

# Lowestoft Town Council

## Public transport working group

### November 2024

#### Introduction

The Lowestoft Town Council (LTC) Public Transport Working Group (PTWG) met on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024 to take forward discussions on a resident survey of bus usage within and to / from Lowestoft. A draft survey had been prepared by the PTWG and was shared in advance with OPR Consulting.

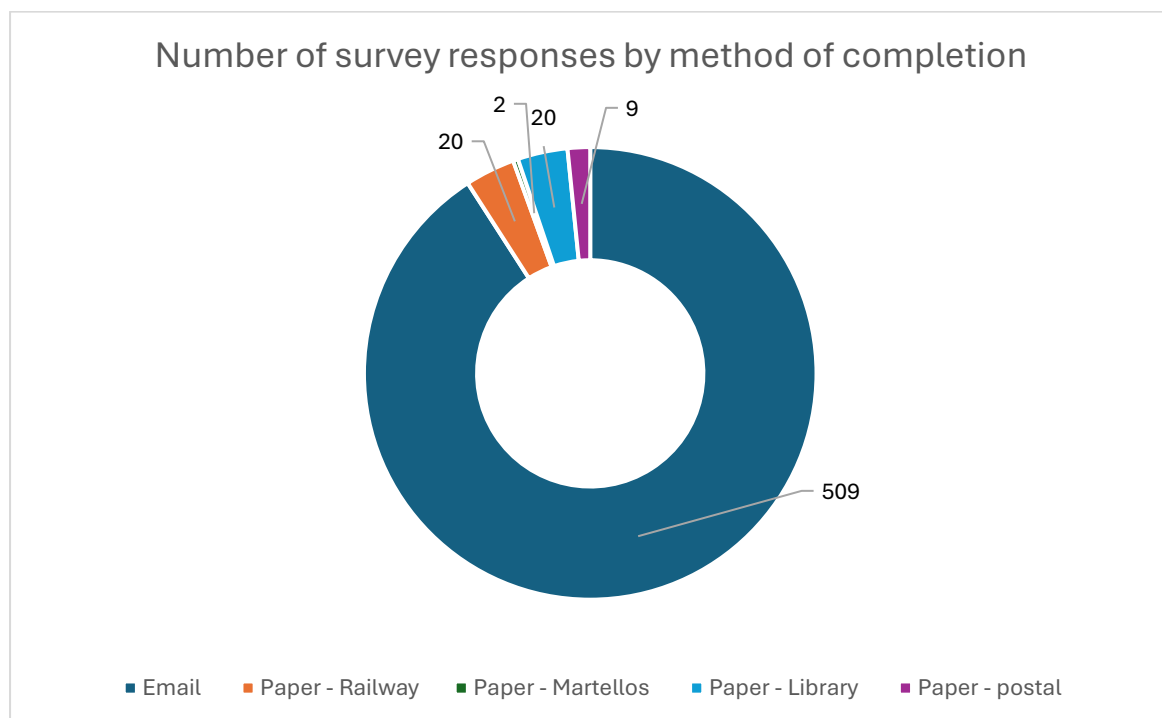
Following this meeting a revised survey was circulated to PTWG members with comments requested. The final survey was launched online in September and ran for just over two weeks. Additionally, hard copies of the survey were made available at Lowestoft Library, at the railway station and at Martello's Café, located in Sparrow's Nest Park.

The power point presentation that was shared at the August meeting and a full copy of the final survey document are available in Annex one.

#### Bus survey results

##### *Responses*

The pie chart below shows the breakdown of responses received. The majority were received via the online survey (509/560), with a further 51 responses received in paper form from various sites around the town and in the post.

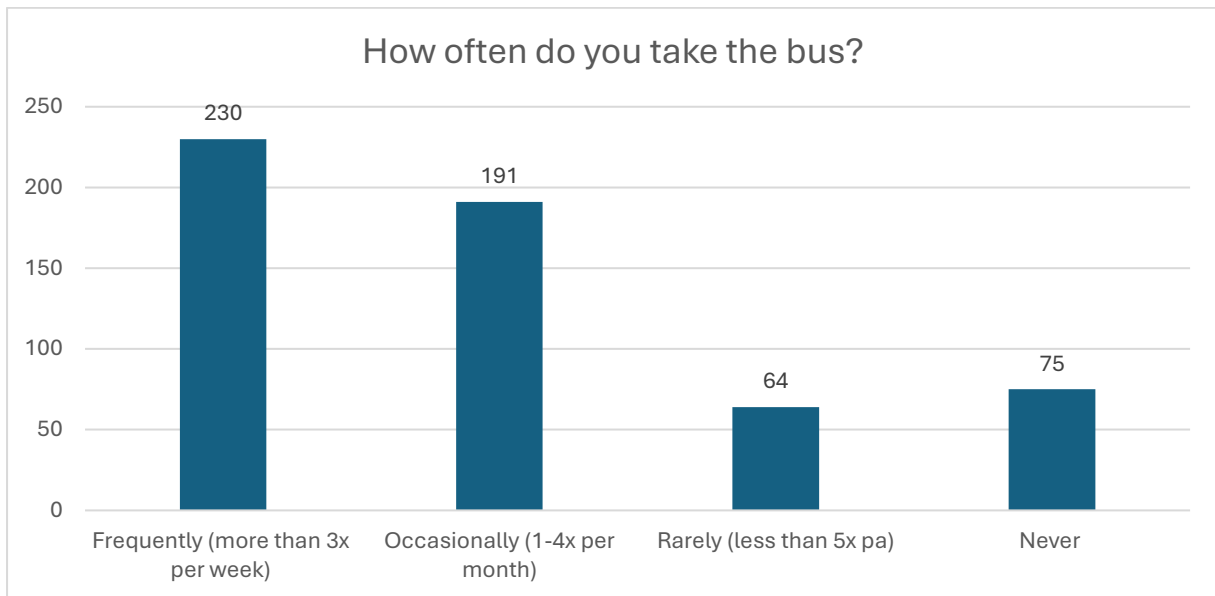


### Frequency of use

The survey asked respondents how often they took the bus, with a choice of four responses offered:

- Frequently (more than 3x per week)
- Occasionally (1-4x per month)
- Rarely (less than 5x pa)
- Never

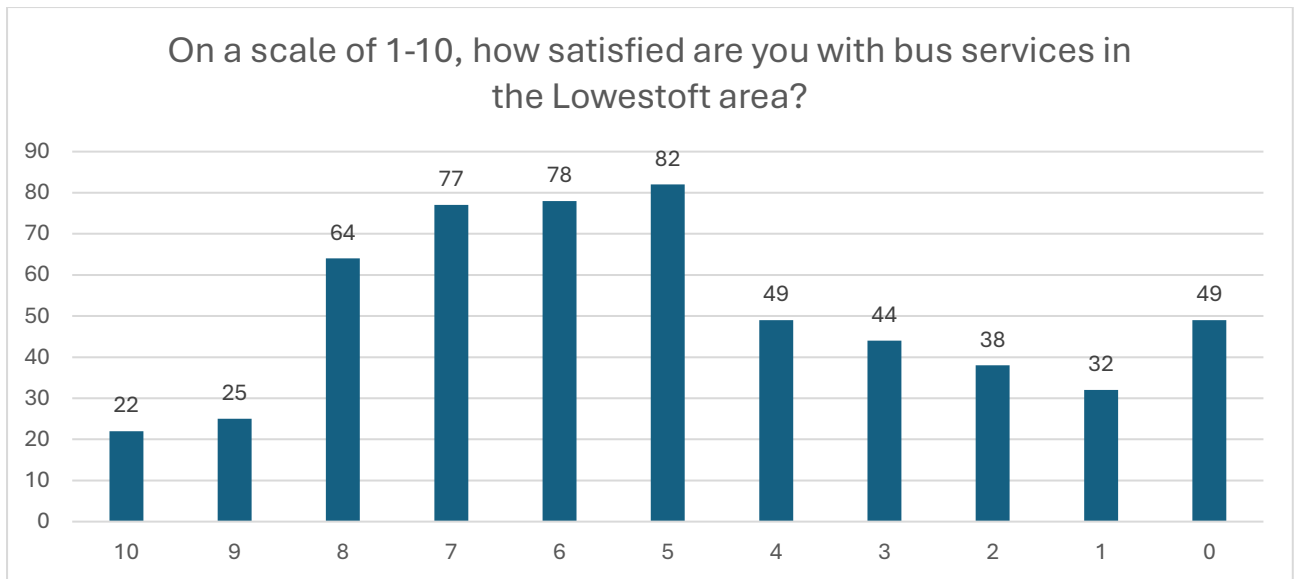
All respondents answered this question with 260 (41%) saying they took the bus frequently (more than 3x per week). At the other end of the scale 75 respondents (13% of the total) said they never take the bus.



### Satisfaction with bus services

The survey asked how satisfied people are with the bus services in Lowestoft, ranked on a scale of 0 – 10 with 10 being extremely satisfied.

Again, this question was answered by all respondents, with 33%, or 1 in 3 respondents scoring 7 or above. A similar percentage of respondents, 29%, scored satisfaction as 3 or less. Of those respondents that scored 0 on the scale, 31 (out of 49) never take the bus.



#### Where do you take the bus?

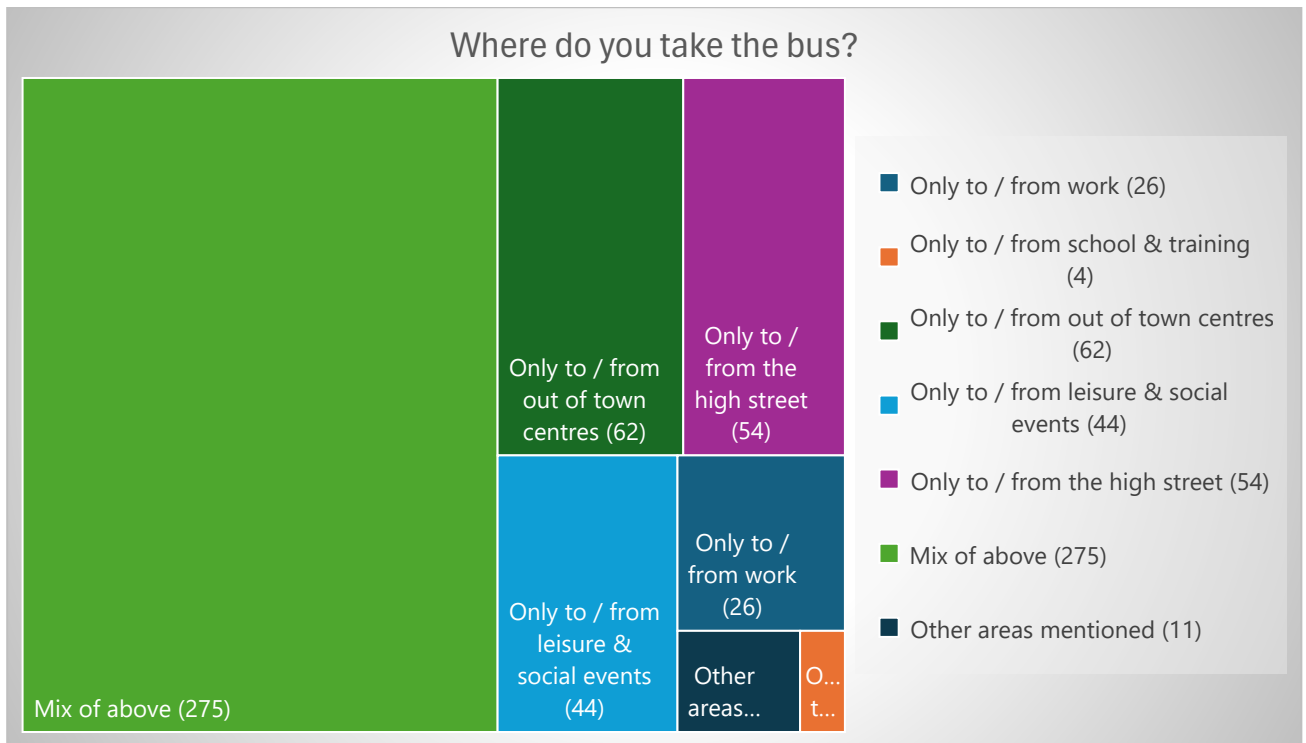
Respondents were asked where they take the bus to and from, with a choice of six options given. Respondents could tick as many answers as applied. Choices offered were:

- to / from work
- to / from school & training
- to / from out of town centres (out of town shopping / hospital)
- to / from leisure & social events
- to / from the high street
- Other

The chart below shows respondents answers, those that ticked more than one response (275) are shown in the box titled *mix of above* and those respondents that ticked only one answer are listed by the destination they chose (e.g. work, school etc).

A total of 11 respondents listed other areas, including:

- Norwich
- Beccles
- Carlton Colville
- College
- Hospital



#### What would encourage you to take the bus?

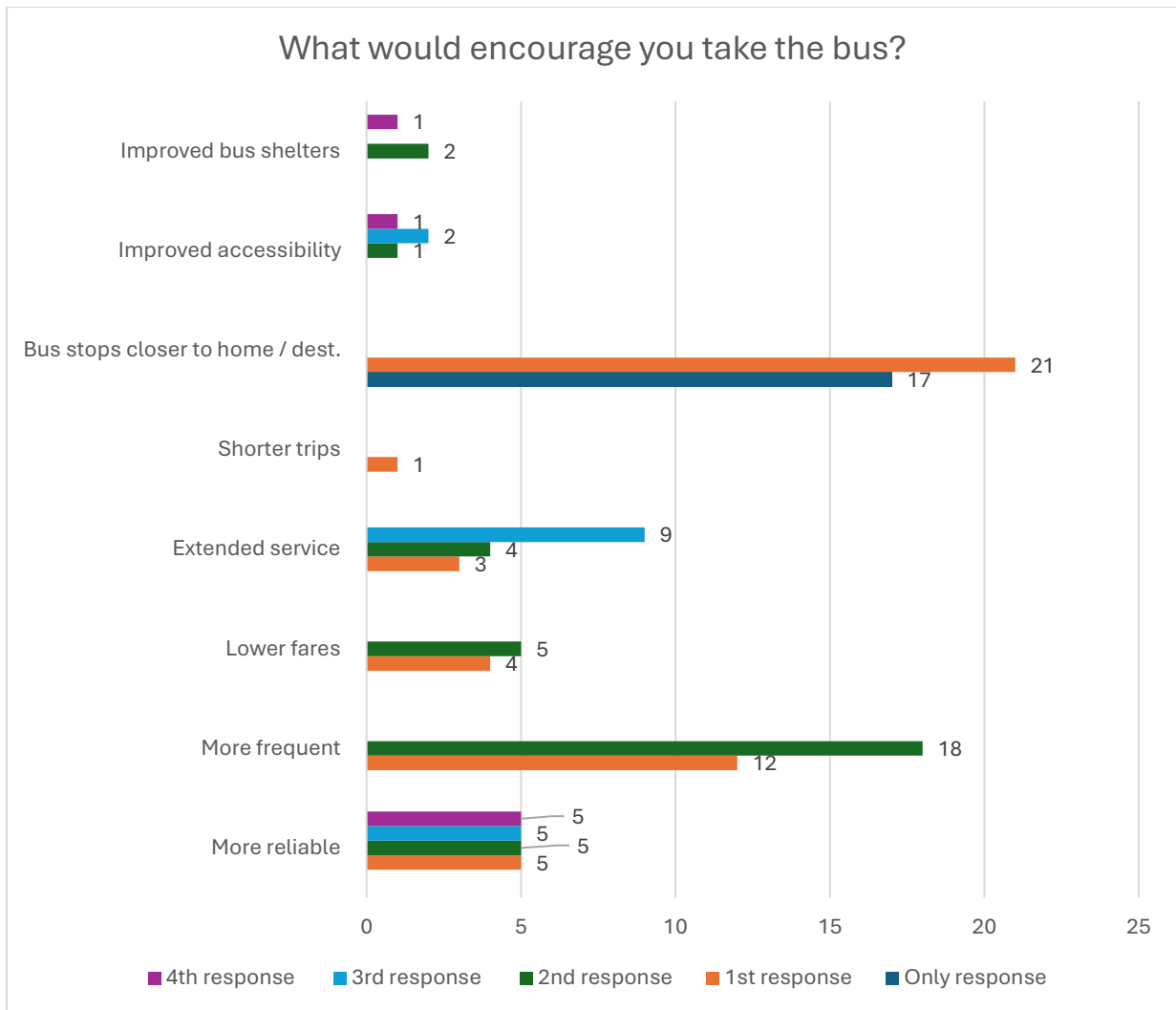
The survey went on to ask respondents who do not currently take the bus, what factors would encourage them to take the bus more? This question was only answered by the 75 respondents who chose *Never* as their answer to the Question – how frequently do you take the bus, see analysis above.

Respondents were given a range of answers and could tick all that applied – choices given were:

- Bus stops closer to home / destination
- More frequent services (more buses per day on existing routes)
- Extended service times (more evening / weekend buses)
- More reliable services (buses turn up on time / journey times are as advertised)
- Lower fares / easier to use ticket options (including day tickets / joint rail & bus tickets)
- Improved bus shelters with seating / information
- Enhanced safety measures at bus-stops and on vehicles
- Shorter / more direct routes to facilities
- Improved accessibility on and off vehicles
- Other (please specify)

As shown in the chart below the most commonly selected answer was *bus stops closer to home / destination* with 17 respondents choosing this as their only answer and a further 21 respondents choosing this as their first reason. More frequent services are also very important with 12 respondents choosing this as their first answer and a further 18 choosing it as their second answer.

Three respondents stated that *a bus service* would encourage them to use the bus, indicating that they do not currently live near a bus route.



#### *New bus routes*

The survey asked respondents to consider whether there are particular locations and / or bus routes that are needed in Lowestoft – this was an open question meaning respondents could write free text as their answer.

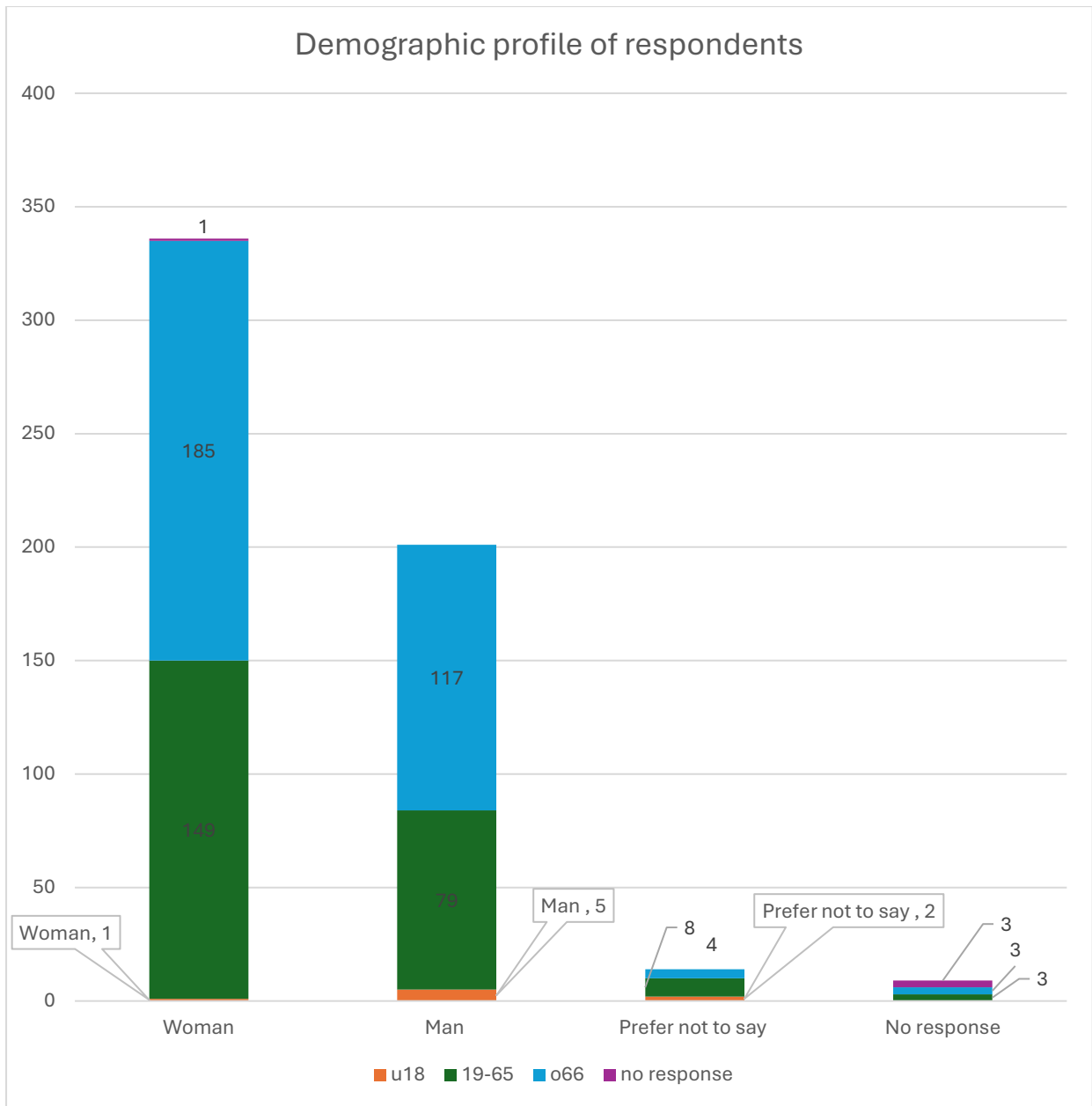
The most common answers given were:

- Gunton area (62), specifically Painter’s Estate (additional 18 responses)
- Oulton / Oulton Broad (28 responses) & Blundeston (12 responses)
- North Quay Retail Park (12 responses)
- Kessingland (12 responses)
- 102, 106 and 105 all mentioned as needing extended services
- Corton area (21 responses)

#### *Demographic profile of respondents*

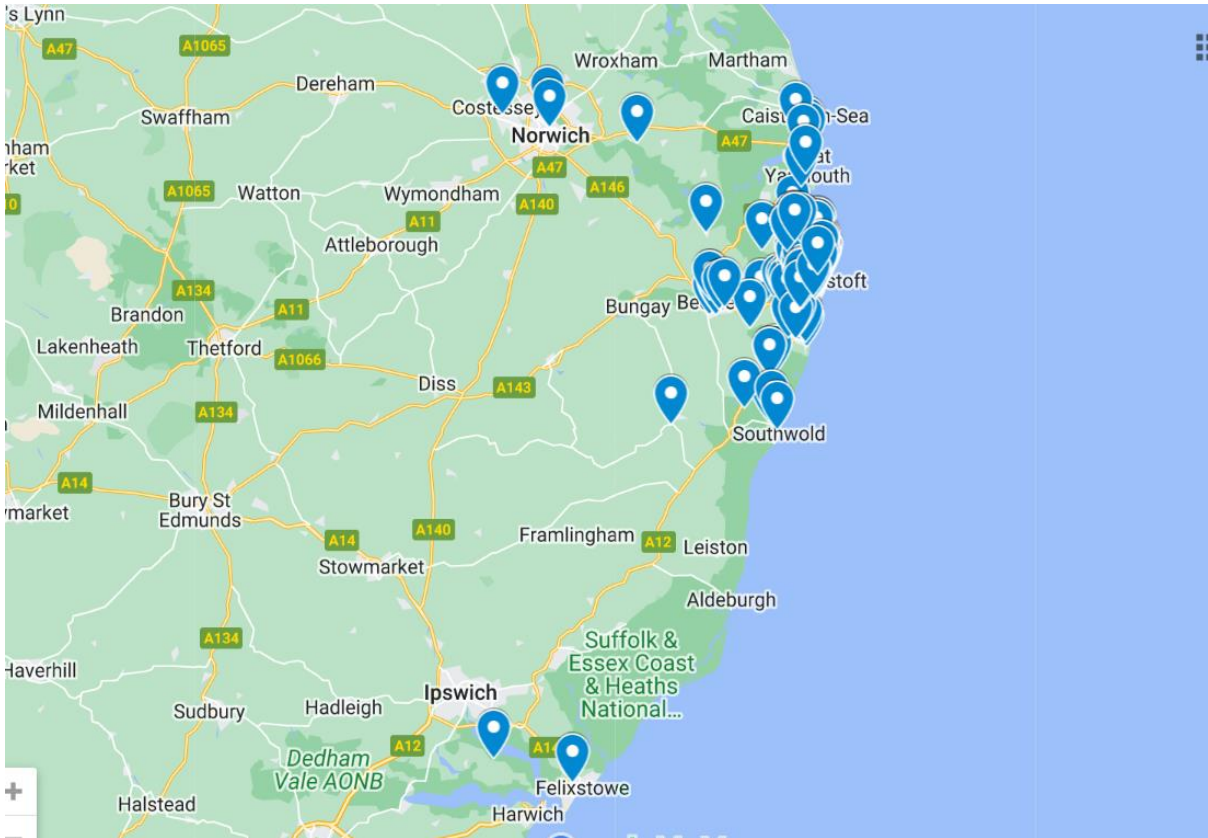
A total of 336 women responded to the questionnaire (60% of the total) and 201 men (36%). The remaining 4% of respondents either ticked *prefer not to say* or left the question blank.

The majority of respondents were over 66 (55%), with only 1% of responses received from those under 18.

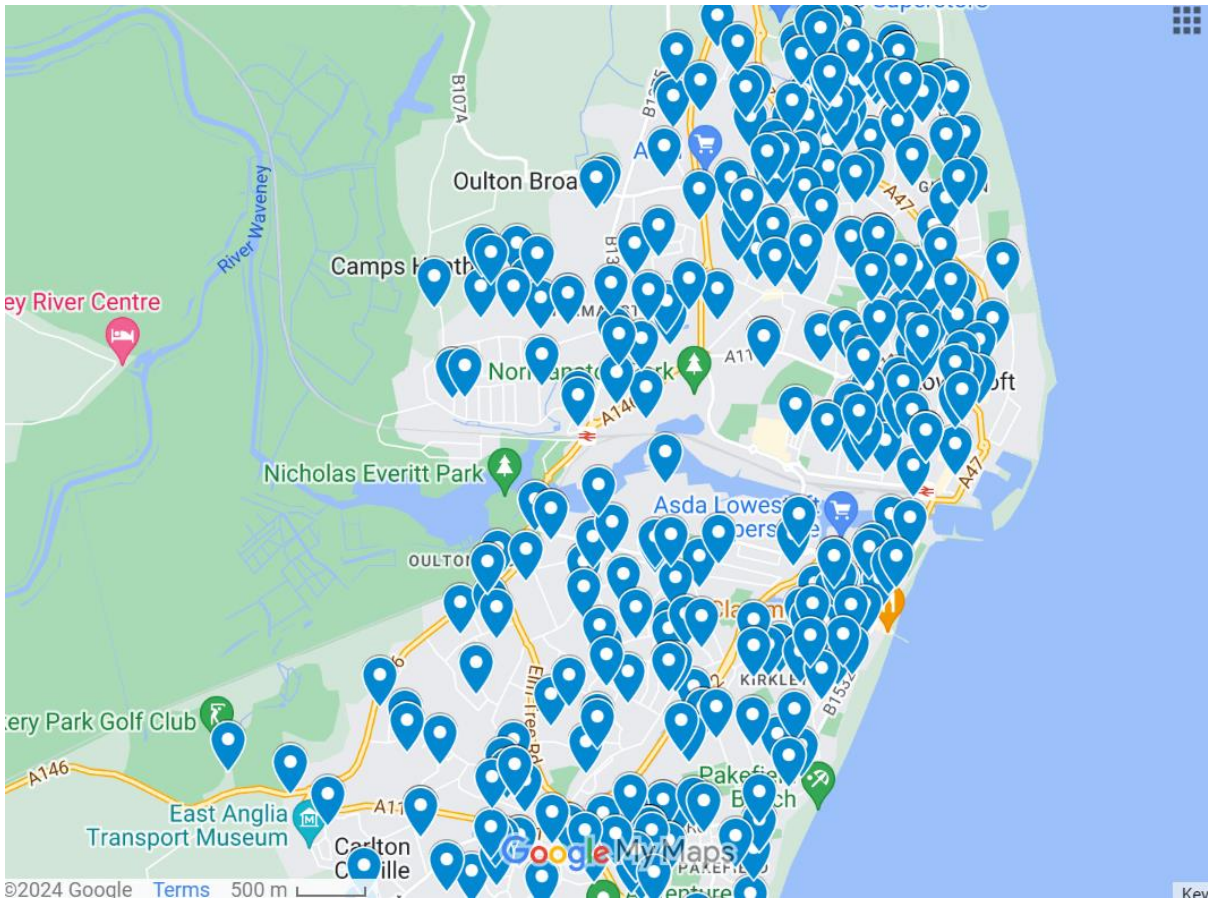


#### Home postcode of respondents

The map below shows the home postcode of survey respondents.



Looking at Lowestoft postcodes in more detail there is a good spread of respondents from both south and north of the town.



## Next steps

The results from the survey demonstrate a demand for bus services in Lowestoft, with those that currently use the bus keen to see the service expanded and some of those who do not currently take the bus willing to consider if bus stops are closer to home / services are more frequent.

While Lowestoft Town Council do not have a statutory duty to provide bus services, they can work in partnership with Suffolk County Council (the Local Transport Authority) advising on where routes are most needed (due to local demand) and apply for service funding through the Bus Service Improvement Plan – service funding, see below.

<https://www.suffolkonboard.com/news/2024/06/bus-service-improvement-plan-where-should-the-money-be-spent/>



## Annex one

Power point presentation to LTC PTWG – 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024



2024 Public  
Transport WG.pptx

Final copy of the bus usage survey – shown as a PDF (was available online via Survey Monkey)



Transport Survey  
Flyer (5).pdf