

# Public Transport Survey 2024

A report by Age UK Redbridge, Barking & Havering



August 2024

“Drivers do not always allow the elderly to sit before driving off.”

Local Older Person

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## 1. Introduction

Age UK Redbridge, Barking & Dagenham and Havering is a local charity, which has been working with older people for over 50 years. We have dedicated, trained staff who are making a positive difference to the lives of older people through a variety of services. This includes the Voices of Experience Project, giving older people in Redbridge the opportunity to give their feedback.

## 2. Background

Most elderly travellers are able to use all forms of public transport without any problems, but those with impaired mobility and sensory impairments may have some difficulties.

A disabled passenger should have the right to unrestricted access to all means of transport and be able to use them with ease and confidence.

We designed this survey, to identify if older people in Redbridge are using public transport services and how easily they find it to do so.

This is due to the fact some older residents have been complaining about accessing bus and underground services and the fact that the changes to the Dial-A-Ride system is making the service less user friendly to many residents.

## 3. Methodology

Participants who could access the internet were emailed a link to an online survey. Additionally we sent paper copies in the post. Some participants even gave their feedback over the phone. We also visited supported living establishments and community groups to collect their feedback.

## 4. Strengths & Limitations

The flexibility of our approach in gathering feedback from people, and the variety of methods used are among the project's strengths.

## 5. Executive Summary of Findings

During April - July 2024, 198 older people in Redbridge completed our survey about public transport.

This section summarises key findings - see section 6 for findings in full.

### Survey Response - Buses

#### Bus Usage:

- A clear majority of respondents (89%) use local bus services - 52% frequently and 37% less often. Just a tenth of respondents (11%) do not use bus services at all.

#### Findings by Age, Household and Health Status (including Mobility and Disability):

- The oldest respondents (90 or over) are noticeably least likely, to use the bus often. Fewer than half of those in this age group (43%) are frequent users, comparing with 56% for younger respondents.
- Respondents in larger households (3 or more people) are significantly more likely to be frequent bus users.
- Interestingly, those in good health (65%) and poor health (56%) are more likely to use the bus often, than those in fair health (45%).
- Respondents who use mobility aids are 16% less likely to travel often by bus, compared with those who do not use them.
- Disabled respondents are 11% less likely to be frequent bus users, comparing with those without a disability.

#### Reasons for Bus Use:

- A broad majority of respondents utilise buses for shopping (83%), with half (48%) going on outings or meeting family or friends, and over a third (37%) travelling by bus to medical appointments. A tenth (12%) use buses to connect with trains.
- Ilford is by far, the most common destination, with Romford, Barking, Wanstead and Woodford also popular.

#### Issues and Experiences:

- Around a quarter of respondents (27%) have problems getting to or from bus stops.
- Almost half of respondents (46%) have problems getting on or off the bus. Of those experiencing problems, 43% say the bus stops too far from the kerb, 40% cite difficulties with either the ramp or steps, and 36% have more general mobility issues. Driving is an issue for 8%, who complain they don't have adequate time to take a seat.

## Survey Response - Underground

### Underground Usage:

- A broad majority of respondents (79%) use underground services - 15% frequently and 64% less often. 21% do not use the underground.

### Findings by Age, Household and Health Status (including Mobility and Disability):

- We find that as respondents get older, they are less likely to use the underground. All respondents aged 50 - 64 are underground users, this falls to 91% for those aged 65 - 74 and 78% for 75 - 89 year olds. Just 43% of those aged 90 or over, use the underground.
- Respondents with housemates to travel with, are notably more likely to use the underground, than sole occupants (100% comparing with 72%).
- It is clear, that those in good health, without mobility aids or a disability, are most likely to be underground users.
- As an example, respondents with mobility issues (who use an aid) are 34% less likely to use the underground, compared with more mobile respondents (who do not use aids).

### Reasons for Underground Use:

- A majority of respondents (69%) use the underground for leisure (for outings or meeting people) with 34% going shopping, and 28% on medical appointments.
- Outings into Central London are clearly popular, along with trips to Stratford.

### Issues and Experiences:

- Around a quarter of respondents (28%) have problems getting to or from underground stations.
- A third of respondents (35%) have problems getting down to the platform. Clearly, the main issue is with stairs or escalators (68%) with lifts (30%) and general mobility and access (18%) also presenting challenges.

## Survey Response - Dial-A-Ride, Taxicard and Redbridge Mobility Transport

### Dial-A-Ride Usage:

- 16% of respondents use Dial-A-Ride. A majority of these (64%) are frequent users.

### Findings by Age, Household and Health Status (including Mobility and Disability):

- We find that as respondents get older, they are more likely to use Dial-A-Ride. Just 5% of those aged 65 - 74 use the service, this rises moderately to 8% for 50 - 64 year olds and to 17% for respondents aged 75 - 89. Almost half of those aged 90 or over (45%) use Dial-A-Ride.
- Respondents living alone are noticeably more likely to use Dial-A-Ride, than those living with others (20% comparing with 6%).
- Around a third of respondents with mobility issues, a disability, or in poor health, are service users.

- We find that very few respondents in good health, without mobility issues or a disability, are Dial-A-Ride users (we assume they would not be as eligible).

#### **Reasons for Dial-A-Ride Use:**

- The service is most used, by far for leisure - with 85% of users going on outings or socialising. The service is lesser-used for medical appointments (25%) and shopping (17%).

#### **Issues and Experiences:**

- Issues include booking (there are difficulties with the new app), the new '30 minute window' for waiting, poor punctuality and reliability, restrictions on weekend and medical appointment use, and a perception that cut-backs have taken place. The new provider is largely criticised.

#### **Taxicard:**

- 14% of respondents use Taxicard. See the full report, for experiences.

#### **Redbridge Mobility Transport:**

- 7% of respondents use Redbridge Mobility Transport. See the full report, for experiences.

## **Survey Response - Other Findings**

#### **Concessions:**

- A broad majority of respondents (80%) make use of a Freedom Pass. The Over 60s Oyster Card (6%) and Disabled Freedom Pass (3%) are also used.

#### **Feeling Safe:**

- Three quarters of respondents (76%) feel safe using public transport, while a noticeable 24% do not.
- We find that as respondents get older, they feel safer using public transport. 69% of respondents aged 50 - 64 feel safe, this rises marginally to 70% for those aged 65 - 74 and to 80% for 75 - 89 year olds. A clear majority of those aged 90 or over (94%) feel safe using public transport.
- Interestingly, those in households of two people, feel less safe than those in larger households, or sole occupants.
- We find that poor health - is the single biggest reason for feeling unsafe. 81% of those in good or fair health feel safe, this drops significantly to just 29% for respondents in poor health.
- Those with a disability or a mobility issue feel around 10% less safe, than fully-mobile respondents or those without a disability.



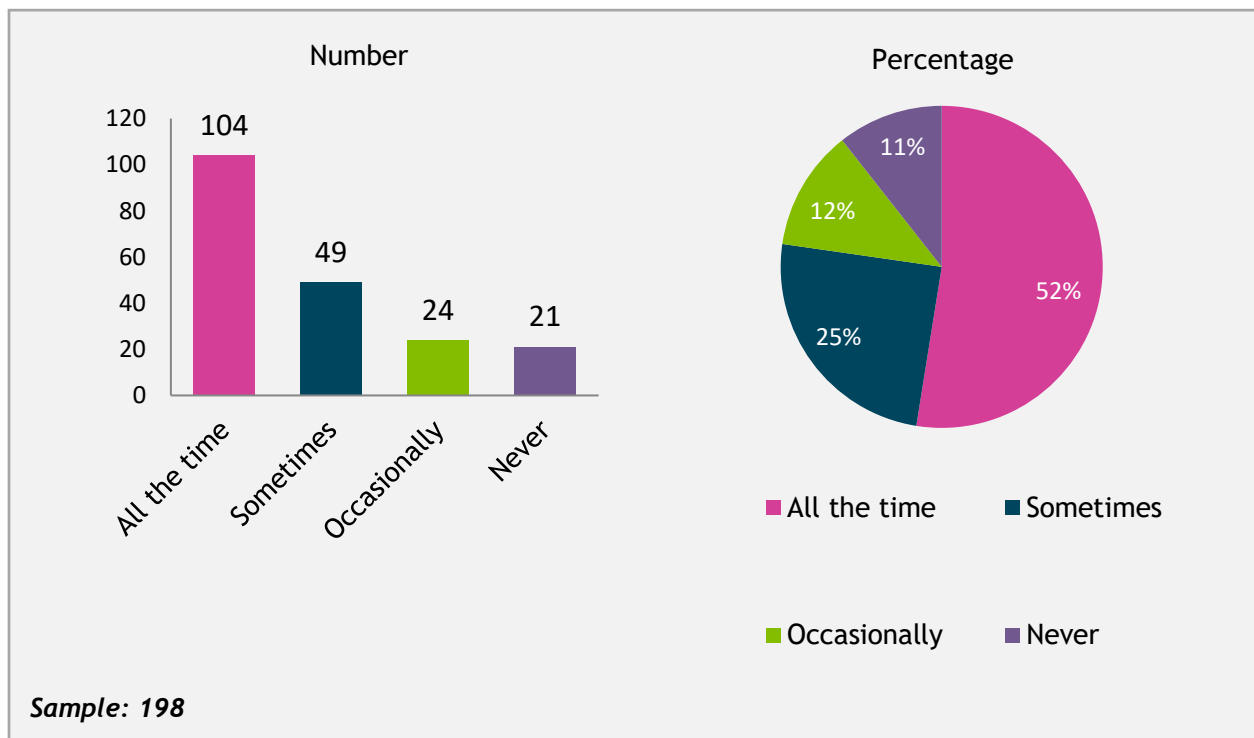
## 6. Our Survey - Analysis of Feedback

During April - July 2024, 198 older people in Redbridge completed our survey on transport.

The survey recorded experiences of various forms of public transport - buses, the underground, dial-a-ride and other local services. We explored how often the services are used, what they are used for, and asked about any difficulties or challenges, in general use or access.

The majority of questions had a free-text option, enabling participants to fully detail their opinions and experiences.

### 6.1 Do you travel by bus?



A clear majority of respondents (89%) use local bus services - 52% frequently and 37% less often. Just a tenth of respondents (11%) do not use bus services at all.

### 6.1.1 Frequently travel by bus

	% Yes
Aged 65 - 74	56%
Aged 75 - 89	56%
Aged 50 - 64	54%
All Respondents (Baseline)	52%
Aged 90 or over	43%

The oldest respondents (90 or over) are noticeably least likely, to use the bus often. Fewer than half of those in this age group (43%) are frequent users, comparing with 56% for younger respondents.

Household - 3 or 3 plus	74%
Household - Just you	53%
All Respondents (Baseline)	52%
Household - 2 people	48%

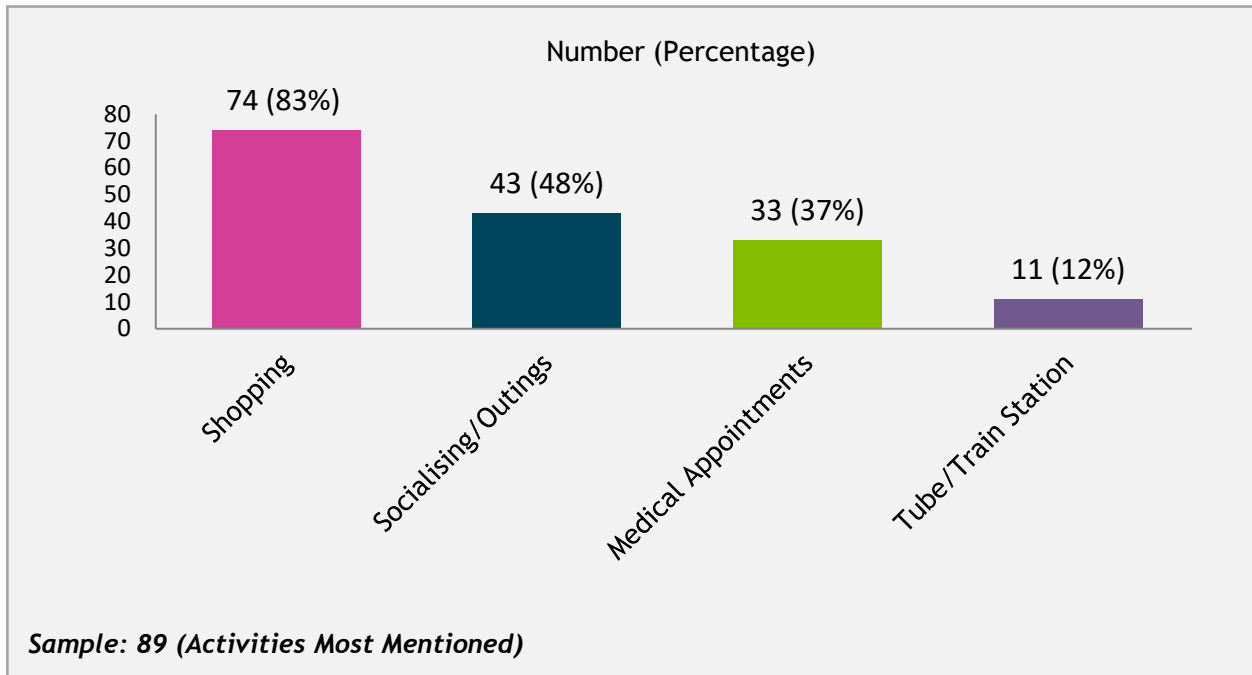
Respondents in larger households (3 or more people) are significantly more likely to be frequent bus users.

Good Health	65%
Do not use mobility aids	60%
Do not have a disability	59%
Poor Health	56%
All Respondents (Baseline)	52%
Have a disability	48%
Fair Health	45%
Use mobility aids	44%

Interestingly, those in good health (65%) and poor health (56%) are more likely to use the bus often, than those in fair health (45%).

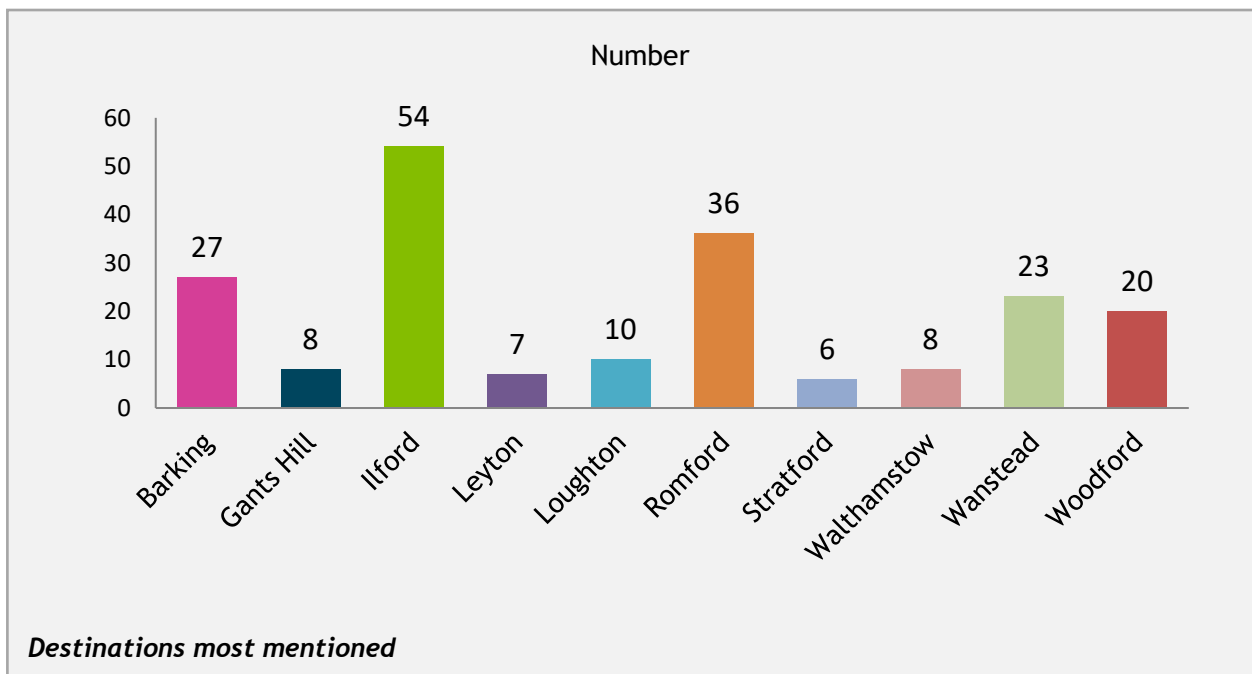
Respondents who use mobility aids are 16% less likely to travel often by bus, compared with those who do not use them. Disabled respondents are 11% less likely to be frequent bus users, comparing with those without a disability.

### 6.1.2 If yes, where do you go when you use bus services?



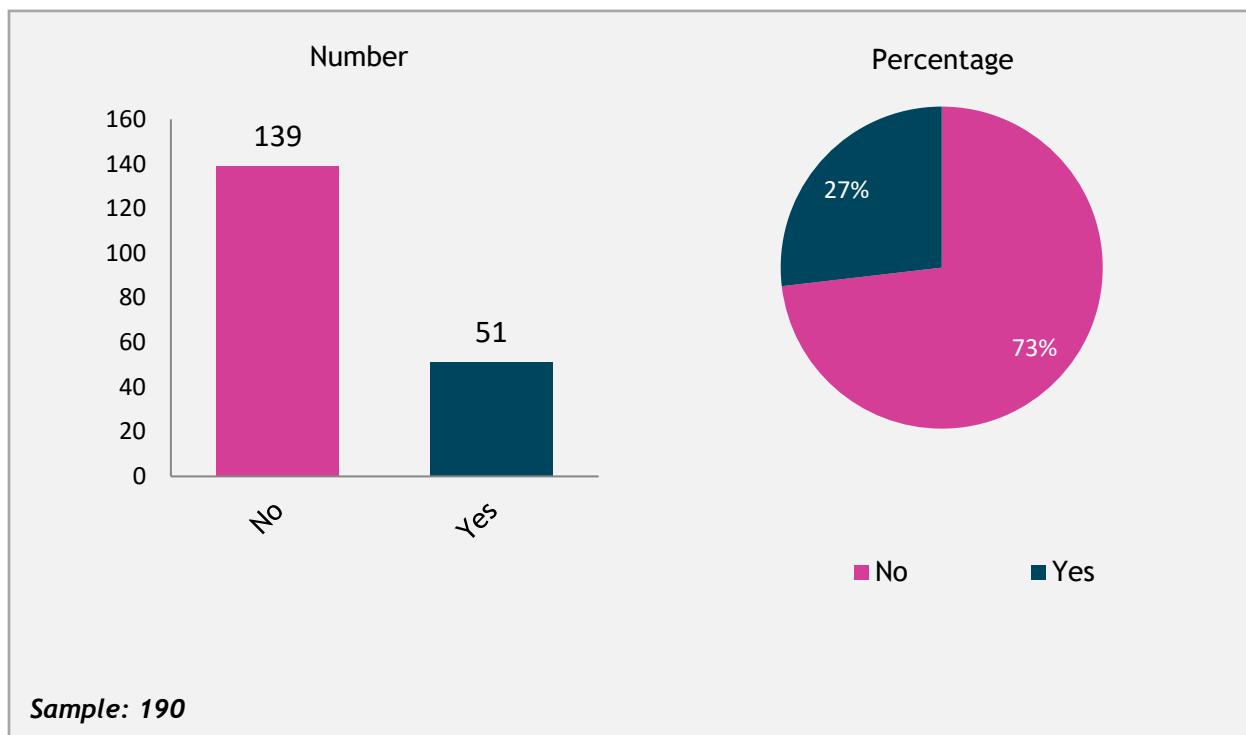
We asked participants why they use buses, and where they go. A broad majority of respondents utilise buses for shopping (83%), with half (48%) going on outings or meeting family or friends, and over a third (37%) travelling by bus to medical appointments. A tenth (12%) use buses to connect with trains.

### 6.1.3 Top Destinations



Ilford is by far, the most common destination, with Romford, Barking, Wanstead and Woodford also popular.

### 6.2 Do you have any problems getting to and from the bus stop?



Around a quarter of respondents (27%) have problems getting to or from bus stops.

Mobility issues are commonly cited, this includes difficulties with walking - for various reasons.

#### Selected Feedback

*“I get tired when I walk a little distance. I have problems with my lungs and heart.”*

*“Back, hip and foot problems. Pain and stiffness when walking.”*

*“I have a fear of falling. I have had a few falls.”*

For those with limited mobility, distance and the physical environment are challenges.

#### Selected Feedback

*“I can't walk very far and keep having to rest.”*

*“A long walk for me as I use a walker.”*

*“A half hour walk.”*

*“I live on a hill and I can't get to the top of the road.”*

*“Many pavements are uneven, vans on pathways and puddles.”*

*“Can be a problem walking uphill to the bus stop plus uneven pavement and overgrown hedges/plants in places halfway and across pavement.”*

*“Only go on good days.”*

Disabilities are also mentioned.

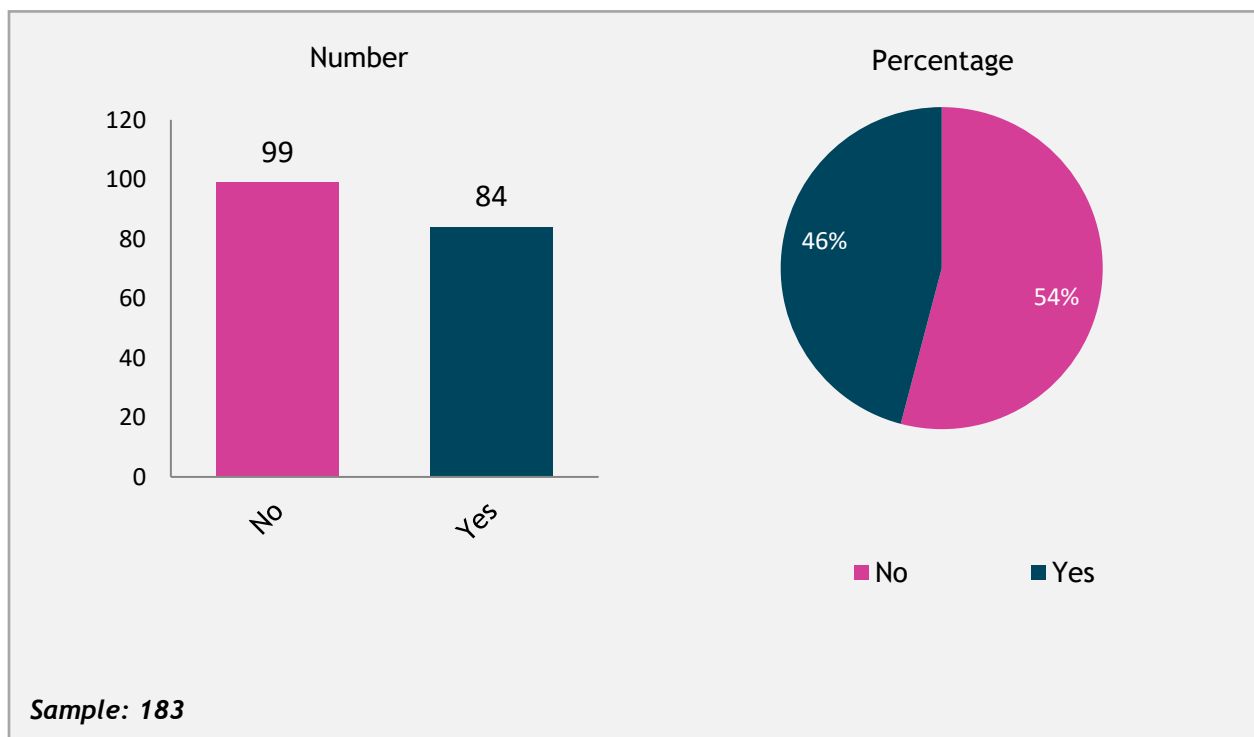
### Selected Feedback

*“I am disabled.”*

*“I’m totally blind and need assistance.”*

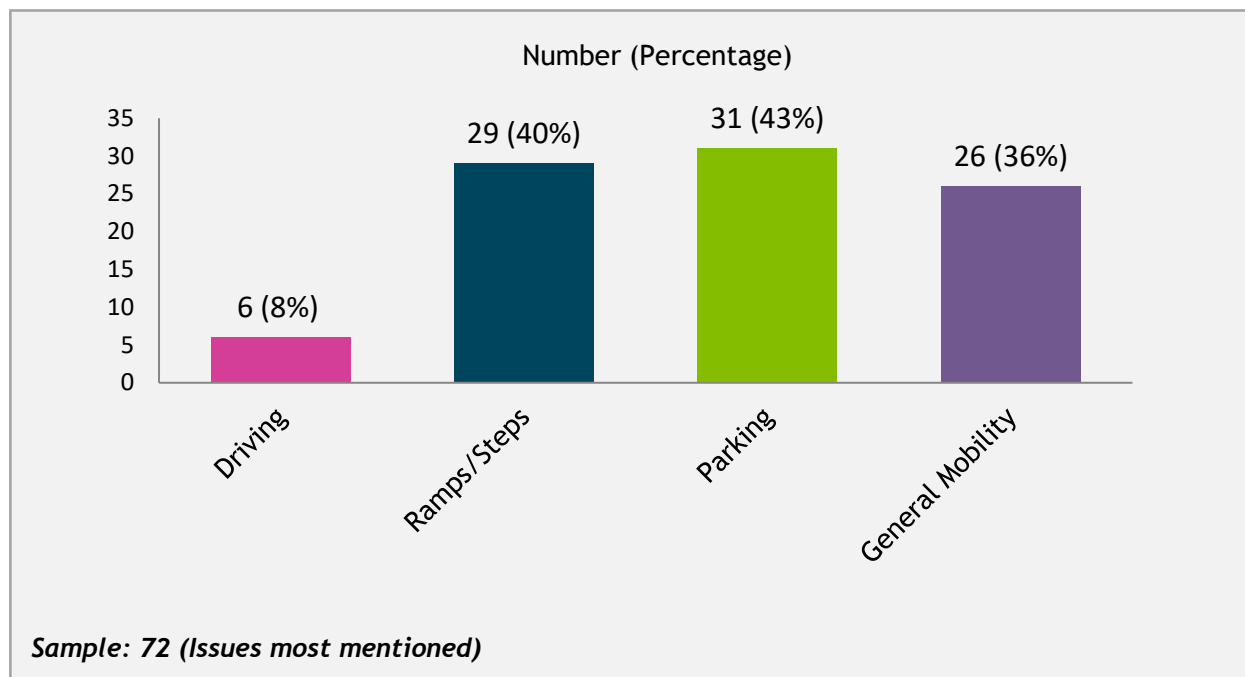
*“I find many young mums very obstinate and despite the notice that it is a wheelchair bay - they will not collapse their pushchair and make room for my wheelchair.”*

### 6.3 Do you have any problems getting on and off the bus?



Almost half of respondents (46%) have problems getting on or off the bus.

### 6.3.1 If yes, please give details as to why?



Of those experiencing problems, 43% say the bus stops too far from the kerb, 40% cite difficulties with either the ramp or steps, and 36% have more general mobility issues. Driving is an issue for 8%, who complain they don't have adequate time to take a seat.

#### Selected Feedback

##### Parking:

*"Sometimes, the bus doesn't stop near to the pavement, when this happens it is a long way down."*

##### Ramps/Steps:

*"Bus drivers don't want to lower the step."*

*"The step is too high, I have to put my good foot on first, steady myself, hold the rail, balance myself, then place my other foot on the step."*

*"When I've got a shopping trolley, they don't put the ramp down, but someone nice usually helps me."*

##### General Mobility:

*"I use a walker which is awkward especially if I have been shopping."*

*"I use a stick and people stand next to the exit door and I have to ask them to move so I can hold the handle."*

*"I need to do it slowly as I am terrified of falling."*

*“On a long ride I have difficulty rising from seat and have often fallen getting off.”*

**Driving:**

*“Drivers do not always allow the elderly to sit before driving off.”*

*“I have to ask the driver to wait for me to sit down as so many older people have fallen, due to jerky bus driving.”*

*“Quite often the bus doesn't slow down to stop.”*

#### **6.4 If you never use the bus services, please explain why?**

We asked those who do not use buses, to indicate why. Mobility issues, including disability and wheelchair use are cited.

##### **Selected Feedback**

*“I can't walk.”*

*“I am in a wheelchair.”*

*“Disabled, difficult walking.”*

In cases, additional support is often needed - including on the bus itself.

##### **Selected Feedback**

*“The drivers don't always lower the ramp and I need assistance to get to my seat and to swipe my bus pass.”*

*“I am sometimes assisted by my son or daughter.”*

Alternatives are available for some.

##### **Selected Feedback**

*“I'm still able to drive.”*

*“I live near all amenities or family pick me up or use taxis.”*

*"I seldom use buses because I have a mobility scooter."*

## **6.5 What is your opinion of the bus services (what works well, and what does not)?**

We asked for general views and experiences, on the service.

Timing is the most mentioned topic. While timetables are generally regarded as reliable, there is frustration at late or cancelled busses, with respondents citing traffic, road-works and diversions.

### **Selected Feedback**

*"It is a good service. There are several buses that have stops near us and they are fairly reliable."*

*"In general, first class - clean, very frequent and they provide the free Metro newspaper."*

*"I am very impressed and satisfied with bus service that I use. All the buses are very frequent and keep to the timetable."*

*"Most buses are on time."*

*"Good, but sometimes does not stick to the timetable."*

*"Buses are missed out."*

*"Timings, especially 247 - all come together or not on timetable - sometimes caused by all the roadworks everywhere."*

*"Big detours on 275 because of Broadmead Road Bridge being closed."*

*"The timetable is often varied. obviously traffic conditions cannot be helped."*

*"If they work well and on time then great. If not a pain, especially on cold, wet days."*

Depending on the bus route, there is a wide variation in frequency. Lesser-served routes limit options, whereas highly-served routes can lead to congestion, and confusion at bus-stops.

### **Selected Feedback**

*"We are lucky to have a good choice of buses - and a frequent service."*

*"Most bus services are fine but the 549 is only every hour or so."*



*“Doesn’t run on a Sunday.”*

*“The bus services are very good. Too many buses in Western Road, going towards Romford Market. Sometimes 4 or 5 stop together and I cannot see if my bus is there or not.”*

Respondents complain that buses from different routes can arrive at the same time, resulting in long waits - especially if the buses are missed. The service ‘needs more regulation’, says one person.

### Selected Feedback

*“Three buses run in my area and they all arrive at the same time. So there is always a long wait.”*

*“At Tesco bus stop which is serviced by 3 different buses they all come at the same time. Missing them all results in long waits.”*

*“Too many arrive at the same time. The service needs more regulation.”*

Hopper buses (hail-and-ride) are desired on some routes. On one such service, a driver reportedly ignores a request stop.

### Selected Feedback

*“Where I live, we require a hopper bus, but London transport say they know but they do not listen to the public.”*

*“Most bus drivers are rude and nasty on this hop-on service. They refuse to stop at the corner of Rosedene Gardens and force me to get off at Monkswood.”*

On accessibility, the availability of real-time information is appreciated - this includes electronic timetables at bus stops, ‘next stop’ announcements on the bus, and various features through online apps.

It is noted that information, especially at the bus stop, is not always accurate.

### Selected Feedback

*“The screen with bus arrivals is very handy.”*

*“The TfL (Transport for London) app for timings etc is very helpful. Announcements on buses regarding next stop are good. Information boards at bus stops are good.”*

*“Sometimes the bus stop indicators are inaccurate.”*

Mobility issues are cited, with drivers stopping away from the kerb or not lowering the ramps. Faulty ramps are reported. On the bus, there can be overcrowding.

#### Selected Feedback

*“I feel not all the bus services are very accessible for people with mobility issues.”*

*“I don't think the bus drivers are very helpful to disabled people. The bus usually arrives on time but they don't always stop near the kerb, which is difficult for a disabled person to get on and off.”*

*“The central exit is rarely lowered though the front entrance almost always is.”*

*“Works reasonably well. Sometimes people with mobility strollers have problems getting off the bus as ramps don't always work.”*

*“The ramp for wheelchairs does not always work - this needs to be updated.”*

*“Lately overcrowded.”*

*“I avoid getting on a bus if it is too crowded. Although much improved, the new buses are far too narrow.”*

*“Very difficult because of buggies.”*

Comments about drivers vary - with both compliments and complaints given.

On the journey itself, we hear that drivers can be too impatient - starting or stopping abruptly, causing discomfort and in cases accidents on-board. One person attributes this to service pressures, feeling there is ‘less and less time to complete the route’ resulting in ‘faster driving’.

It is commonly suggested that drivers do not wait for passengers to sit.

#### Selected Feedback

*“Bus drivers generally considerate.”*

*“Bus services are good, some drivers are quite helpful if you ask for directions.”*

*“Good when drivers pay attention.”*

*“Overall good - but there are some very poor, rude drivers. I do give them polite feedback and most are happy to be told.”*

*“Driving standards have deteriorated - drivers are given less and less time to complete the route, so they go faster. They have to slam on the brakes if passengers ring the bell late and set off without giving passengers the chance to reach their seats safely.”*

*“Some drivers brake too hard so people can get unsteady and this could lead to falls and injuries.”*

*“Drivers do not wait for you to be seated.”*

*“The drivers have a problem in understanding the word WAIT till a passenger is safely on.”*

*“No problem getting a seat, younger people stand up.”*

School home-times are often a noisy, chaotic and uncomfortable experience - with access to doors and seats blocked by the inrush of schoolchildren.

#### Selected Feedback

*“Fantastic - very regular apart from the school children who fight to get on first.”*

*“Good service usually, but not in school coming out time. The children barge in at both entrances and exits.”*

*“Buses during school let-out-time can be like a war zone, very noisy and sometimes swears. The schoolchildren sometimes push their way onto the bus, making it difficult for older people who are not steady on their feet, to get to the seats.”*

*“I have had to wait until all the children have gone on their respective buses, before finding space on a bus.”*

Some complain of bus pass restrictions.

#### Selected Feedback

*“Cannot travel before 9.00am, it does not help. We have to pay even after having a bus pass.”*

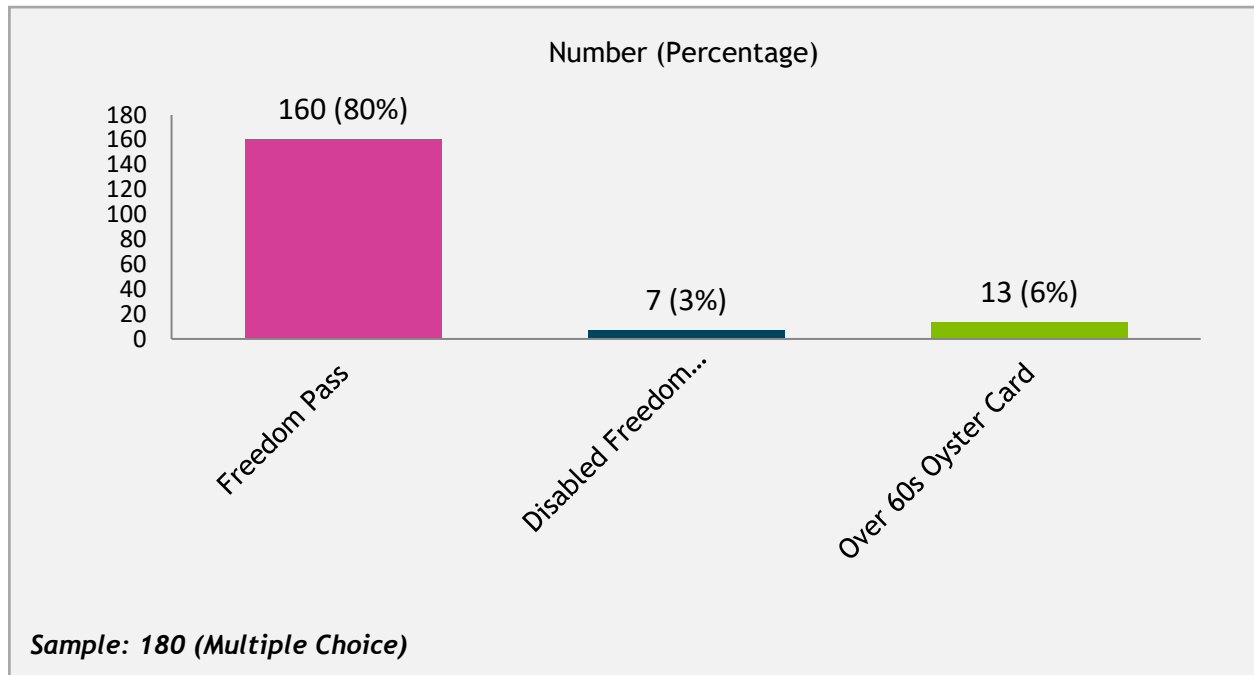
*“Service is good but sometimes have early appointments which we cannot change, so have to pay if we travel before 9am.”*

There are fears about future route changes.

### Selected Feedback

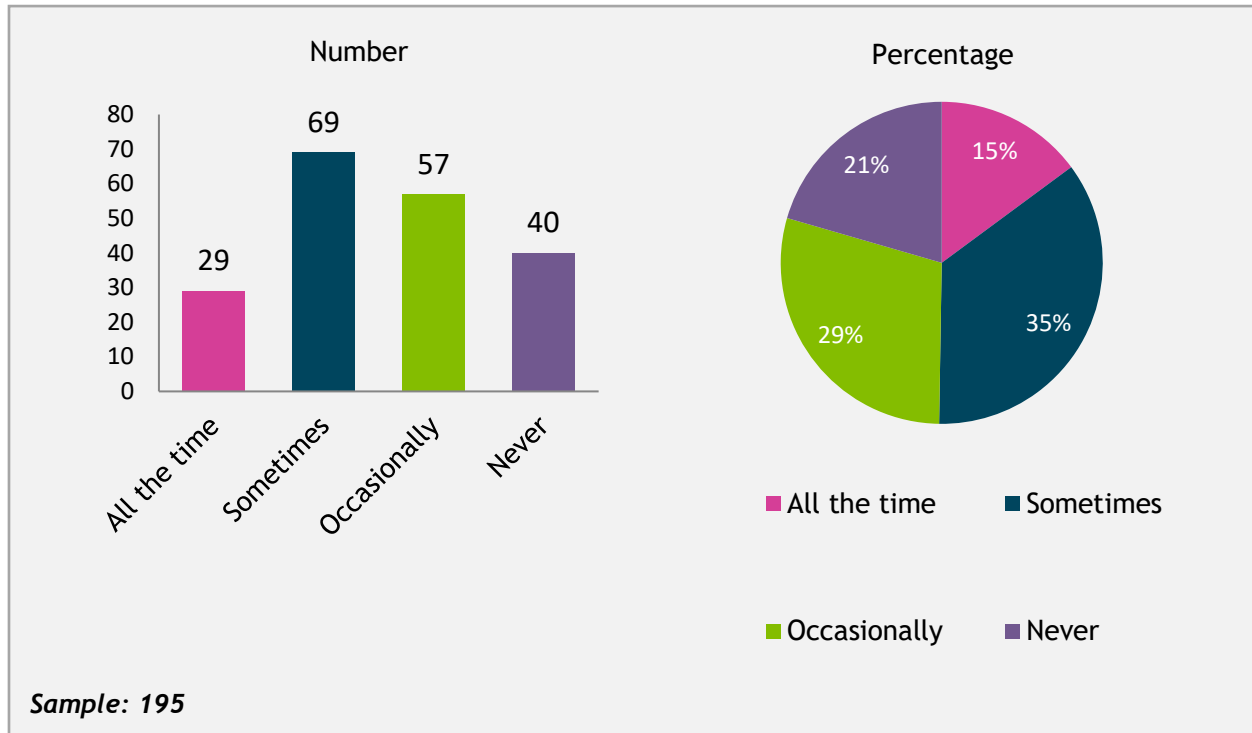
*“At present where I live I am well served, however TfL have plans to change routes, reduce services close to me and this will impact on me hugely.”*

### 6.6 Do you get free travel from?



A broad majority of respondents (80%) make use of a Freedom Pass. The Over 60s Oyster Card (6%) and Disabled Freedom Pass (3%) are also used.

## 6.7 Do you use the underground?



A broad majority of respondents (79%) use underground services - 15% frequently and 64% less often. 21% do not use the underground.

### 6.7.1 Use the underground

	% Yes
Aged 50 - 64	100%
Aged 65 - 74	91%
All Respondents (Baseline)	79%
Aged 75 - 89	78%
Aged 90 or over	43%

We find that as respondents get older, they are less likely to use the underground.

All respondents aged 50 - 64 are underground users, this falls to 91% for those aged 65 - 74 and 78% for 75 - 89 year olds. Just 43% of those aged 90 or over, use the underground.

Household - 3 or 3 plus	100%
Household - 2 people	91%
All Respondents (Baseline)	79%
Household - Just you	72%

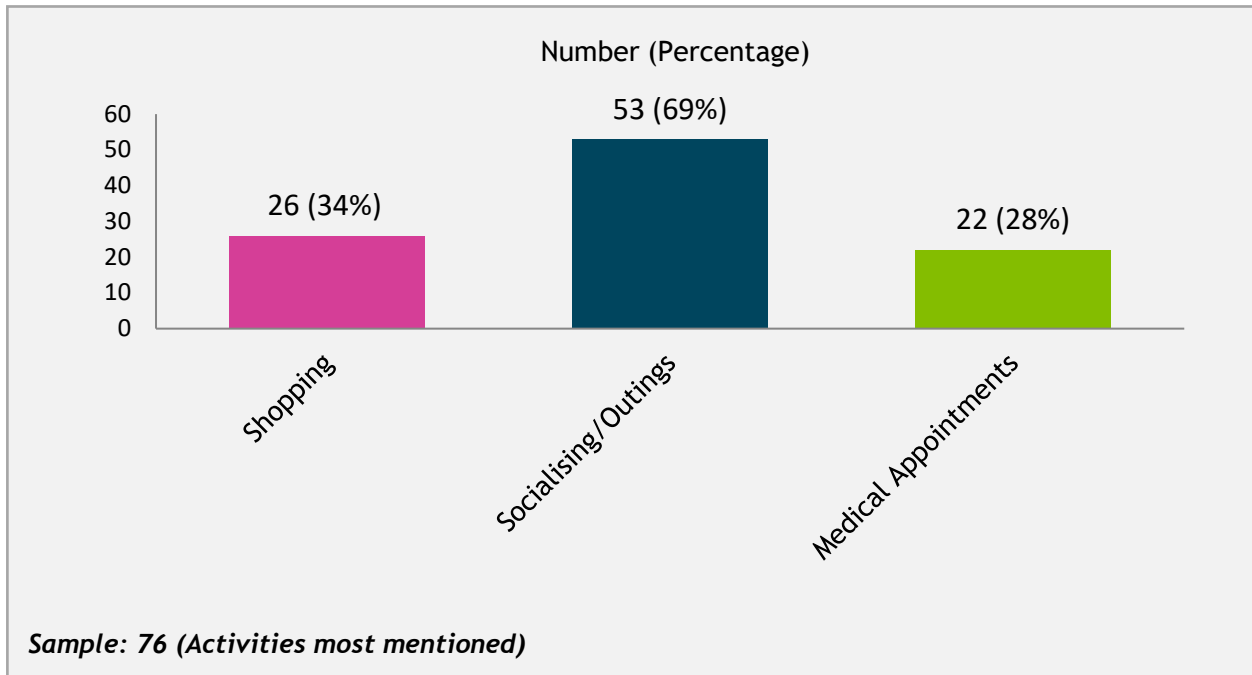
Respondents with housemates to travel with, are notably more likely to use the underground, than sole occupants (100% comparing with 72%).

Do not use mobility aids	94%
Do not have a disability	94%
Good Health	91%
All Respondents (Baseline)	79%
Fair Health	75%
Have a disability	67%
Poor Health	63%
Use mobility aids	60%

It is clear, that those in good health, without mobility aids or a disability, are most likely to be underground users.

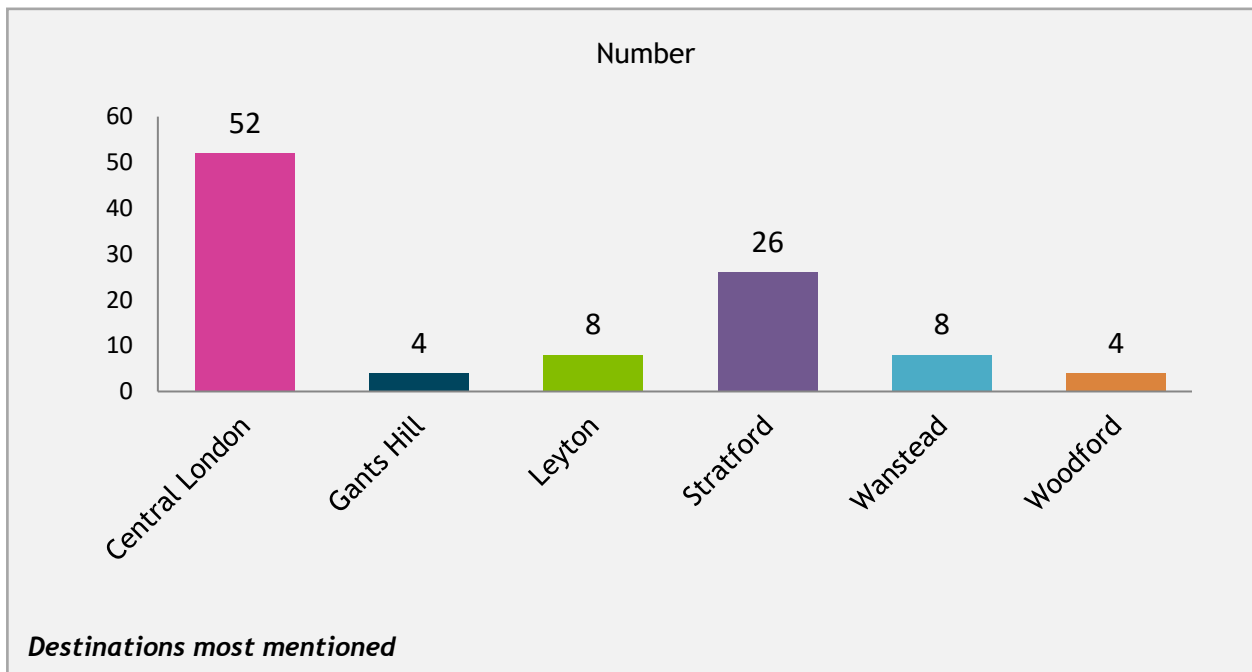
As an example, respondents with mobility issues (who use an aid) are 34% less likely to use the underground, compared with more mobile respondents (who do not use aids).

### 6.7.2 If yes, where do you go when you use underground services?



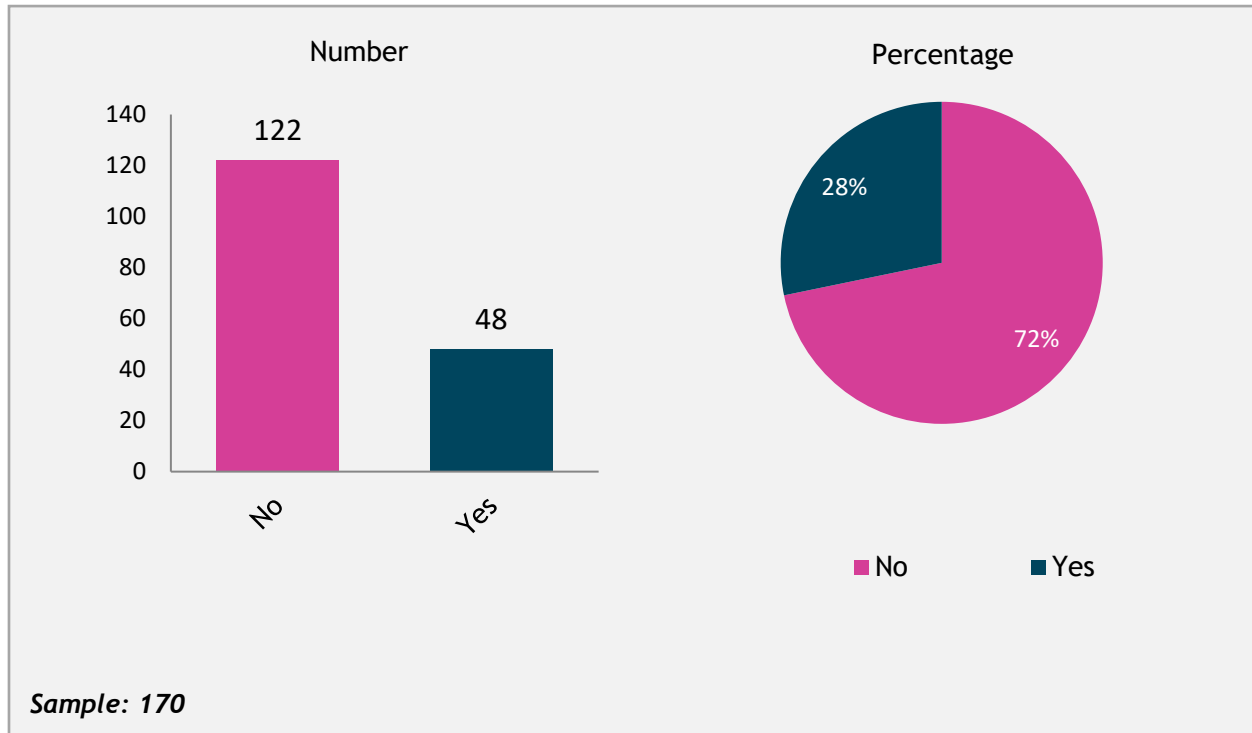
We asked participants why they use the underground, and where they go. A majority of respondents (69%) use the underground for leisure (for outings or meeting people) with 34% going shopping, and 28% on medical appointments.

### 6.7.3 Top Destinations



Outings into Central London are clearly popular, along with trips to Stratford.

## 6.8 Do you have problems getting to and from the underground station?



Around a quarter of respondents (28%) have problems getting to or from underground stations.

### 6.8.1 If yes, please give details as to why?

Mobility issues are described. We hear that stations can be too far away or located along hills.

#### Selected Feedback

*"It is too far, a mile walk."*

*"Big hills to walk up and down."*

*"Walking can be difficult especially in cold wet weather."*

*"Get tired when I walk for a little distance."*

*"I keep having to rest."*

Assistance is often required. We hear that bus links can be unreliable, and in cases unavailable.



## Selected Feedback

*"I need assistance to get there."*

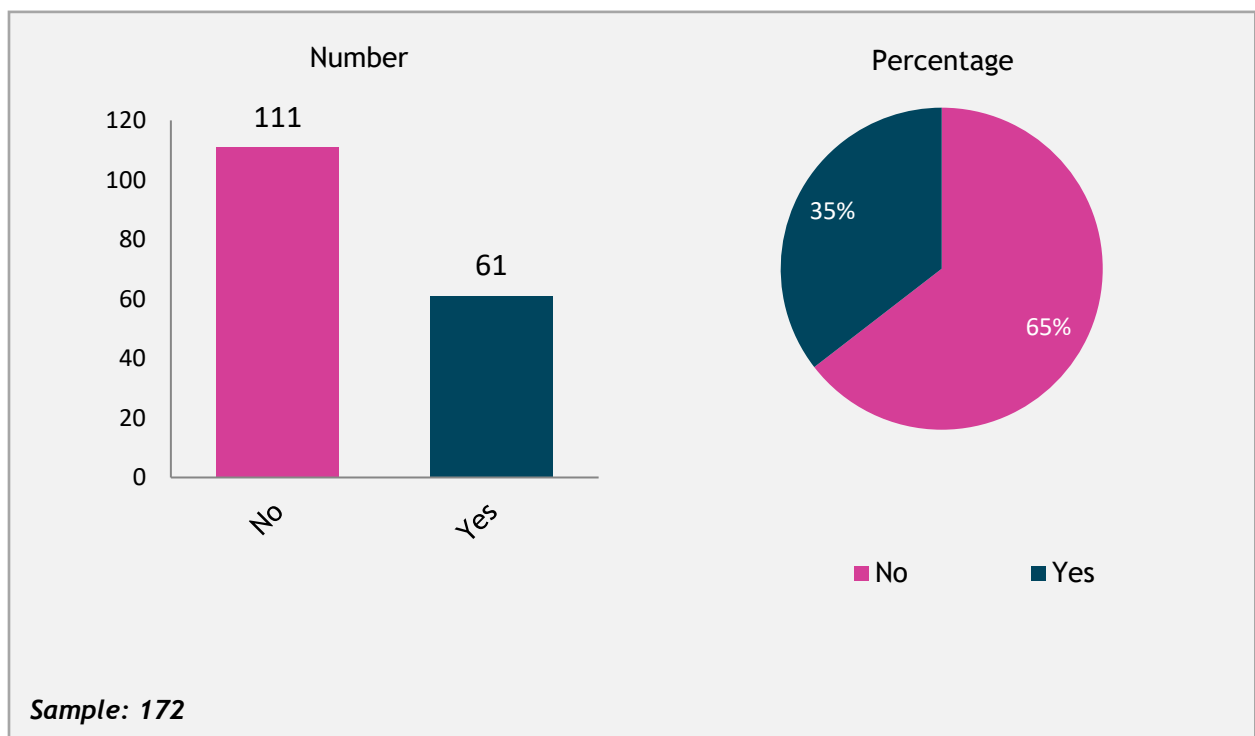
*"I need to take cabs and arrange for assistance."*

*"I have to get transport to and from the station."*

*"Because of the bus service (buses not reliable)."*

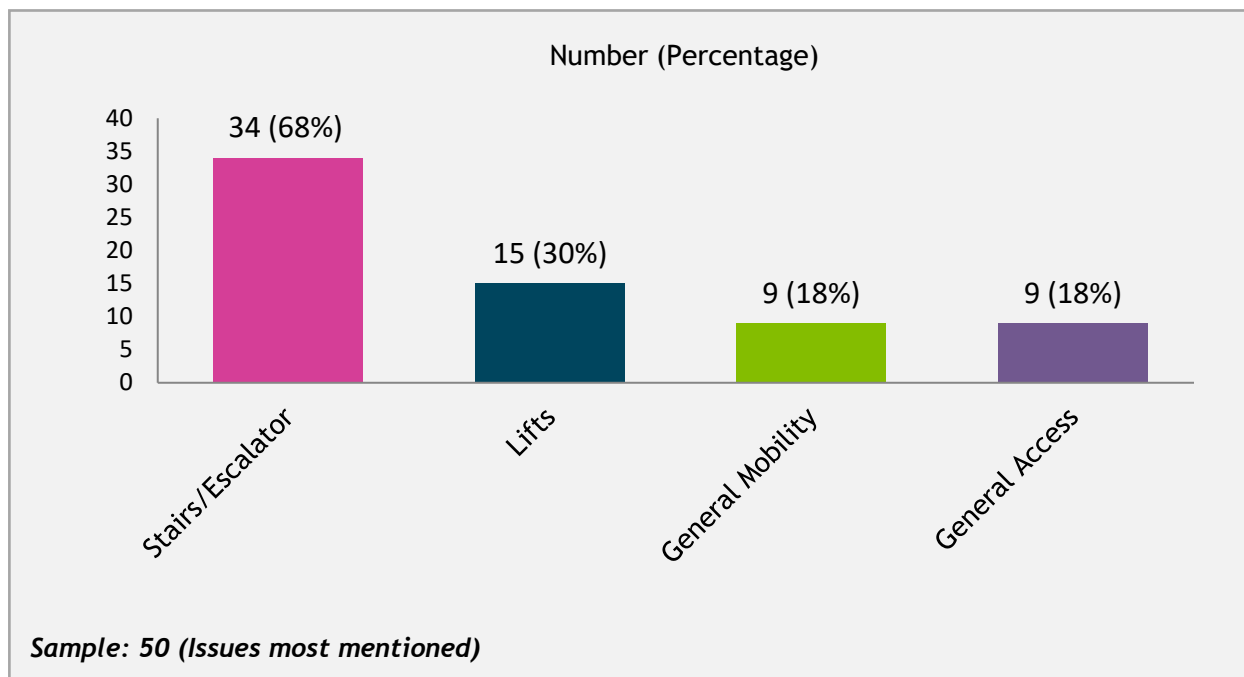
*"No buses to the station."*

### 6.9 Do you have problems getting down to the platform?



A third of respondents (35%) have problems getting down to the platform.

### 6.9.1 If yes, please give details as to why?



Clearly, the main issue is with stairs or escalators (68%) with lifts (30%) and general mobility and access (18%) also presenting challenges.

#### Selected Feedback

##### Stairs/Escalator:

*“Climbing the stairs up and down causes pains in my knees.”*

*“If there is an escalator, then it is easy. On some of the older stations, there can be numerous stairs. But this can't be helped and older people have to take it slowly.”*

*“But steps are very steep down from Cranbrook Road entrance to the station.”*

*“I struggle with the steps at Newbury Park Station going down west towards the city. It would really help me, and other sight impaired people, if the edges of the steps were painted white or yellow.”*

##### Lifts:

*“Often no lift available.”*

*“Going up and down the stairs - there is no lift or escalator at Leytonstone.”*

##### General Accessibility:

*“Sometimes, I check they have disabled access available.”*

*“I use a wheelchair.”*

*“I find the escalators difficult as I'm blind. I can't use the lifts on my own.”*

*“I have reduced sight - I need to be accompanied - I find the escalators move too fast and it is difficult for me to see and judge how I get on and off.”*

*“Sometimes too high.”*

*“I think some platforms are very low or a big gap.”*

*“Finding the correct platform.”*

**General Mobility:**

*“Get worries falling.”*

*“Sometimes no room to walk along the platform. Nowhere to sit.”*

**6.10 If you don't use the underground for any other reasons, please explain why?**

We asked those who do not use the underground for any other reasons, to indicate why.

Mobility challenges are described, along with accessibility issues.

**Selected Feedback**

*“I have arthritic feet, in constant pain, however when I can, I use a cab.”*

*“Hip problems.”*

*“Fear of falling.”*

*“I know that some of my family members who have mobility issues do not use underground because they are not always accessible to them.”*

*“I am in a wheelchair.”*

*“Physical and sensory disability.”*

A lack of confidence is expressed by some, with overcrowding and complexity among the reasons given.

### Selected Feedback

*"I don't like going on my own."*

*"Too complicated."*

*"I am old and I do not have the confidence."*

*"Lack of confidence on crowded underground."*

*"I am claustrophobic and have panic attacks, especially if I do not know what form of conveyance takes me from the train station to the road."*

*"Last journey back from hospital visit to St Bart's difficult, very crowded, had to wait on the platform until several trains passed by. This was around 4pm."*

Tube strikes and general delays are also mentioned.

### Selected Feedback

*"On the whole good, but inconvenient when they go on strike and cut or delay services."*

## **6.11 What is your opinion of the underground (what works well, and what does not)?**

We asked for general views and experiences, on the service.

Respondents with a disability say that not all stations have good accessibility, and this is particularly the case at older stations along the Central line. Additionally, moving from one platform to another can involve 'a lot of walking'.

### Selected Feedback

*"I can only use the underground when accompanied due to reduced sight."*

*"Not all of them have disability access."*

*"I find the Central line generally works well, but as stations are older, there is little assistance for the disabled."*

*"The Jubilee line is good but the disabled step is still too high."*

*"A lot of walking from one platform to another for people with disabilities."*

More generally, the distance from platform to the street - including at newer stations, can be problematic.

#### Selected Feedback

*"Often long walks to get to the pavement."*

*"Even new updated stations often too much walking."*

Stations with working lift and toilet facilities are appreciated. Respondents observe that older stations are less likely to have these.

#### Selected Feedback

*"Prefer the Elizabeth line from Ilford Station and there are lifts to the platform."*

*"Stations that have lifts are more comfortable and also having the use of toilet facilities is very useful. Not all stations have them."*

*"Not enough lifts."*

*"Older stations have no lifts."*

*"Should have lifts at all stations for the disabled and mums."*

On information, staff are considered helpful when approached - however they are not always visible or available. One person says that changes (to platforms) are not effectively communicated, and another finds that station announcements can be 'inaudible'.

#### Selected Feedback

*"The staff, at all stations, are very helpful giving directions and information."*

*"Confusing and no one to ask or to buy top up for Oysters."*

*"Some instructions not helpful."*

*"Platforms often change and do not say the correct platform at entry - meaning people have to go up and downstairs. Not easy for disabled travellers."*

*"Not enough info about problems. Inaudible announcements."*

We receive compliments generally about the staff, with examples of assistance given - however it can be difficult to 'find a staff member' at times.

#### Selected Feedback

*"Generally works well. Station staff helpful if you need assistance."*

*"Station staff there with ramp waiting for me to assist me off. There have been many occasions when assistance is not there and I have to ask passengers to lift me on or off."*

*"The only time when the underground doesn't work properly is when we are trying to seek assistance from a member of staff. The hardest thing is to find a member of staff."*

*"When I was going on holiday, there wasn't a member of staff at the train station who would help me with my suitcase and I had to book a taxicab home."*

*"It is getting better. I would really like the return of the train guards and platform staff, makes me feel a lot safer."*

Feedback about the general environment varies, depending on the line. The Elizabeth line is commented to be 'spacious, smooth and quiet' while the Central line is more widely regarded as 'noisy and overcrowded'. The 'rush hour' is typically avoided.

#### Selected Feedback

*"The Central line is notoriously noisy, crowded and uncomfortable but the Elizabeth Line is amazing and more than makes up for it - air-conditioned, spacious, smooth and quiet."*

*"The Central line is extremely noisy."*

*"Over crowded, far too noisy. I am claustrophobic, feel unsafe. A very hostile environment."*

*"I try never to travel in the rush hour, far too hot & packed with people. I let the crammed tubes go and wait."*

The trains themselves, presumably at older lines, are commented to need a refresh.

#### Selected Feedback

*"Noisy, dirty, worn-out seats, stuffy."*

Timing and frequency is widely complimented on the whole. However, delays are reported on the Central line and this may be due to a 'shortage of trains'.

Additionally, strikes are noted by some respondents.

#### Selected Feedback

*“Very good with plenty of trains coming so not too long to wait.”*

*“Trains are usually on time.”*

*“Sometimes I wait a long time for a train.”*

*“The central line lately hasn't been very good at timings and trains are not running that frequently, with big gaps between. Otherwise, I think it is easy to get around from one line to another.”*

*“Current delays on Central line.”*

*“It has been very good. The Central line (our local line) is having problems with a shortage of trains at the moment.”*

*“Lately lots of strikes, closures. Not reliable.”*

The freedom pass is widely appreciated, enabling people to travel across London - largely for outings and leisure. There is one complaint about peak-time restrictions.

#### Selected Feedback

*“We are fortunate to have an underground in our area and I can travel free. The freedom pass is so valued.”*

*“It gets me to many places of interest. I use the underground a lot to explore the other side of London.”*

*“Obviously the infrastructure allows ease of travel across the whole of London, East to West, quite easily.”*

*“It is quicker than going by bus.”*

*“Still waiting to use our freedom passes before 9am for hospital appointments.”*

General statements, on the whole are complimentary.

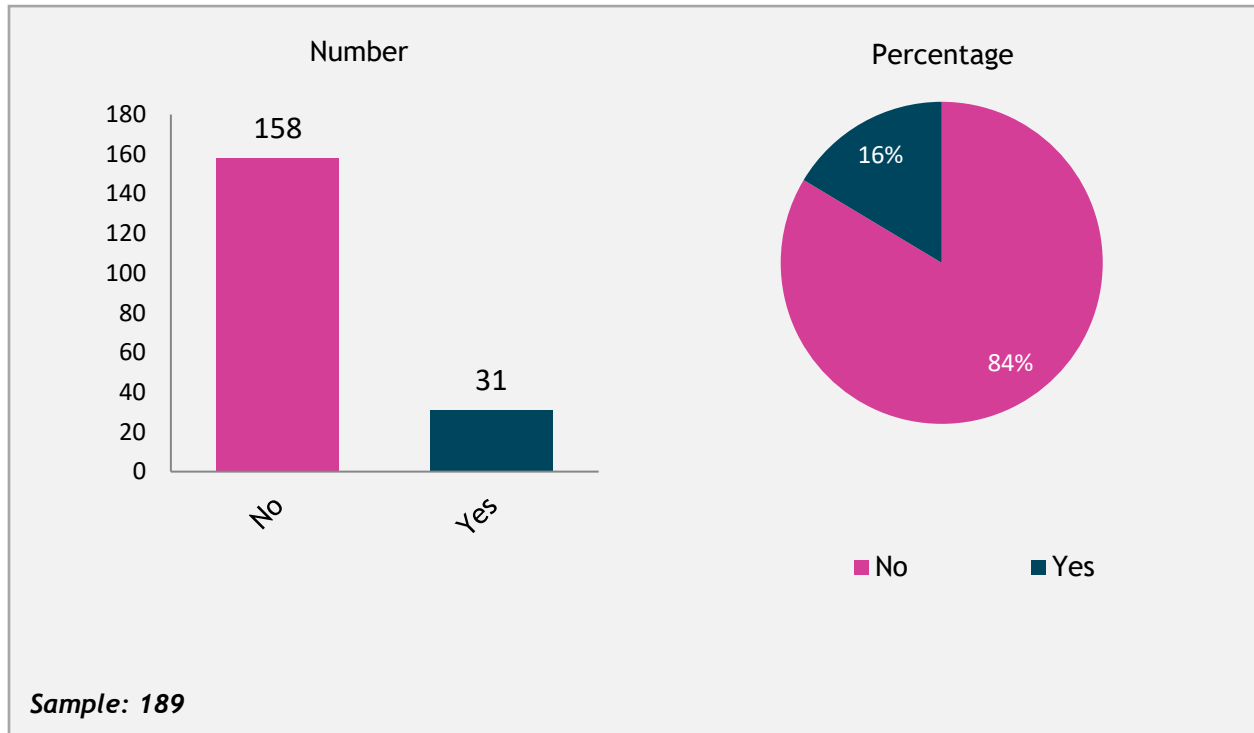
#### Selected Feedback

*“Can't fault the underground.”*

*“Good service most of the time.”*

*“It is quicker and more reliable than the buses.”*

## 6.12 Do you use Dial-A-Ride?



16% of respondents use Dial-A-Ride.

### 6.12.1 Use Dial-A-Ride

	% Yes
Aged 90 or over	45%
Aged 75 - 89	17%
All Respondents (Baseline)	16%
Aged 50 - 64	8%
Aged 65 - 74	5%

We find that as respondents get older, they are more likely to use Dial-A-Ride.

Just 5% of those aged 65 - 74 use the service, this rises moderately to 8% for 50 - 64 year olds and to 17% for respondents aged 75 - 89. Almost half of those aged 90 or over (45%) use Dial-A-Ride.



Household - Just you	20%
All Respondents (Baseline)	16%
Household - 2 people	9%
Household - 3 or 3 plus	6%

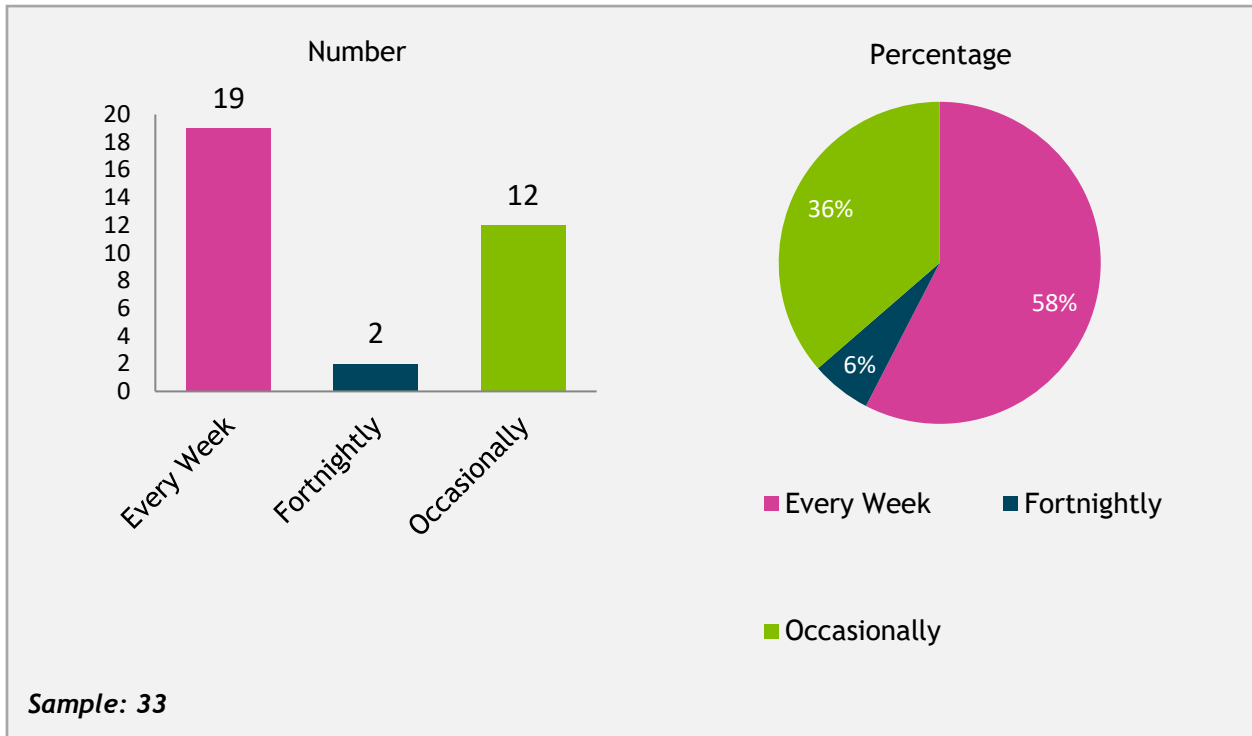
Respondents living alone are noticeably more likely to use Dial-A-Ride, than those living with others (20% comparing with 6%).

Use mobility aids	36%
Poor Health	31%
Have a disability	28%
Fair Health	23%
All Respondents (Baseline)	16%
Do not use mobility aids	4%
Good Health	3%
Do not have a disability	1%

Around a third of respondents with mobility issues, a disability, or in poor health, are service users.

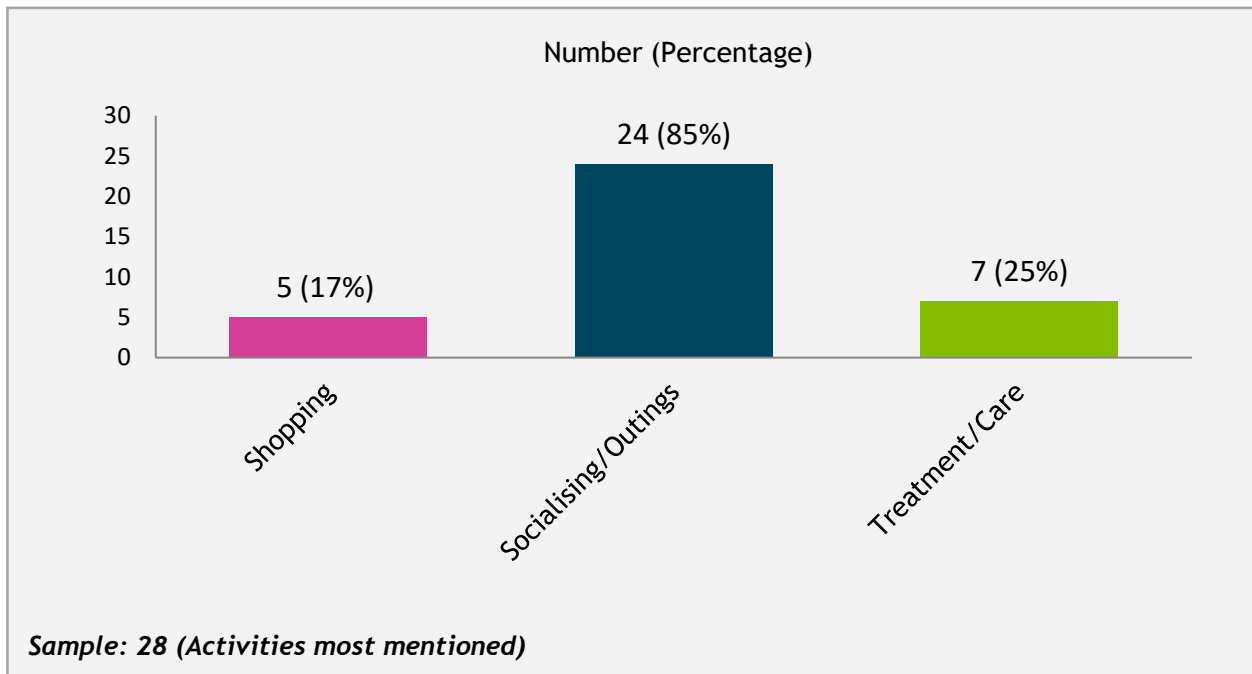
We find that very few respondents in good health, without mobility issues or a disability, are Dial-A-Ride users (we assume they would not be as eligible).

**6.13 If yes, how often do you use Dial-A-Ride?**



Of those using Dial-A-Ride, a majority (64%) are frequent users.

**6.13.1 If yes, where do you go when you use Dial-A-Ride services?**



The service is most used, by far for leisure - with 85% of users going on outings or socialising. The service is lesser-used for medical appointments (25%) and shopping (17%).

## 6.14 What is your opinion of Dial-A-Ride (what works well, and what does not)?

We asked for general views and experiences, on the service.

Experiences of the booking system vary. On phone booking, we receive compliments and also accounts of congested lines. The app - a new introduction has made it easier for some, and more difficult for others.

### Selected Feedback

*"I can book it when I need to - that part of the service has improved."*

*"I phone up to book and they are all nice and helpful."*

*"I have problems getting through on the phone hanging on for ages."*

*"The new computer system is terrible."*

*"The new system makes it harder for people who can't use the app to book a ride. It is easier for people who can book via the app than trying to book on the phone."*

A blind client gives a detailed account of the new app's failings. As the concerns have not been addressed, this effectively results in 'discrimination' against blind and partially sighted people.

### Selected Feedback

#### Account from a blind client:

*"Up until last November Dial-a-Ride was perfectly okay, just a few moans but normally okay.*

*But since then, they have altered the system and want us to use an app to book journeys and we cannot book them by email anymore.*

*It has become a total joke for us blind and visually impaired. The app is not accessible which I have already reported.*

*Before November the bus used to come to where you are and you would be informed by your phone that your bus will be arriving in three minutes and your driver's name (example Paul). But now you still get a text message to inform you your bus will be arriving in so many minutes but now the message for us blind and visually impaired reads 'please look out for bus number...'. Can I see the number? I can't even see the bus.*

*I have reported this defect and I'm not alone. In my opinion, Dial-a-Ride has gone to the dogs and also it is discriminating and I'll repeat that."*

One person lacks general information.

#### Selected Feedback

*"I do like to use Dial-a-Ride, but I do not know how."*

We hear that booking must be made in advance, however this generally works well.

#### Selected Feedback

*"I find it very good. I phone up and book weekly in advance."*

*"An advanced booking works well - that is when I make the booking a few days ahead."*

*"Dial-a-Ride is excellent if you can book it and it comes when you want. Have to book well in advance."*

Booking a return journey is not always possible - at times, clients are offered a one-way service.

There is a perception that availability has recently reduced.

#### Selected Feedback

*"Works well at times, but ridiculous, they can't take you but they say they can fetch you back."*

*"Terrible - I ring up to book a week ahead and they can't always find me a booking or they offer me just one way but not the return journey"*

*"My brother tried to use it many times and never got a booking. I understand from others, that there is less availability now."*

Punctuality is widely regarded as 'unreliable'. Transport can 'often be delayed' for over an hour, and in cases, not turn up at all.

It is suggested that complaints are not welcome - and may even result in the withdrawal of service.

#### Selected Feedback

*"It is at present unreliable."*

*“Disorganised, bad timing, management need to be sacked.”*

*“They do their best, but sometimes bad timekeeping.”*

*“Sometimes they are late, but the service is generally good.”*

*“Have to keep phoning to find out where it is as it's often over an hour late.”*

*“I don't use Dial-a-Ride, they let you down and come late and don't turn up. They spoil your day. They ride about empty or just 1 person on them.”*

*“Never comes on time. I have missed time from classes as they arrive at my home late and arrive too early at my class.”*

*If you complain they don't come at all.”*

There is frustration at the half-hour window, which results in ‘too much waiting around’. Additionally, the journey itself can be longer than anticipated.

#### Selected Feedback

*“The new system has made the service a lot worse - waiting 1/2 hour each way makes life difficult as it's a very long waiting period.”*

*“This 30 minute window is too long. They need to make this shorter, e.g. 15 minutes. It is too much waiting around.”*

*“Not always reliable. They pick up other people and you can be on the bus for an hour.”*

On staffing, the drivers are highly regarded - receiving much praise.

#### Selected Feedback

*“Find it works well, drivers are helpful.”*

*“Wonderful service - the drivers are lovely.”*

*“It is a very good service for old and disabled people. The drivers I had were very good on occasional trips I had.”*

*“The driver didn't lower the bars for the people who were getting on. They are usually very helpful though.”*

On overall administration however, the organisation is viewed as poor, especially 'since the contract changed in November'.

In one example, we hear that for two clients living at the same address, two separate buses arrived.

#### Selected Feedback

*"They are very disorganised."*

*"Also, for instance, two people at the same address, send two buses to pick them up - must get themselves organised please."*

*"I don't use Dial-a-Ride but I have heard a lot of people say that the service has gone downhill since the contract changed in November."*

There is appreciation that the service is free, however there is a desire for weekend travel, and the ability to use for medical appointments.

#### Selected Feedback

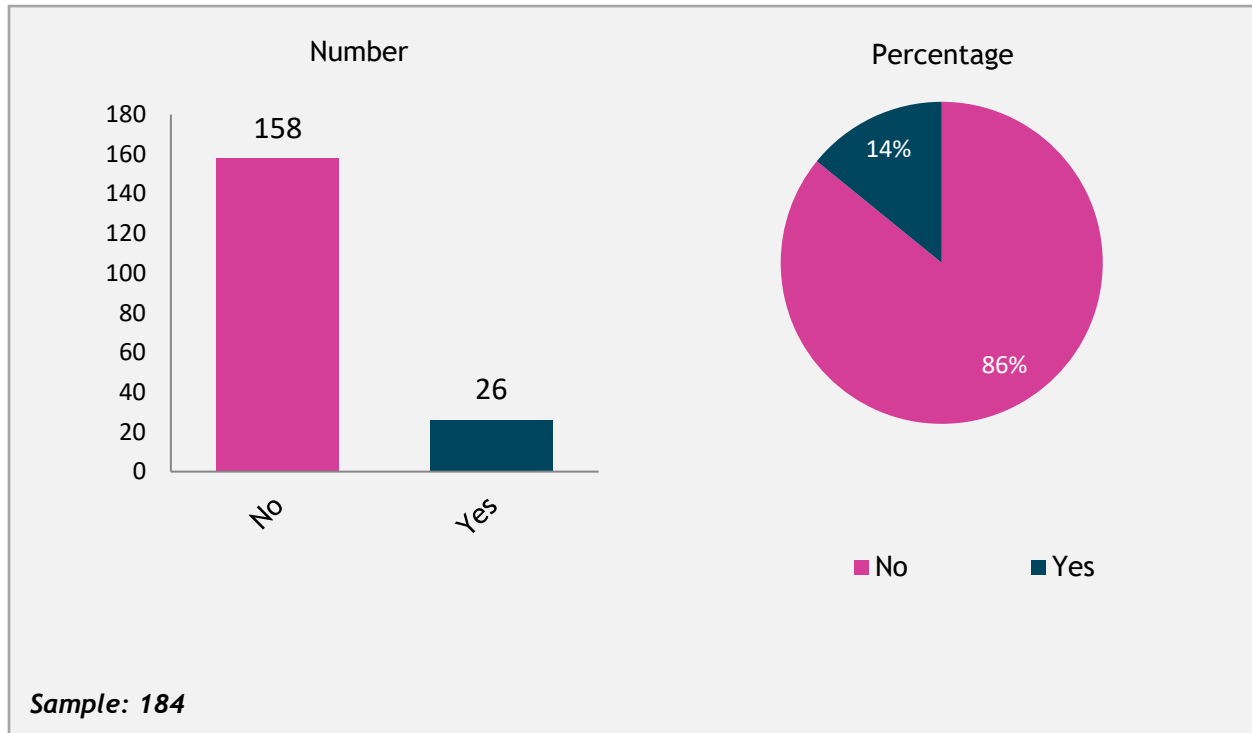
*"It is completely free of charge."*

*"Been promised Dial-a-Ride months ago, still waiting to hear from Age UK."*

*"Not available at weekends."*

*"It is a shame that they cannot be used to go to hospital appointments."*

### 6.15 Do you use Taxicard?



14% of respondents use Taxicard.

### 6.16 If yes, what is your opinion of Taxicard (what works well, and what does not)?

We asked for general views and experiences, on the service.

Comments about punctuality are mixed. We hear that the service is reliable, and also receive accounts of taxis arriving late, or not at all. Some respondents who have been 'let down' have not used the service since.

One person recommends booking the day before.

#### Selected Feedback

*"Excellent service, reliable."*

*"Turns up really good."*

*"Unreliable. Can wait a long time after they say they are coming."*

*"Once I booked it and they didn't turn up at all. So we didn't go but they did turn up to take us on the return journey."*

*"Not very good, will not use it again, let me down when going on holiday to pick up the coach."*

*"I was let down very badly about 2 years ago since then I stopped using them."*

*"If you order it the day before it works well. Otherwise they may turn up late if you try to book it for the same day."*

On staffing, feedback is again mixed. While some respondents are assisted by drivers, others - including a blind person, say they are not helped in and out of the taxi.

#### Selected Feedback

*"The drivers are helpful. They hold my arm and help me."*

*"The drivers do help me with my stick and bags."*

*"With my problem, it is too high for me to get in the taxi. The drivers don't want to help, which they are supposed to do when you have aids."*

*"They don't help you in and out of the taxi."*

*"They don't get out of the car and expect a blind person to go and find them. It is much easier to get into a black taxi."*

Registering for the service can be a slow process.

#### Selected Feedback

*"I applied for Taxicard 3 weeks ago but I haven't heard yet."*

Awareness of Taxicard is limited.

#### Selected Feedback

*"Didn't know there was such a thing."*

*"What is it?"*

A more comprehensive weekend service is desired.

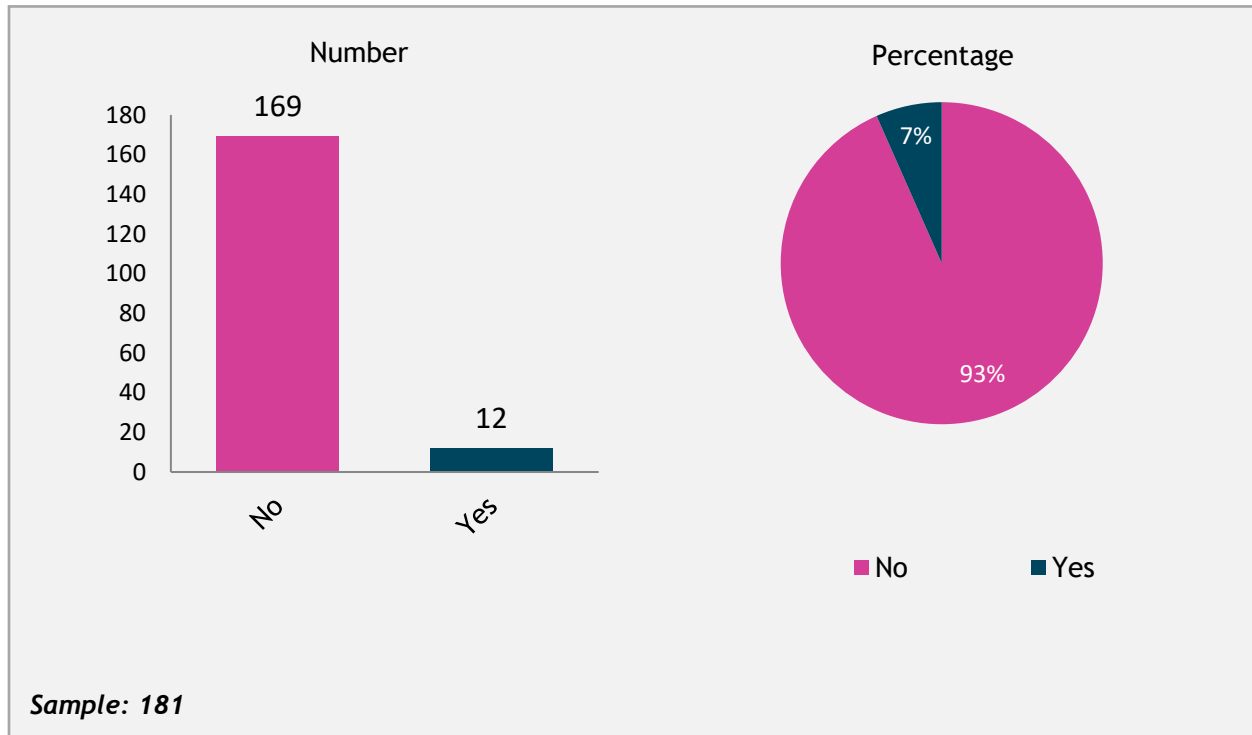


## Selected Feedback

*“Difficult to get at weekends and bank holidays but very good.”*

*“Can’t get one on Saturday evenings.”*

### 6.17 Do you use Redbridge Mobility Transport?



7% of respondents use Redbridge Mobility Transport.

### 6.18 If yes, What is your opinion of Redbridge Mobility Transport (what works well, and what does not)?

We asked for general views and experiences, on the service.

Respondents are widely complimentary of both punctuality, and support from the drivers.

## Selected Feedback

*“Out of the 3, this is more reliable and drivers will give customers help from the back.”*

*“Excellent drivers, helpful and service on time, reliable.”*

*“The transport drivers are all good. The drivers are on time, polite and kind.”*

*“Very good, good staff, always on time. Excellent the best.”*

*“I get a bit nervous going up the ramp to get on. Some of the drivers are more helpful than others.”*

Delays with the registration process are reported - one person has ‘waited six months’ for an application form.

#### Selected Feedback

*“I applied for Redbridge Mobbity Transport 3 weeks ago but haven't heard yet.”*

*“It has taken me more than 6 months to get the application form. I found the form a headache to complete. My son said he would try to do it for me online. I would like to have this service as they will take you to a hospital appointment and Dial-a-ride won't.”*

Awareness of the service is limited.

#### Selected Feedback

*“What is that?”*

*“I didn't know it existed.”*

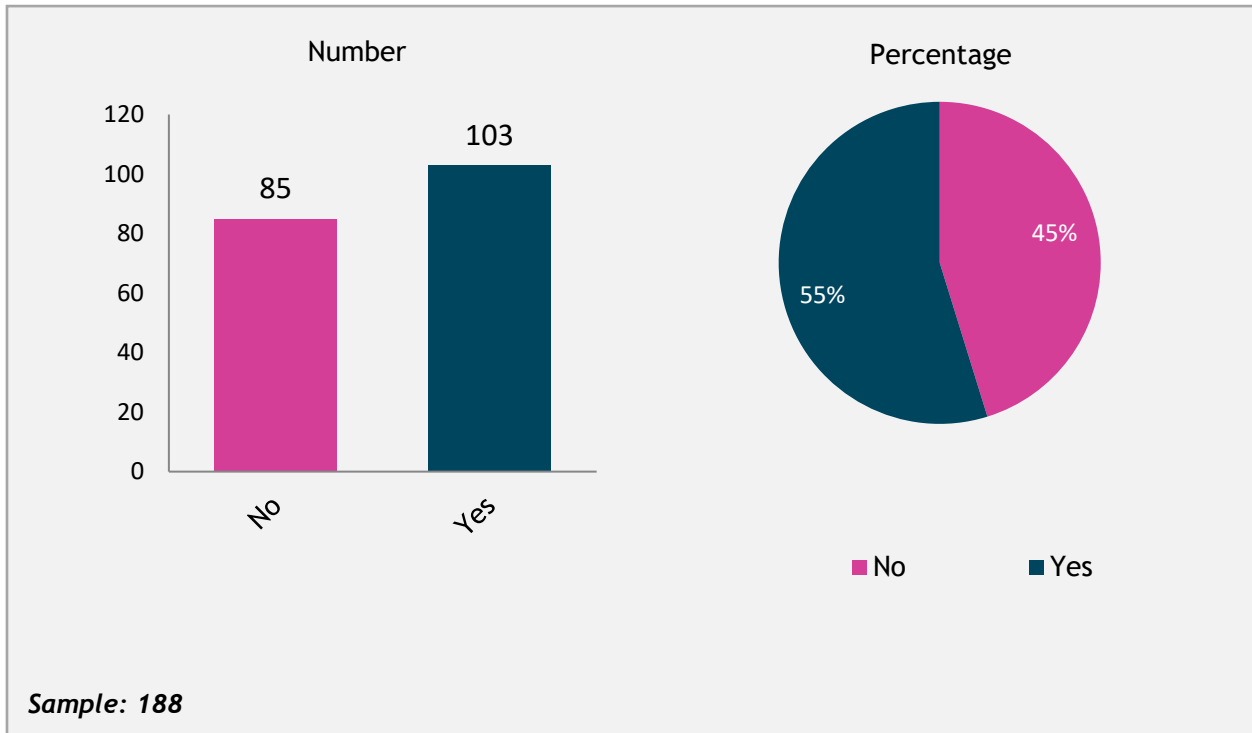
In other feedback we hear that paying in advance can be problematic, and the service does not stop at Ilford Library.

#### Selected Feedback

*“I can't see my card to read off my details in order to pay in advance. You used to be able to pay the driver cash.”*

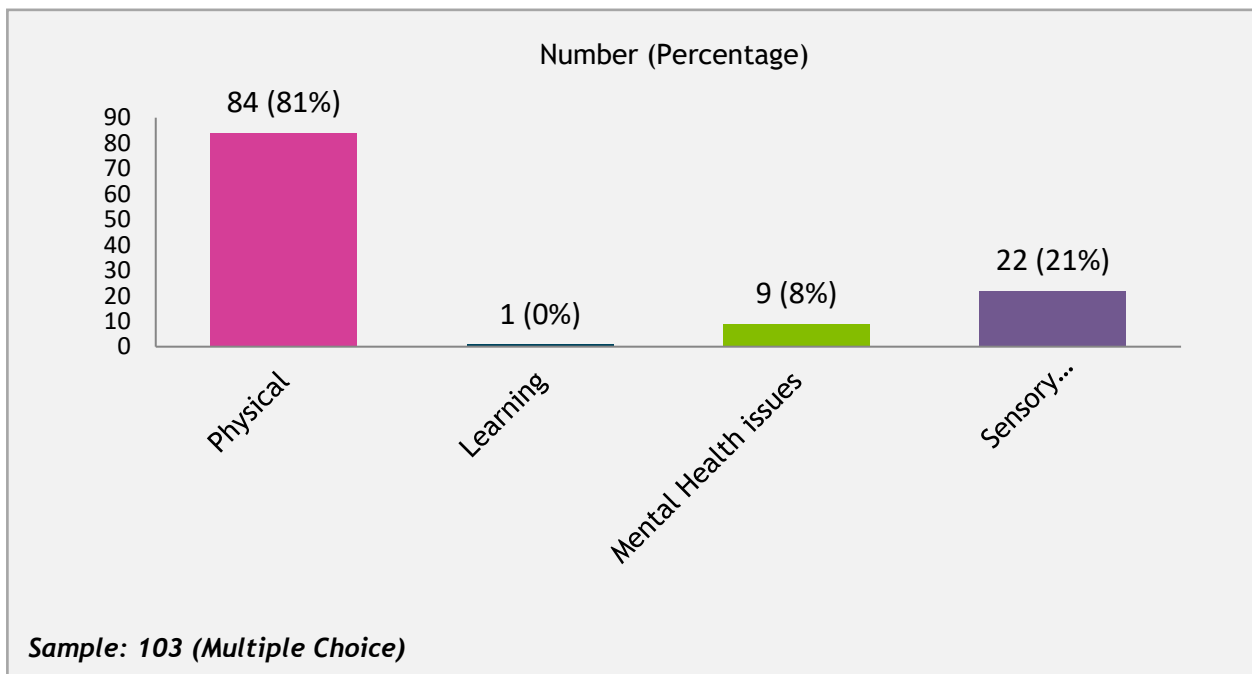
*“That can't stop outside Ilford Library - due to parking restrictions.”*

### 6.19 Do you have a disability?



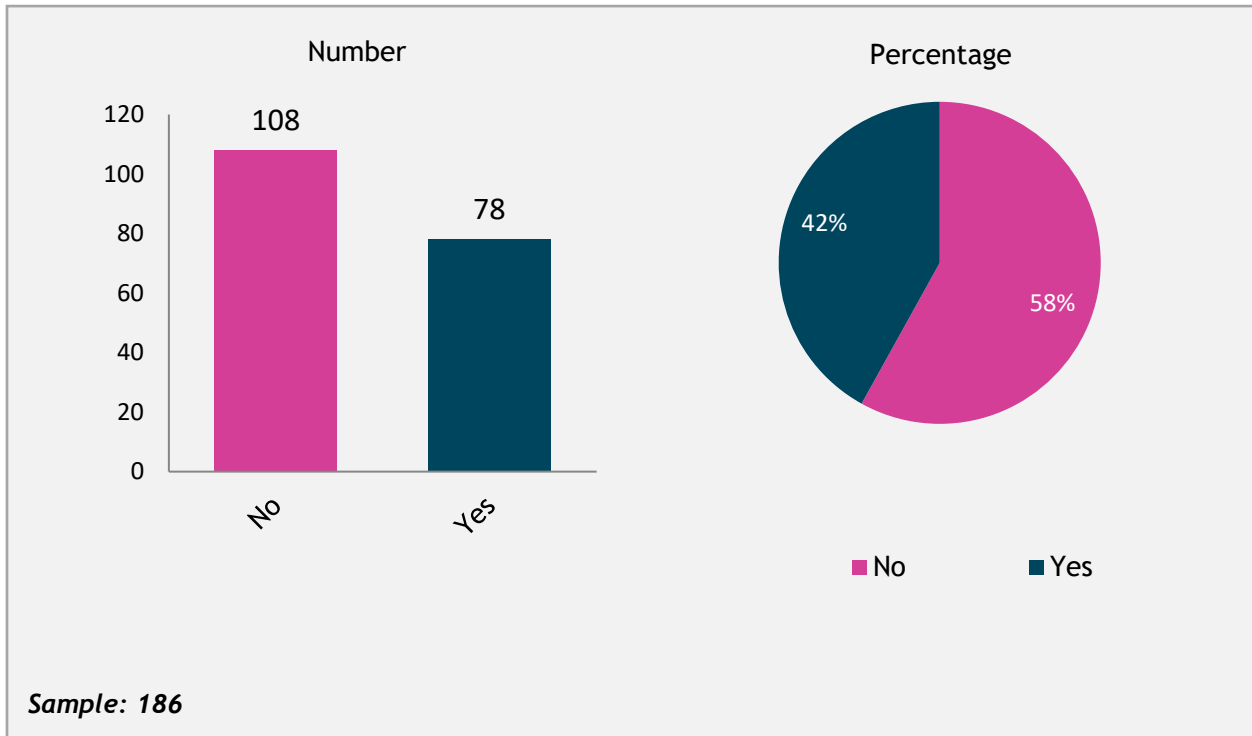
Over half of respondents (55%) have a disability.

#### 6.19.1 Disability Type



Of these, 81% have a physical disability, 21% a sensory (hearing or sight) disability and 8% a mental health issue.

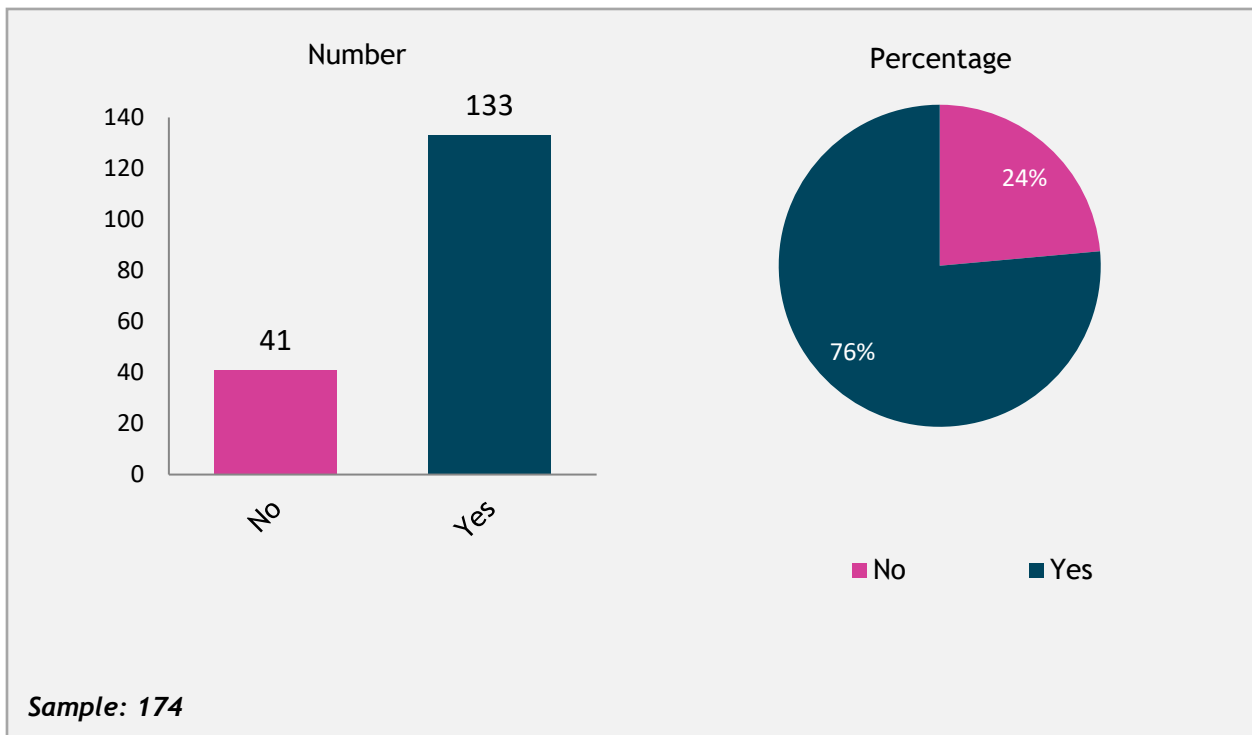
### 6.20 Do you use any mobility aids?



A sizeable minority of respondents (42%) use mobility aids.

Of these, 85% (70 people) use a walking stick, frame or crutches, while 15% (12 people) use a wheelchair or mobility scooter.

### 6.21 Do you feel safe using public transport?



Three quarters of respondents (76%) feel safe using public transport, while a noticeable 24% do not.

### 6.21.1 Feel safe using public transport

	% Yes
Aged 90 or over	94%
Aged 75 - 89	80%
All Respondents (Baseline)	76%
Aged 65 - 74	70%
Aged 50 - 64	69%

We find that as respondents get older, they feel safer using public transport.

69% of respondents aged 50 - 64 feel safe, this rises marginally to 70% for those aged 65 - 74 and to 80% for 75 - 89 year olds. A clear majority of those aged 90 or over (94%) feel safe using public transport.

Household - 3 or 3 plus	84%
Household - Just you	78%
All Respondents (Baseline)	76%
Household - 2 people	71%

Interestingly, those in households of two people, feel less safe than those in larger households, or sole occupants.

Do not have a disability	83%
Good Health	81%
Fair Health	81%
Do not use mobility aids	79%
All Respondents (Baseline)	76%
Have a disability	71%
Use mobility aids	70%
Poor Health	29%

We find that poor health - is the single biggest reason for feeling unsafe. 81% of those in good or fair health feel safe, this drops significantly to just 29% for respondents in poor health.

Those with a disability or a mobility issue feel around 10% less safe, than fully-mobile respondents or those without a disability.

### 6.22 If no, please give details:

When asking respondents why they feel unsafe, we detect themes on poor driving, and feeling less safe at night or in crowds. Mobility issues are also cited.

#### Selected Feedback

##### Drivers and Driving:

*"Drivers are not very nice."*

*"Some bus drivers are not good drivers. Use brakes too much and too fast. Don't give old people enough time to sit and very often shut doors before people get off!!"*

*"Drivers do not realise disablement when you get on the bus, the driver will pull away very fast and sometimes I have not been able to get to seat."*

*"I feel safer on Dial-a-Ride. The drivers are more helpful."*

##### Time of Day and Crowding

*"Only travel in the daytime."*

*"Yes during the day but not during the night on the bus."*

*"Too crowded."*

*“Occasionally rowdy school children and they take up the disabled seat, also have to watch your bag all the time - people too close.”*

*“Sometimes if people are unsocial then you don't want them to catch your eye just in case they turn rough.”*

**Mobility:**

*“I'm worried about falling”*

*“I have not travelled on a bus for quite a while and am worried in case it is too jerky. I would have difficulty holding on to a grab rail.”*

*“Too jerky and not near the pavement.”*

Additionally we receive comments about bus stops, and general accessibility.

**Selected Feedback**

**Bus Stops:**

*“I feel vulnerable when waiting at the bus stop, especially if there are few people there.”*

*“Lighting at bus stops could be better.”*

**General Accessibility:**

*“I need to be alert as I do not find them very user friendly.”*

*“Never enough light.”*

On trains and the underground, the environment is considered noisy, crowded and potentially unsafe, with a lack of available staff.

**Selected Feedback**

*“On the tube it can be so jolting (Central line) and very noisy. Drunks etc.”*

*“Underground do not always feel safe from fellow travellers and beggars.”*

*“It depends on the time of day I need to travel. Crowds, no platform staff, crowded trains.”*

*“Would not use a train on my own of a night.”*

*“No one around on the platforms and on the trains.”*

### **6.23 Do you have any other comments about public transport?**

Finally, we asked for any other comments.

Comments about buses:

#### **Selected Feedback: Buses**

##### **Driving:**

- Bus drivers can be rude and unhelpful.
- The young ones drive like a racing car.
- Lowering the bus should be automatic. Greater awareness of the elderly. I once fell on a bus and the driver did not get off his seat to help me.
- I can see how public transport could make people with disabilities feel vulnerable. I have seen some bus drivers not happy about engaging the disabled ramp.
- As my sight reduces it will be more difficult and I appreciate the help (usually) from bus staff.
- All bus drivers need more and better training on how to use the ramp and what to do.
- Buses need to pull into the pavement edge, otherwise it is a big step down.
- It would be good if the drivers could stop nearer to the curb and lower the bus. That would make it easier to get off. Especially when I have to get my shopping trolley off as well. Some do.
- On the 2 occasions when I have got on the wrong bus because I couldn't see the bus number (macular degeneration) bus drivers were extremely helpful.
- Some bus drivers are very considerate - they (almost all) wait until I have sat down before starting the bus. Few put down the middle movable platform.

##### **Environment:**

- Too many prams get on the buses, making a hazard for other passengers.
- Bus is fine when it's not too busy.
- Sometimes the buses need a good clean.

##### **Route:**

- Would be useful to have 462 service go into Forest Lawn.
- W12 is great but as there will be no substitute for it my life will change and I will be more dependent on others. It will take away my independence.
- They shouldn't mess around taking routes off as it will be traumatic to some who want to be able to travel. Also changing times from 1/2 hour on same route to an hour.
- Very grateful to have it, especially in Redbridge where buses are many.
- More frequent EL3 bus to Goodmayes station would be nice.
- New routes seem rubbish.



## Comments about trains and the underground:

### Selected Feedback: Trains/Underground

#### Stairs/Escalators and Lifts:

- Can't do stairs, escalators unreliable.
- They should improve mobility access by providing/installing a lift in the underground stations that do not have this facility.
- Access to train station. Struggle with steps (no lift) or walk around to main entrance.

#### Toilets:

- Also they should have toilet facilities in all underground stations.

#### Environment:

- Central line needs refurbishing.
- I have never found the seats on the Central Line trains very comfortable - very worn.
- Should introduce over 50's only carriages. We don't all want to hear other peoples' phones. Also from a safety point of view less pushing.
- On the main line service I was always concerned about the gaps between the trains and the platforms (Romford Station).
- Very happy with public transport - the Central Line is a bit dirty looking compared with other lines though!

#### Staffing:

- On the tube there is no one around.
- Would like to see more staff on stations.
- I would like to see more policing generally on the underground network.

#### Frequency:

- The loop between Hainault and Woodford needs improving by being more frequent.
- Find closures at weekends inconvenient.

## Comments about Dial-a-Ride:

### Selected Feedback: Dial-a-Ride

- The Dial-a-Ride isn't very user friendly. I can manage it but it isn't anywhere nearly as good as the Uber app. If you try to ring Dial-a-Ride you wait a long time on the phone for them to answer.
- Most of the drivers are very helpful on Dial-a-ride. If they can't offer me a booking, I just don't go sometimes. My daughter uses the app to try to book it for me as I find the app difficult to use.

## Comments about passes and fares:

### Selected Feedback: Passes/Fares

- I use my Freedom Pass all the time and rely on it. If I didn't have it, I would be lost.
- I was already receiving the Over 60's Oyster card when I applied for the Disabled Freedom Pass. I have sight loss. London Borough of Redbridge refused to give me the Disabled Freedom Pass.
- Very sad not to have a Freedom Pass beyond Woodford. We would be prepared to pay towards a Freedom Pass in Epping Forest - but cannot.
- I am grateful for my Freedom Pass and the opportunities it gives me with independence. So important.
- Freedom pass allows people to get out more often and is beneficial to their health and overall expenses.
- I think it's unfair for the over 60's to pay for transport in the morning before 9am. If you have appointments in the morning or going to work you shouldn't be charged.
- Too expensive compared with Paris.
- In general an excellent service. In past years there used to be a coach service locally taking people on day trips to places such as Stratford-Upon-Avon. Many of us very miss this service and would greatly appreciate a return. Any chance of this?
- Public transport is very expensive for the people who need to use it to go to work daily.

## Other comments:

### Other Feedback

#### General Safety:

- Some public behaviour is very poor. Smoking and vaping bans are necessary, desirable, and not always observed.
- Rabble hanging out at Ilford station.
- People and children that put their feet on seats. People talking on their phones that shout and can hear the person they are talking too. Hearing other people's music. Eating smelly food (Kentucky Fried Chicken, McDonalds etc). Left rubbish on seats.
- To make the ramps with sides.

#### General Comments:

- On the whole is very good.
- It is brilliant when it works.
- Happy that I live near good transport links.
- Most people just want to get home from the end of the service. Make all management have a day out on all the services and talk to the customers.
- I love my bus pass and public transport. I am lucky I am very mobile and I run for buses and trains although I am 85 years. I run up the hill while the bus is coming down. All the drivers know me.
- I think that Public Transport is really good in the Greater London.

- When there are no strikes then both the buses and trains work well.
- On the whole it works well for me.
- I enjoy it. It makes me feel part of the world (rather than being isolated in a car and not mixing with people).

## 7. Glossary of Terms

TfL

Transport for London

## 8. Distribution and Comment

This report is available to the general public, and is shared with our statutory and community partners. Accessible formats are available.

If you have any comments on this report or wish to share your views and experiences, please contact us.

Age UK Redbridge, Barking and Havering, 103 Cranbrook Road, Ilford, IG1 4PU.

Phone: 020 8220 6000

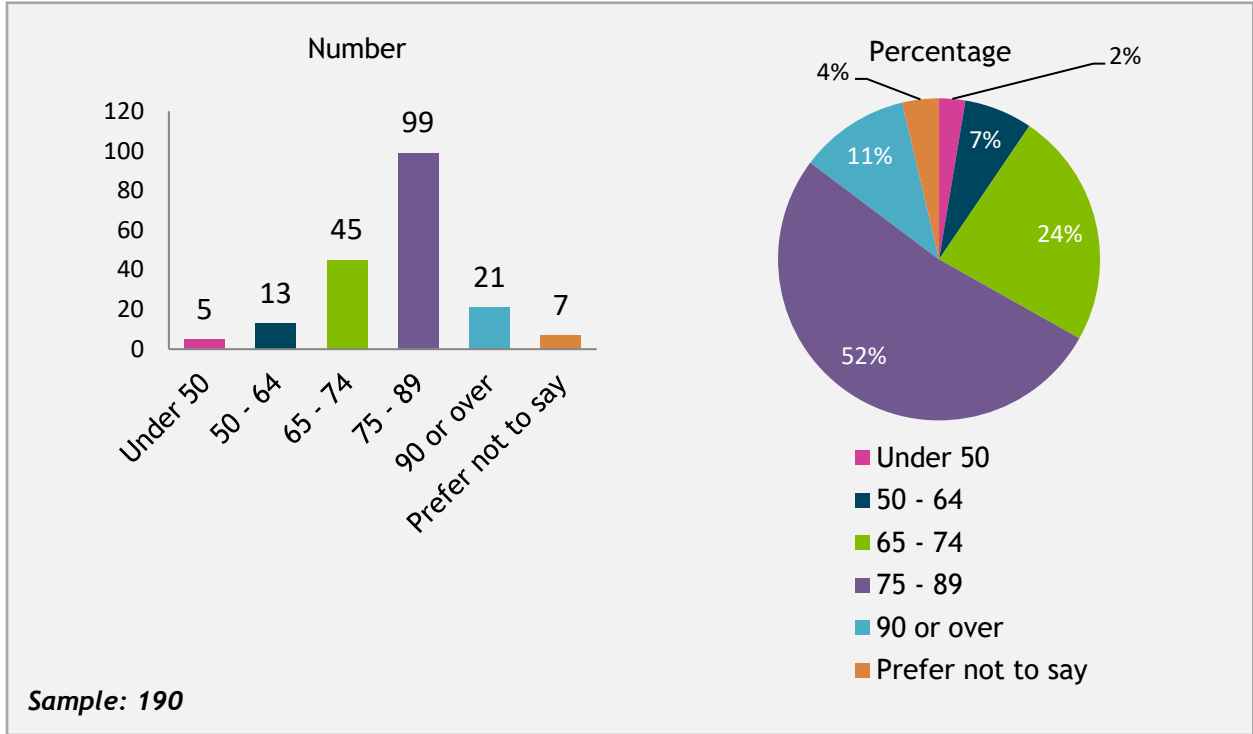
Email: [admin@ageukrbh.org.uk](mailto:admin@ageukrbh.org.uk)

Registered Charity Number: 1088435

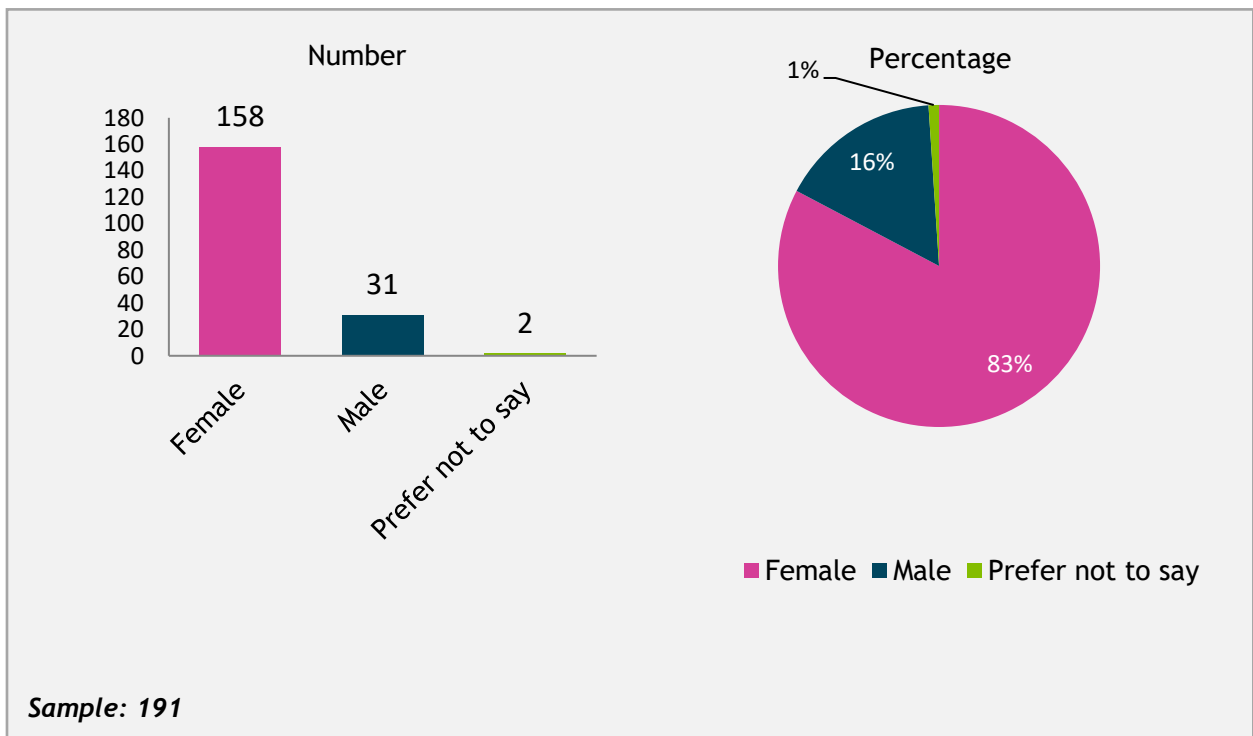
## Appendix - Demographics

The demographics of participants are stated as follows:

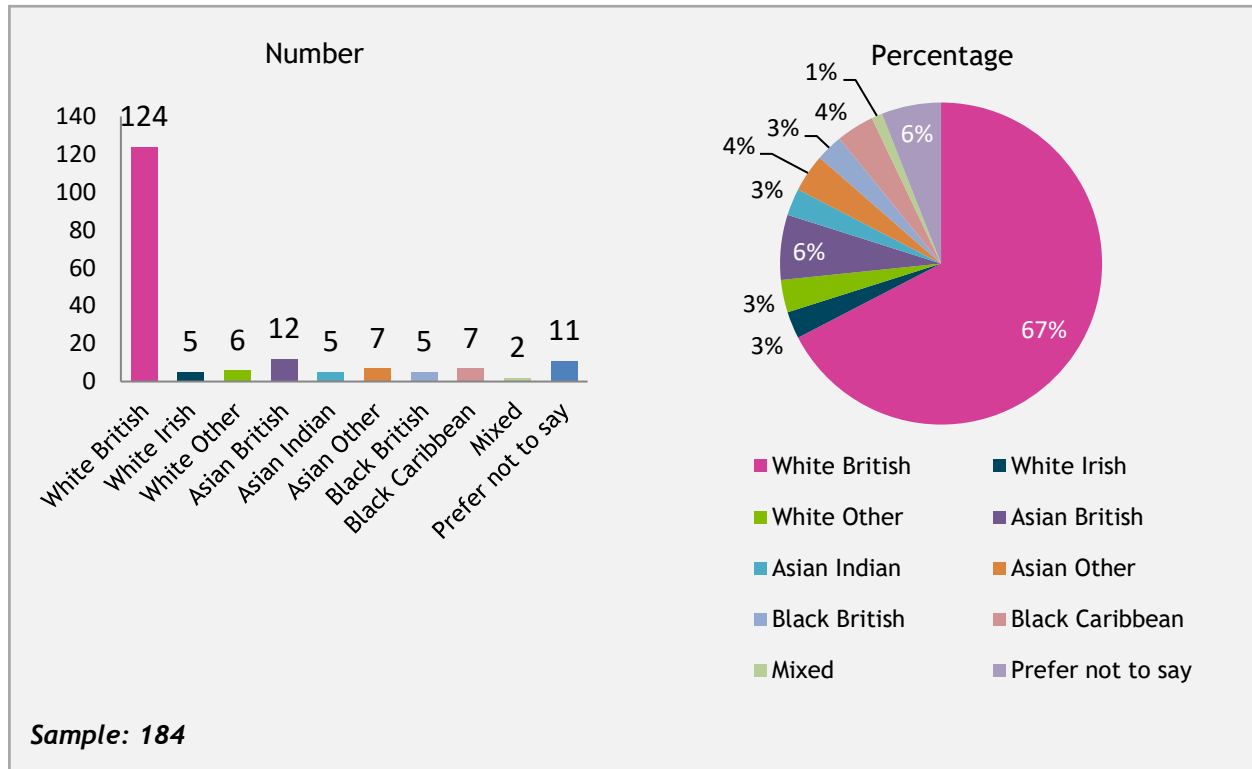
### Age



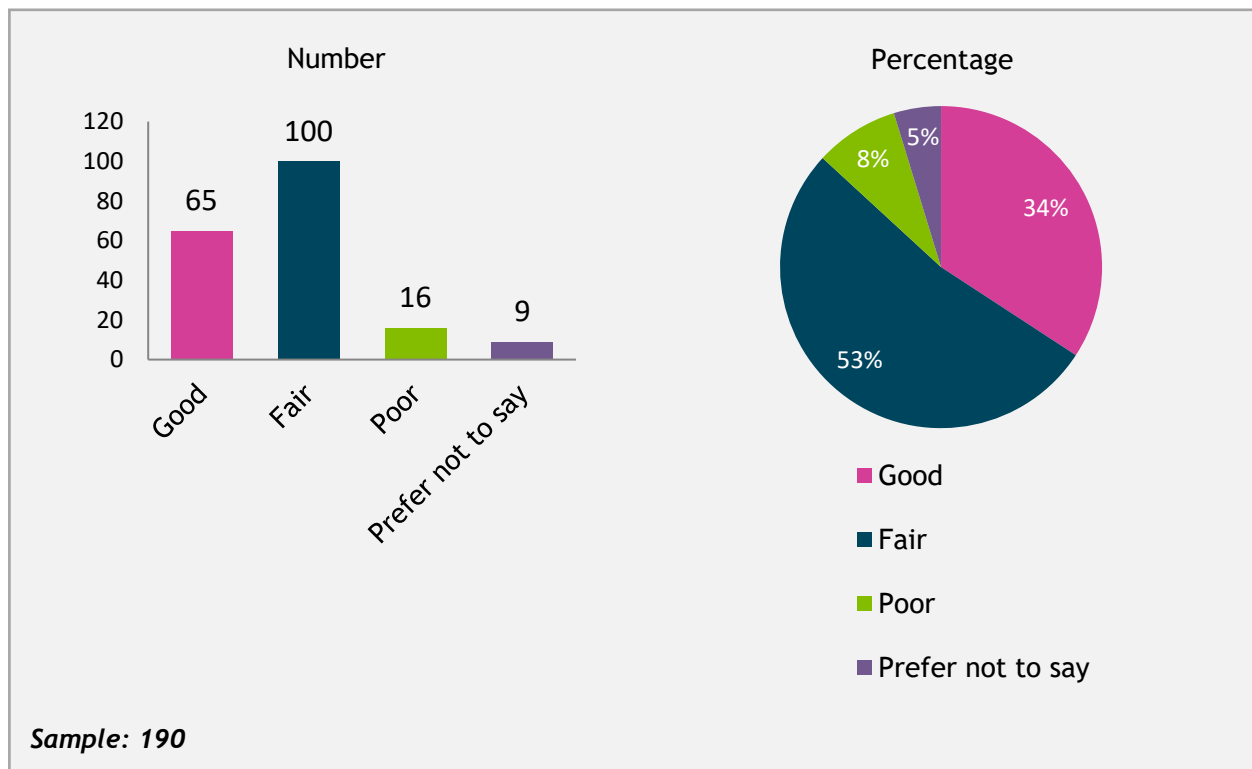
### Gender



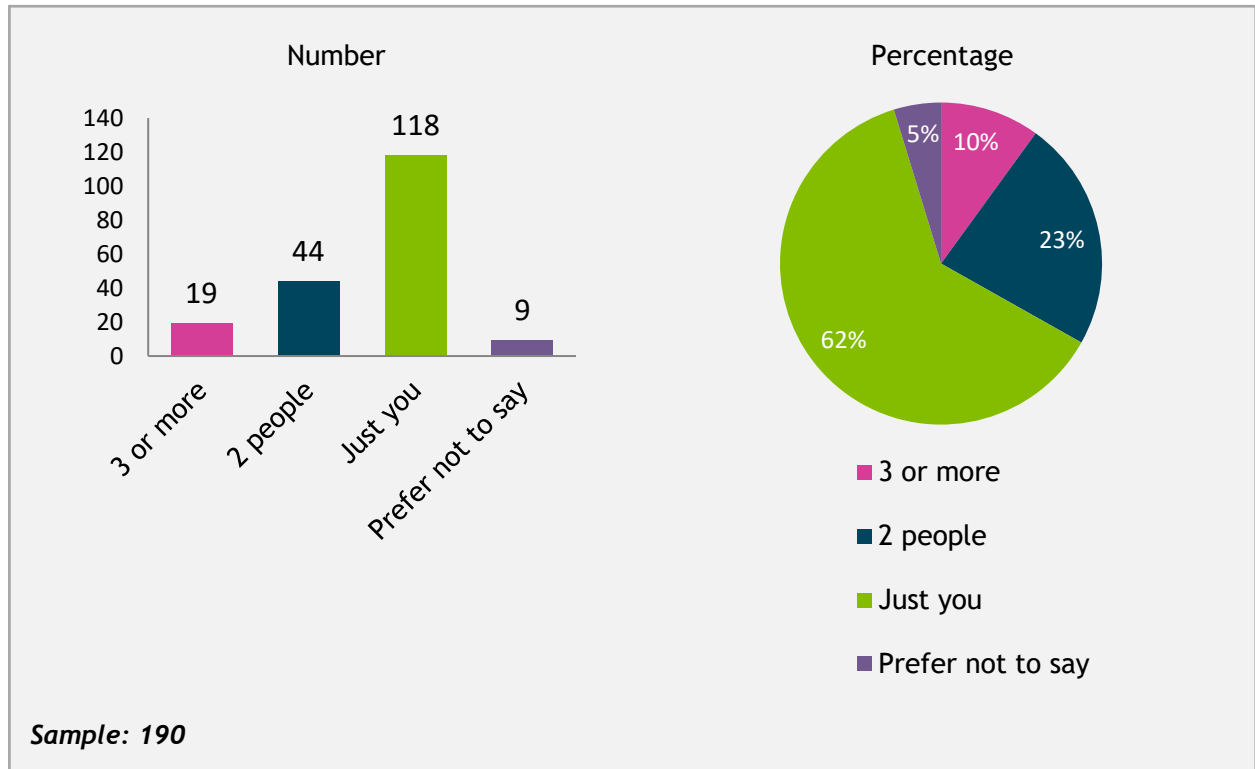
## Ethnicity



## Health



## Household



“I love my bus pass and public transport.

I am lucky I am very mobile and I run for buses and trains although I am 85 years. I run up the hill while the bus is coming down.

All the drivers know me.”

Local Older Person