7. ELECTRIC VEHICLES

29. Do you drive an electric vehicle on a regular basis? (If no, please move onto question 31)

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

30. If so, would you use charge points in town centre car parks?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- [ ] Occasionally

31. Would you like to see more EV charge points installed within Babergh and Mid Suffolk town centre car parks?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- [ ] Unsure

8. SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS

32. If you have any other comments regarding car parking in Babergh and Mid Suffolk, please use the box below.

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