



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

Consultation report: Oxford temporary bus gates survey

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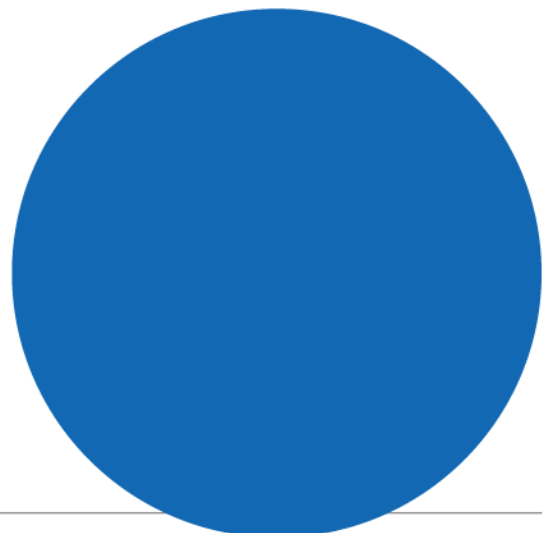


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Executive summary





Here we summarise the findings from an online survey to gather feedback from residents and stakeholders on proposed bus gates in Oxford.

Background to the survey

Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council have recently run a fast feedback survey to gather views on temporary bus gate proposals for Oxford city centre, which aim to assist Oxford's recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic. If approved, the new temporary bus gates would be implemented using experimental traffic regulation orders. The proposed temporary bus gates aim to enable quicker, more frequent buses on less congested roads and safer make attractive conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. This may allow reallocation of road space to create further improvements to the pedestrian and cycling environment. More information is available [here](#).

Levels of support for the proposals

Levels of support for the bus gate proposals are mixed. Overall, a total of 50% of survey respondents think the bus gates are a good idea including those who had concerns (35% think the bus gates are a good idea, with a further 15% stating that they think the idea is good but are concerned about the details). Conversely, 46% are against the idea, with 3% requiring more information before they can give a view (the remaining 1% stated 'don't know').

Analysis by respondent type shows that Oxford residents are most supportive of the proposals (38% stating 'good idea', 15% 'good idea but concerned about the details') whilst those representing organisations such as businesses and universities are least supportive (only 9% stating 'good idea', 63% stating 'bad idea'). Within this category, opposition to the proposals was highest amongst businesses (70% 'bad idea') and representatives of schools (65% 'bad idea'). Opposition was lower amongst University representatives (49% 'bad idea') and representatives of healthcare providers (19% 'bad idea').

Further analysis of feedback from residents (in and outside of Oxford) shows that white residents are more supportive of the proposals than residents from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups.

Residents with a disability are also less supportive of the proposals with 29% stating 'good idea' and 51% 'bad idea'; this compares with 42% 'good idea' and 40% 'bad idea' amongst those who do not have a disability.

There is a very marked trend in differing levels of support for the proposals by age; the older the resident, the less supportive of the proposals they are. For example, amongst residents aged 16-24, over half (55%) unconditionally support the proposals ('good idea'), with a third (33%) opposing them ('bad idea'). Amongst those aged 65+, the proportion supporting the proposals ('good idea') falls to 28%, and nearly half (47%) oppose them ('bad idea').



Comments on the proposals

After indicating their levels of support for the proposals, respondents were encouraged to type in any comments about the proposed bus gates. Those who do not support the proposals or who are unsure of them were much more likely to make a comment than those who think they are a good idea (we have found this to be the case in many similar consultations).

Amongst supporters of the proposals (who think that the proposed bus gates are a good idea), **the most common themes in the comments are as follows:**

- Reduce traffic
- Promote walking and cycling
- Reduce pollution
- Encourage public transport use
- Makes the city centre more attractive
- Reduce private car usage
- Should be made permanent

Overall, supporters tend to feel that the bus gates will reduce traffic and increase more sustainable transport methods which will make the city centre a more attractive environment with less pollution.

Respondents who have concerns about the details, need more information or oppose the proposals tended to highlight the following issues:

- Increased congestion in other areas of Oxford
- Reduced customer access to shops/services
- Concerns over the access for the vulnerable
- Limit access to my work
- Increase journey time and limited access to children's schools
- Concerns relating to Covid-19
- Damage to economy by reducing customer access

Displaced traffic onto the already busy ring road and an associated 'division of the city' are key concerns; there is a view, for example, that North Oxford residents will need to travel on the ring road which is already congested to get to South Oxford (likewise with travelling East to West).

There are a variety of access concerns, particularly for those looking to get to work and schools; some expect much longer journey times which they feel would actually be counter-productive in terms of environmental benefits. Access for the vulnerable is also a concern as they may not want to travel on buses due to Covid-19 (or, for example, mobility issues) and may also need access to healthcare which they believe will be more difficult as a result of the bus gates.

Local businesses are particularly concerned that access will be restricted for customers and also that operations will be affected (e.g. access for deliveries, tradesmen and employees).



Practicalities of the bus gates

Respondents were asked to indicate which viewpoints they agree with from a list of different statements about the aims and practicalities of the temporary bus gates.

The top priorities are similar across respondent groups, with agreement levels highest for the following viewpoints:

- Medical and healthcare professionals should be exempt whilst making home visits or similar (48% agree overall).
- None, the temporary bus gates should not be implemented (35%).
- Vehicles registered to and operated from city centre businesses should be exempt (26%).

Representatives of a business, university, college etc. were most likely to agree that vehicles registered to and operated from city centre businesses should be exempt (38%). In addition, the youngest resident age groups were more likely to agree with this viewpoint (36% where aged under 16, 33% where aged 16 to 24).

The above question was followed by an open-ended question where respondents could expand on their reasons for supporting various viewpoints and their thoughts on the practicalities.

Oxford residents were most likely to make a comment about exemptions for residents (18%). There was a relatively high level of support for resident exemptions, although some disagreement on how 'resident' should be defined; a number of comments suggested that some communities outside of the city centre need to be exempt.

A variety of comments re-iterated that city centre workers should be exempt (particularly from businesses, universities, colleges etc.: 32%), and that this needs to include tradesmen and those making deliveries to businesses. Comments also suggest that without exemptions some city centre businesses could be adversely affected, along with academic organisations and other organisations such as places of worship. A third of business representatives (business, university, college etc.) made a comment on this issue.

Respondents with a disability were most likely (20%) to comment on the need for exemptions for persons with a disability/vulnerability. These comments tended to highlight that some residents (elderly and with disabilities or mobility issues) are reliant on transport by car.

Parents are concerned about the practicalities of getting children to school, particularly in winter, and this is exacerbated by concerns about Covid-19 which mean many prefer private transport; this was a particular concern for under-16s (25%) and 35-44-year olds – in addition to those representing schools and universities.

Many of those commenting feel strongly that an exemption for health and care workers is essential and needs to include the full range of health and care workers, including social care staff and pharmacists making deliveries.



Reallocation of road-space

Respondents were asked whether or not they support reallocation of road-space to cycle lanes, pedestrian areas and alfresco dining.

Overall, there is clear support for the reallocation of some road-space, particularly for dedicated cycle lanes (71% support / 22% oppose) and expanded pedestrian areas (62% support / 28% oppose). Sentiment is more mixed for alfresco dining, but a significant majority (56%) still support this, with 31% opposing it.

Representatives of a business, university, college etc. show lower than average support for the various options, particularly expanded pedestrian areas (43% support) and alfresco dining (46%). Again, there are differences by organisation type within this category; levels of support for expanded pedestrian areas are 22% for school representatives, 36% amongst business representatives, 57% for Universities/Colleges and 73% for healthcare providers.

Younger residents tend to be most supportive of the ideas around reallocation of road space, particularly the 25-34 age group (79% support cycle lanes, 69% support expanded pedestrian areas, 64% support café and restaurant tables and chairs to enable more alfresco dining).

Residents with a disability are more likely than average to oppose reallocation of road-space: 29% oppose cycle lanes, 32% oppose expanded pedestrian areas, 37% oppose café and restaurant tables and chairs to enable more alfresco dining.

More generally, those who think the bus gates are a good idea (or a good idea but are concerned about the details) tend to support the reallocation of road-space, whilst those opposing the bus gate proposals are more likely to oppose the specific ideas for reallocation of road space.

Other comments & suggestions

Respondents were provided with the opportunity to make any other comments they wished to make about the proposed temporary bus gates.

Many of the comments re-iterate or elaborate on the points made in the earlier comments on the proposals, and again those in opposition to the proposals were more likely to comment; however, safer/dedicated cycle lanes/facilities and pedestrianisation of the area featured prominently in comments this time.

There are also a significant number of comments suggesting that the councils have not properly consulted on the proposals and that they are being rushed.

Respondents were also asked to comment on what else the councils should do to help facilitate safe, socially distanced transport in Oxford and restart the local economy.

The most common suggestions are around improved cycling infrastructure, improved cycling and pedestrian safety and better bus services (both in terms of frequency/coverage and affordability). Free parking (particularly for park and ride) was also a common suggestion.

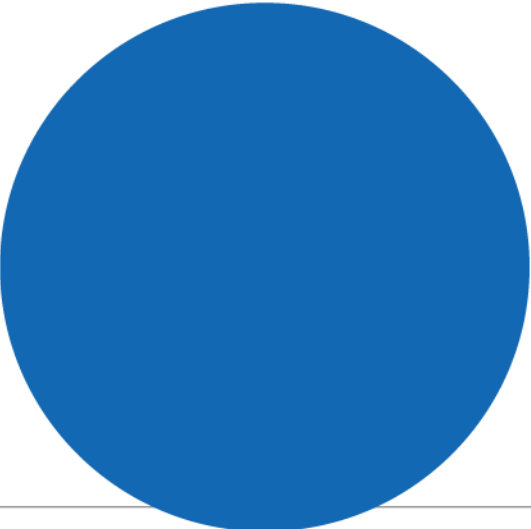
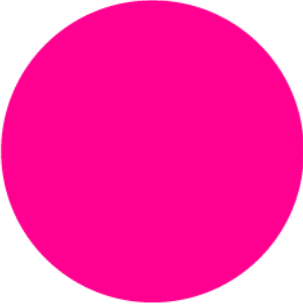


Suggestions for pedestrianisation range from wider pavements and spaces for walking and cycling to more ambitious/aspirational suggestions for pedestrian/cycling only streets in the continental style with terraces and alfresco dining.

Particularly amongst opponents of the scheme, the opportunity to make comments and suggestions was often used to re-iterate that travelling by bus is the last thing many people want to do in the current situation (Covid-19) and with the winter months approaching.



Introduction





In this section we provide details of the background, objectives and methodology used in the consultation survey.

Background to the survey

Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council have recently run an online feedback survey to gather views on temporary bus gates proposals for Oxford city centre, which aim to assist Oxford's recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic.

The proposed temporary bus gates aim to enable quicker, more frequent bus journeys on less congested roads and also to make conditions for pedestrians and cyclists safer and more attractive. They would allow the potential reallocation of road space to create an improved pedestrian and cycling environment.

- The link to the online feedback survey can be found [here](#).
- Further information on the proposals can be found [here](#).

About the survey

The councils encouraged feedback on the proposals through an online survey which was accessible on the Oxfordshire County Council website from 28th July until 9th August 2020. There has been a very high level of interest in this exercise and phenomenal response to the survey, with over 7,000 responses. A full profile (by respondent type and demographics) of who responded to the survey is provided overleaf.

About this report

DJS Research, an independent market research company, was commissioned by the councils to provide an independent analysis of the survey findings.

The survey introduced the proposals then asked respondents a series of questions including closed ('tick-box') questions, and open questions where respondents could type in comments.

In addition to analysing the closed questions, DJS Research carried out thematic analysis of the open comments from the online survey on a question-by-question basis, coding them into themes so that these could be quantified.

This document summarises the findings from the independent analysis.

The survey findings will inform the decisions about the scheme including the location of the bus gates, timings, and how road space can best be reallocated ahead of the proposed installation of the temporary bus gates.



Respondent profile

In total, 7,266 responses to the survey were received. A profile of the respondents to the survey is provided below (tables 1 to 5).

Table 1: please select ONE of the following that best describes in what capacity you are filling in this questionnaire.

OVERALL RESULTS (all responses: n=7,266).

Respondent type	No. responses	% responses
As an Oxford resident	5227	72%
As an individual living outside of Oxford	1576	22%
As or on behalf of a business, university, college etc.*	312	4%
As or on behalf of a group/organisation	56	1%
As a councillor	26	0%
Rather not say	65	1%

The majority of respondents were Oxford residents (72%) or individuals living outside of Oxford (22%); the remainder of responses is made up of people filling in the survey as or on behalf of businesses, universities, colleges etc. (4%), groups/organisations (1%) and councillors (<1%).

*Those classifying themselves as responding on behalf of a business, university, college etc. were asked to provide details of their organisation type. These respondents break down into representatives of: 161 business, 53 colleges/universities, 20 schools, 16 healthcare providers (e.g. GPs, NHS -Trusts), 11 organisations (e.g. places of worship) and 51 where the organisation was not specified.

Table 2: what is your age? RESIDENTS ONLY. (all Oxford residents and individuals living outside of Oxford who answered question: n=6,774).

Respondent type	No. responses	% responses
Under 16	22	0%
16-24	313	5%
25-34	1,003	15%
35-44	1277	19%
45-54	1512	22%
55-64	1268	19%
65 & over	1,155	17%
Prefer not to say	224	3%



Amongst residents, most age groups were well represented, although only 5% were aged under 25.

Table 3: are you...? RESIDENTS ONLY. (all Oxford residents and individuals living outside of Oxford who answered question: n=6,741).

Respondent type	No. responses	% responses
Male	3,103	46%
Female	3,241	48%
Other	26	0%
Prefer not to say	371	6%

Table 4: what is your ethnicity? RESIDENTS ONLY. (all Oxford residents and individuals living outside of Oxford who answered question: n=6,765).

Respondent type	No. responses	% responses
Asian or Asian British (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, any other Asian background)	163	2%
Black or Black British (Caribbean, African, or any other Black background)	42	1%
Chinese	39	1%
Mixed (White & Black Caribbean, White & Black African, White & Asian and any other Mixed background)	129	2%
White (British, Irish, any other white background)	5,427	80%
Other	109	2%
Prefer not to say	856	13%

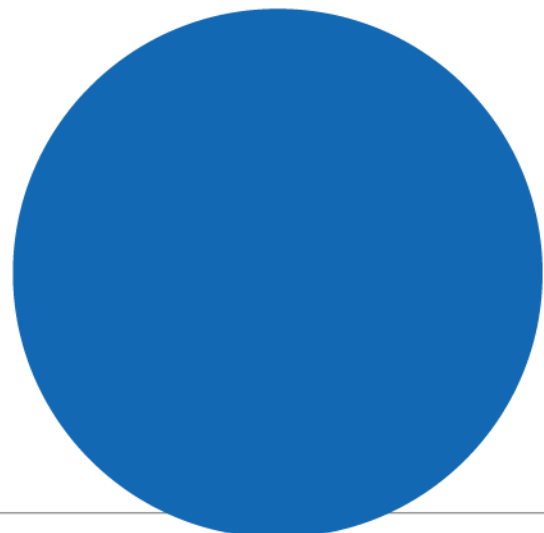
Table 5: please indicate whether you have a long-standing illness or disability. RESIDENTS ONLY (all Oxford residents and individuals living outside of Oxford who answered question: n=6,741).

Respondent type	No. responses	% responses
Yes	793	12%
No	5236	78%
Prefer not to say	718	11%

In the remainder of this report, where appropriate we have analysed how views differ by the different respondent types and demographic groups outlined above.



Levels of support



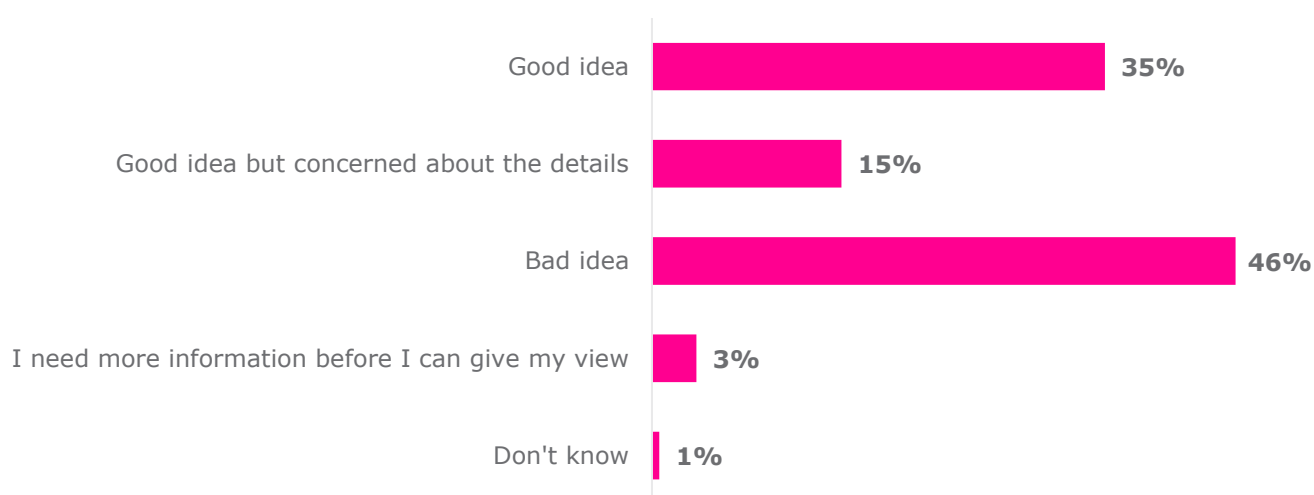


Those responding to the survey were asked to indicate whether or not they support the idea of the proposed bus gates.

Headline findings

Overall results for this question are summarised in figure 1, below.

Figure 1: what is your view about the proposed bus gates as a temporary measure to protect people from Covid-19 and restart the local economy? OVERALL RESULTS (all responses: n=7,262).



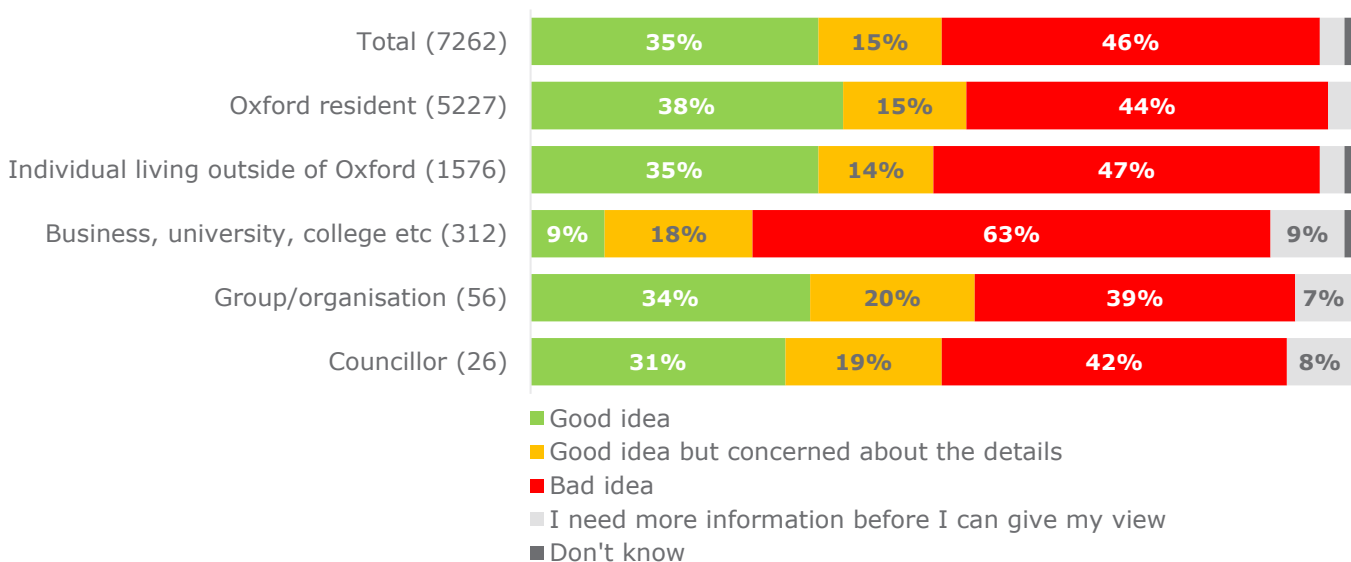
Overall, 35% of respondents think the proposed bus gates as a temporary measure to protect people from Covid-19 and restart the economy are a good idea, with a further 15% stating that they think the idea is good but are concerned about the details. Conversely, 46% are against the idea, with 3% requiring more information. 1% of respondents said they didn't know.

Results by respondent type

Figure 2.1 (overleaf) shows how responses to this question varied for different types of respondent. It shows that Oxford residents are most supportive of the proposals (38% stating 'good idea') whilst organisations such as businesses and universities/colleges are least supportive (9% stating 'good idea', 63% stating 'bad idea'). There is quite a range of views within this particular group though as set out later (see Figure 2.2).



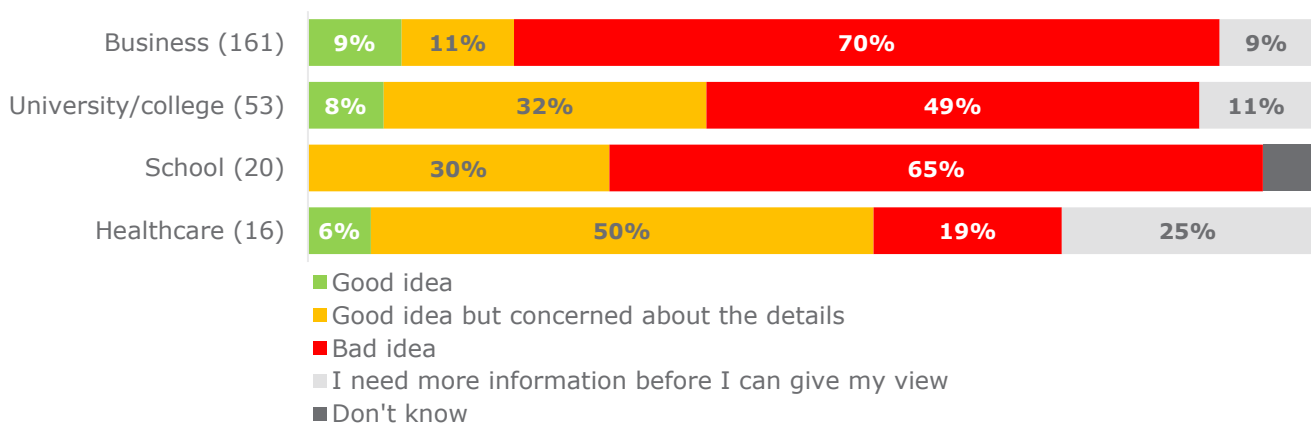
Figure 2.1: what is your view about the proposed bus gates as a temporary measure to protect people from Covid-19 and restart the local economy? RESULTS BY RESPONDENT TYPE (base sizes in brackets).



With the exception of organisations (businesses, universities etc.) most respondent groups are fairly evenly spread in terms of their sentiment towards the proposals with around half feeling they are a good idea (although with some concern about the details) and a slightly smaller proportion opposing the proposals and stating that they are a bad idea.

Figure 2.2 (below) breaks down sentiment for the different types of organisation in the business/university/college etc. category (where the type of organisation is indicated). The base sizes for schools and healthcare providers are quite low and should be treated as indicative rather than statistically robust.

Figure 2.2: what is your view about the proposed bus gates as a temporary measure to protect people from Covid-19 and restart the local economy? RESULTS BROKEN DOWN BY BUSINESS TYPE (base sizes in brackets).



Businesses are most likely to oppose the proposals (70% bad idea) whilst universities/colleges and healthcare providers are more likely to feel the proposals are a good idea but have concerns about the details.



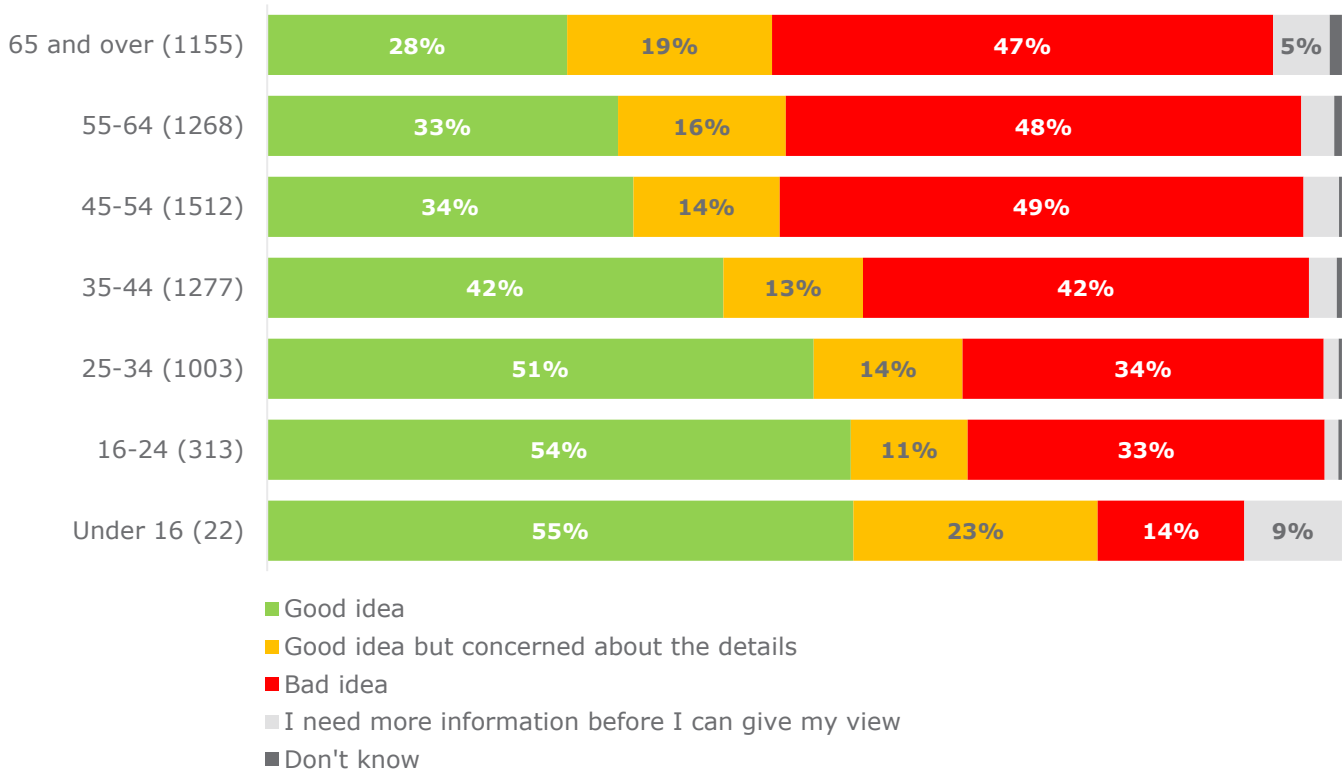
Resident results by demographic group

Further analysis of feedback from residents (in and outside of Oxford) highlights some differences in opinion by demographic factors (such as age and gender):

- Males are slightly more supportive of the proposals, with 41% stating they are a 'good idea' compared with 36% of females.
- White residents are more supportive of the proposals than residents from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups; 41% of white residents stated that the proposals are a 'good idea' compared with 29% of BAME residents. More than half (54%) of BAME residents stated that the proposals are a 'bad idea', compared with 40% of white residents.
- Residents with a disability are less supportive of the proposals with 29% stating 'good idea' and 51% 'bad idea'; this compares with 42% 'good idea' and 40% 'bad idea' amongst those who do not have a disability.

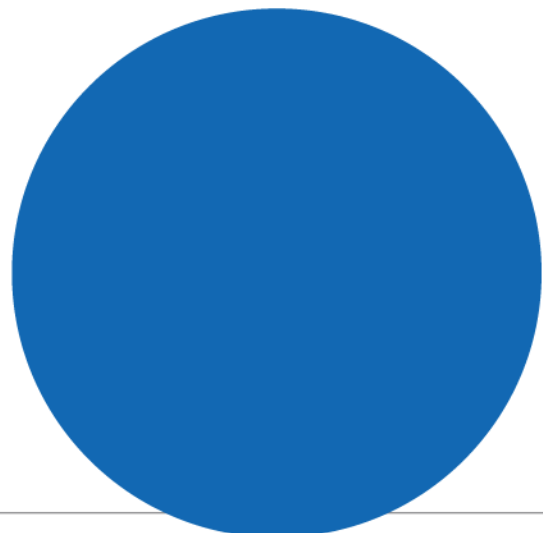
Another marked trend is in differing levels of support by age: the older the resident, the less supportive of the proposals they are (see figure 3, below):

Figure 3: what is your view about the proposed bus gates as a temporary measure to protect people from Covid-19 and restart the local economy? RESULTS BY RESIDENT AGE (base sizes in brackets).





Comments on the proposals





After indicating their levels of support for the proposals, respondents were encouraged to type in any comments about the proposed bus gates.

This was an open-ended question; DJS Research have analysed the comments and coded them into categories to provide a quantified sense of the themes and sentiment.

Important note: Those who do not support the proposals or who are unsure of them were much more likely to make a comment than those who think they are a good idea – for example only 916 of the 2,574 respondents who think the proposals are a good idea made a comment; in contrast 2,561 of the 3,316 respondents who think the proposals are a bad idea made a comment. The comments at an overall level are therefore more likely to highlight concerns than benefits.

Below we therefore provide a summary of key themes broken down by the level of support for the proposals.

Supporters of the proposals

If we look specifically at respondents who think that the proposed bus gates are a **good idea**, of the 916 comments, the most common themes are as follows:

1. Reduce traffic: 246 comments (27%)
2. Promote walking and cycling: 232 comments (25%)
3. Reduce pollution: 206 comments (22%)
4. Encourage public transport use: 97 comments (11%)
5. Makes the city centre more attractive: 60 comments (7%)
6. Reduce private car usage: 54 comments (6%)
7. Should be made permanent: 46 comments (5%)

Respondents who think that the proposed bus gates are a **good idea but are concerned about the details**, tended to use their comments to raise specific concerns; from 709 comments the most common themes are as follows:

1. Increase congestion in other areas of Oxford: 156 comments (22%)
2. Reduce customer access to shops/services: 76 comments (11%)
3. Concerns over the access for the vulnerable: 69 comments (10%)
4. Limit my access to my work: 65 comments (9%)
5. Increase journey/limited access to children's schools: 49 comments (7%)
6. Concerns relating to Covid: 46 comments (6%)
7. Reduce Traffic: 40 comments (6%)
8. Increase pollution: 36 comments (5%)
9. Poor public transport service: 33 comments (5%)

Example comments illustrating some of the positive sentiments amongst supporters of the proposals are provided overleaf.



Example comments (where support the proposals)

"The bus gates are essential to reduce traffic congestion and make it easier to travel by bus, on foot or by bike."

"It is more critical than ever to cut pollution levels in the city and make cycling and walking safer."

"I think it's important to do all we can to keep Oxford's air clean and to encourage public transport usage, walking & cycling, while discouraging car passage through the city centre."

"I strongly support this proposal. Reducing cars and streamlining buses will create a cleaner, much less polluted and more attractive and safer city environment. I believe it will open up possibilities for human-centred economic recovery."

"With the introduction of the bus gates and the encouragement to build Oxford City back into a Visitors and shopping city, I would like to see the parking free at the park and rides. This will also promote employees from businesses and organisations to leave their vehicles outside of the city limits and embrace a better transport solution."

"Fully supportive. I'm just outside the city centre so they will be an occasional irritation but I'm convinced the benefits will outweigh this. I've cycled across the city to work and the kids have taken buses to school; this should help make those cycle trips safer and bus journeys quicker and more reliable."

"Strongly in favour. Car users will still be able to access any of the car parks they do now, but the gates will reduce through traffic, and so make cycling and walking a more pleasant experience in this 'cycle city'."

"We need bold ideas to fight congestion and revive the city centre. This is a good start and needs to run for a suitable period of time so evidence can be captured."

"I am in favour of anything that we can do to discourage cars and improve safety and air quality for pedestrians and cyclists. It was so lovely walking around Wallingford during the early weeks of the lockdown - cleaner air and being able to hear birdsong!"

"It is so important to improve air quality in the city and to encourage walking and cycling."

"Make them permanent. If they are good enough now then they should be good enough forever."

"During lockdown I saw families cycling along St. Aldate's - something I've never seen before. That's the kind of city I'd like to live in, and the bus gates are a first step in getting there."

"Excellent idea! The city centre was so much nicer without all the cars, it makes walking around or cycling so much more pleasant."

"I hope that they become permanent measures, rather than just temporary. We know that most traffic in Oxford does not bring any benefit to the businesses in town, if there was space for people to sit outside, with good options for cycling and walking it would be a world leading city to spend time in."



Require more information

Amongst respondents that stated **I need more information before I can give my view**, the most common themes from the 234 comments are as follows:

1. Increase congestion in other areas of Oxford: 39 comments (17%)
2. Concerns relating to Covid: 29 comments (12%)
3. Limit my access to my work: 24 comments (10%)
4. Reduce customer access to shops/services: 18 comments (8%)
5. Concerns over the access for the vulnerable: 17 comments (7%)
6. Poor public transport service: 14 comments (6%)
7. Increase pollution: 13 comments (6%)
8. Not good for residents: 12 comments (5%)
9. Reduce access to Health Care: 12 comments (5%)

Opposition to the proposals

Amongst respondents who think that the proposed bus gates are a **bad idea**, the most common themes in the 2,561 comments are as follows:

1. Increase congestion in other areas of Oxford: 632 comments (25%)
2. Concerns relating to Covid: 552 comments (22%)
3. Reduce customer access to shops/services: 396 comments (15%)
4. Damage to the economy by reducing customer access: 360 comments (14%)
5. Limit my access to my work: 250 comments (10%)
6. Increase journey/limited access to children's schools: 228 comments (9%)
7. Increase pollution: 225 comments (9%)
8. Divide City: 218 comments (9%)
9. Concerns over the access for the vulnerable: 200 comments (8%)

Example comments illustrating some of the concerns, caveats and less positive sentiment about the proposals are provided overleaf.



Example comments (where oppose or need more information)

"The displaced traffic will have to go on the ring road, which is dangerous & congested enough at present."

"As a business I would be most concerned about our delivery drivers being restricted."

"What are the implications for the Botley Road which is usually heavily congested anyway and now you are proposing all traffic use this. How would people get to the car park at the Westgate Centre if you are not allowed to enter anywhere in the city centre?!"

"It will mean North Oxford residents can not travel to South Oxford without going on the ring-road which is notoriously congested and dangerous, particularly because of the lorries. This is not ideal for older people. North Oxford residents will therefore stop travelling to South Oxford which will lead to most of the Westgate closing (as the restaurants in the Castle area did due to the exorbitant parking charges at Worcester Street car park) and the Botley Road shops will also close. Disastrous."

"I live in West Oxford, my elderly parents live in Jericho, if the proposed gates are imposed and I need to visit them to perform care visits etc. If the proposed gates are installed I will have to drive through them in case of emergency and get the fine."

If not then my journey will be vastly extended by having to drive around the ring road which in normal times at rush hour is not viable. These proposals essentially isolate parts of the city from the other which is not acceptable."

"Shops are already finding it hard to get the footfall because of Covid, people aren't keen on using buses because of Covid, if you stop people from driving through these areas it's only going to: 1 make people go to places like Milton Keynes and other places away from Oxford city centre. 2 close shops so all that money you spent building a new shopping centre will be wasted. 3 what about trades plumbers painters builders etc. that do work in shops and colleges on the centre, how are they meant to?"

"I am concerned I may not be able to drive to work. I live in Jericho and work in Cowley and I often need my car available at the practice for urgent home visits."

"This will double and triple the length of my two most frequent journeys (to my elderly parents home and my daughter's school), with unacceptable associated costs (financial and environmental). There is no bus service that my daughter could catch to school and the roads (especially the tourist coaches) are not safe for a 10yr old to cycle. You should be focusing on dissuading out of town traffic from coming into/through our city rather than penalising residents."

"I am a police constable working in the south of Oxford. I have no option other than to use my personal car to commute to work due to the long and unsociable hours that I work. Living in Jericho means that I will now add 4,000 miles to my annual mileage (verified by Google Maps) just to get to work. Being a young driver this will also add additional insurance and fuel costs to me personally. This will increase my carbon footprint and therefore will add to pollution within Oxford."

"Concerned that our patients may find it difficult to reach the surgery e.g. those living close to Botley road. There are no direct buses to Jericho from Botley. Elderly can not necessarily travel by bus and often rely on relatives driving them to surgery. Patients rightly remain anxious about Covid risk on public transport and those at higher risk should not be expected to travel by bus. It would also cause significant difficulties for District Nurses visiting patients across the city."

"If this is truly to reduce Covid-19, it is the opposite of what is required. Private transport is the better option. Bus transport to alleviate traffic makes sense, but NOT to prevent Covid."



Key themes by respondent group & segment

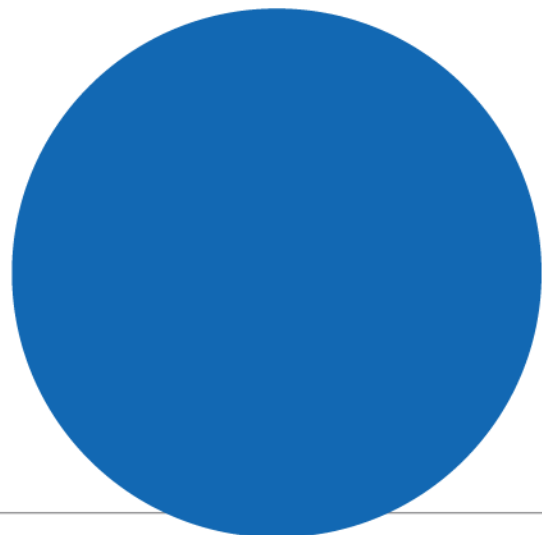
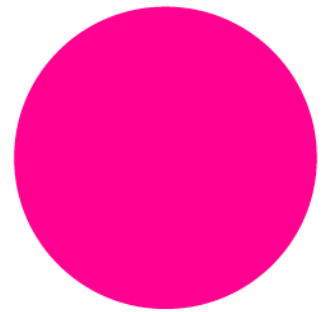
The main themes in the comments are similar across respondent groups, but there are a few differences in relative importance. It is notable that organisations (Business, university, college etc.) are more concerned than average about damage to the economy due to an impact on business operation (12% making this comment compared to 4% overall). There are also some indicative differences between the different categories within business, university, college etc.:

- Businesses are more likely to comment on reduced access to shops/services (25%) and damage to the economy by reducing customer access (22%).
- Healthcare providers are particularly concerned about reduced access to work (43%) and concerns over access for the vulnerable (36%).
- Representatives of schools are likely to comment on increased journey time and limited access to children's schools (71%).

Key themes are relatively consistent across demographic groups, although there are some key differences: Concerns over the access for the vulnerable are more prevalent amongst over 65s (11%) and residents with a disability (19%). Comments relating to accessing schools are more prevalent than average amongst under 16s (22%), those aged 35 to 44 (13%) and BAME residents (17%).



Practicalities of the bus gates





Respondents were asked to indicate which viewpoints about the bus gates they agree with from a list of different statements.

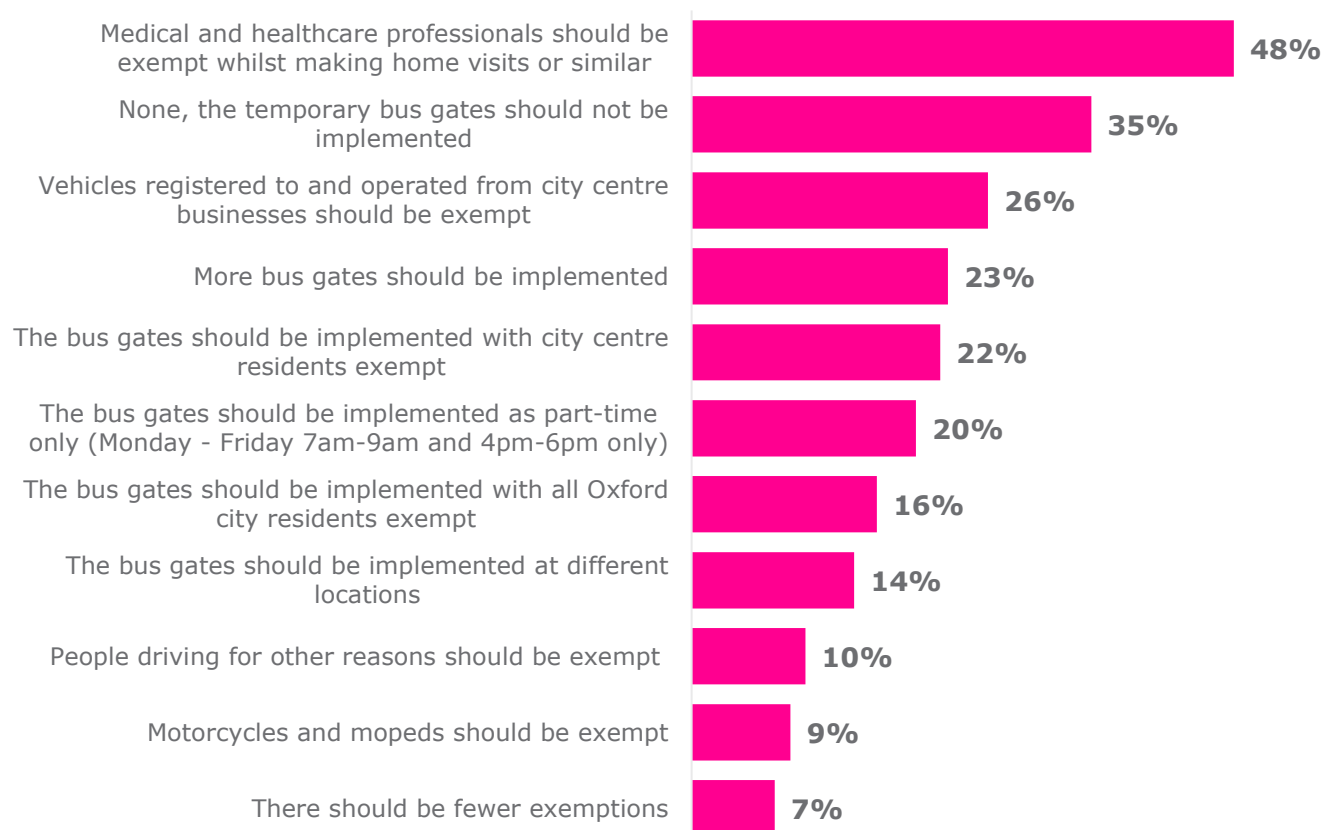
Headline findings

Overall results for this question are summarised in figure 4, below.

Figure 4: we are aware that there are a range of views about the aims and practicalities of the temporary bus gates being proposed and we are open to suggestions to change the proposals.

Which of the following viewpoints about the proposed temporary bus gates do you agree with? OVERALL RESULTS % AGREE.

(all responses: n=7,118).



Results by respondent type

Table 6 (overleaf) breaks down these results by respondent type with the top three for each group shaded green. The top priorities are similar across the groups although groups/organisations and councillors are more likely to agree that more bus gates should be implemented.



Table 6: we are aware that there are a range of views about the aims and practicalities of the temporary bus gates being proposed and we are open to suggestions to change the proposals.

Which of the following viewpoints about the proposed temporary bus gates do you agree with? RESULTS BY RESPONDENT TYPE (base sizes in brackets).
Top three for each audience shaded green.

	Total (7,266)	Oxford resident (5,227)	Individual living outside of Oxford (1,576)	Business, university, college etc. (312)	Group/organisation (56)	Councillor (26)
Medical and healthcare professionals should be exempt whilst making home visits or similar	48%	50%	44%	35%	58%	40%
None, the temporary bus gates should not be implemented	35%	33%	38%	48%	26%	40%
Vehicles registered to and operated from city centre businesses should be exempt	26%	26%	25%	38%	23%	16%
More bus gates should be implemented	23%	24%	22%	6%	28%	24%
The bus gates should be implemented with city centre residents exempt	22%	24%	18%	16%	19%	20%
The bus gates should be implemented as part-time only (Monday – Friday 7am–9am and 4pm–6pm only)	20%	20%	20%	19%	15%	12%
The bus gates should be implemented with all Oxford city residents exempt	16%	21%	4%	13%	8%	0%
The bus gates should be implemented at different locations	14%	15%	15%	9%	4%	16%
People driving for other reasons should be exempt – explain below	10%	8%	13%	24%	25%	12%
Motorcycles and mopeds should be exempt	9%	9%	9%	7%	9%	12%
There should be fewer exemptions	7%	8%	6%	3%	4%	8%



Top three results by segment & demographic group

The view that **medical and healthcare professionals should be exempt whilst making home visits or similar** has the highest level of agreement (48% agree overall). Levels of agreement vary, and the audiences most likely to agree with this viewpoint are as follows:

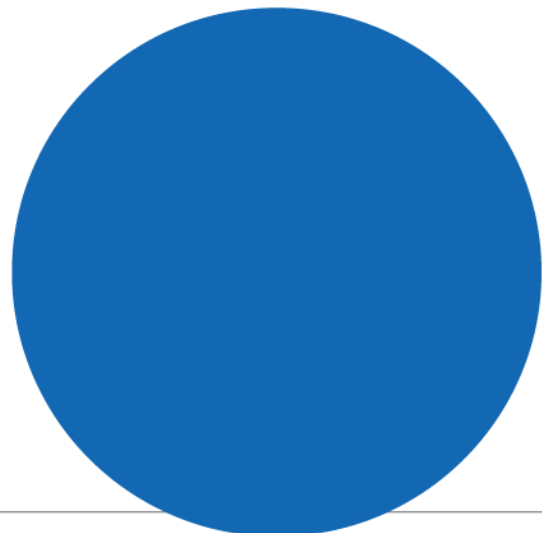
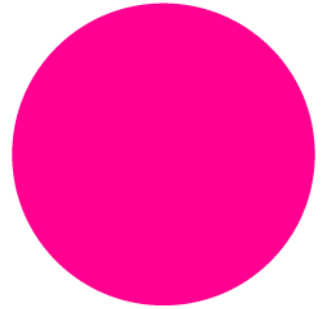
- Representatives of healthcare providers (88% agree).
- Those who think the bus gates are a good idea but are concerned about the details (70% agree).
- Those who think the proposals are a good idea (66% agree) or that need more information to provide their view (66%).
- Those representing a group or organisation (58% agree).
- Residents aged 65 and over (55% agree) and females (53% agree).

Over a third of respondents (35%) ticked '**None, the temporary bus gates should not be implemented**'. Agreement here is highest for those who think the bus gates are a bad idea (74%). As a result, those most likely to agree with this viewpoint reflect the cohort that are least supportive of the proposals, for example residents from BAME segments (41% agree) and residents with a disability (41%). Representatives of a business, university, college etc. are more likely to agree with this viewpoint (48% agree); however, there is some variance by the category of business: 54% of business representatives agree compared with 35% for universities/colleges, 30% for schools and 19% for healthcare providers.

Overall, over a quarter (26%) agreed that **vehicles registered to and operated from city centre businesses should be exempt**. Representatives of a business, university, college etc. were most likely to agree with this viewpoint (38% overall, 34% for businesses and 48% for representatives of universities). Agreement for this statement was also relatively high amongst those who think the proposals are a good idea but are concerned about the details (44%) and those who need more information before they can give their view (37%). In addition, the youngest resident age groups were most likely to agree with this viewpoint (36% where aged under 16, 33% where aged 16 to 24).



Comments on practicalities



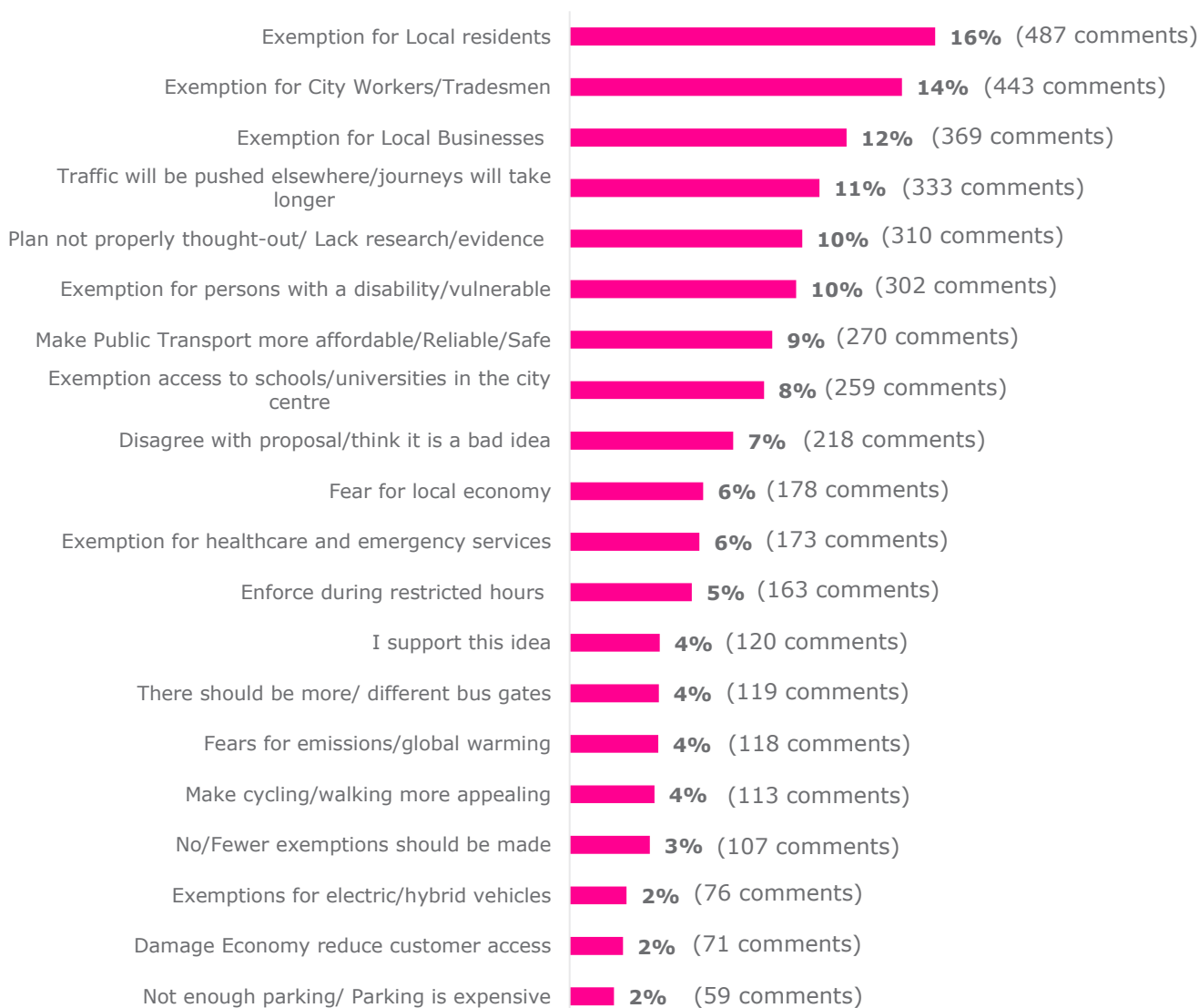


Respondents were encouraged to type in any comments about the aims and practicalities of the temporary bus gates

This was an open-ended question where respondents could expand on their reasons for supporting the viewpoints detailed in the previous section; DJS Research have analysed the comments and coded them into themes to provide a quantified sense of the themes and sentiment.

Overall results for this question are summarised in figure 5, below.

Figure 5: We are aware that there are a range of views about the aims and practicalities of the temporary bus gates being proposed and we are open to suggestions to change the proposals. Please enter any additional comments to expand on your answers above (Which of the following viewpoints about the proposed temporary bus gates do you agree with?)
OVERALL RESULTS (all responses: n= 3,086).





In total, 3,086 respondents made a comment; again, those who oppose the proposals, have concerns or need more information were more likely to make a comment than those who support the proposals without concerns.

Some of the themes re-iterate and re-enforce earlier comments about general support, opposition and concerns; however, many comments provided more detail on view-points around the aims and practicalities of the temporary bus gates. We explore some of this detail below.

Exemption for local residents: 487 comments (16%)

Oxford residents were most likely to make a comment about this issue (18%). There was a relatively high level of support for resident exceptions, although some disagreement on how 'resident' should be defined; a number of comments suggested that some communities outside of the city centre need to be exempt:

"City Centre residents with valid Oxfordshire Parking Permits should be permitted to select ONE gate through which they may pass through, not necessarily all time but at non-peak times say."

"The exemption should be more than city centre residents, as other near-centre communities would be very negatively affected. It may not need to cover outer Oxford residents though for whom going via the ring road adds little inconvenience."

Exemption for City Workers/Tradesmen: 443 comments (14%)

Many comments re-iterated that city centre workers should be exempt (particularly amongst Businesses, universities, colleges etc.: 32%), and that this needs to include tradesmen and those making deliveries to businesses. This view was particularly prevalent amongst representatives of universities/colleges (43%) and healthcare providers (54%).

"Tradesman and delivery vehicles should also have exemption for travel or work on city centre addresses."

"Those living, working, attending school and university, and making healthcare calls in the city centre should be exempt, if these bus gates do go ahead."

Exemption for Local Businesses: 369 comments (12%)

Comments suggest that without exemptions some city centre businesses could be adversely affected, as well as some academic organisations and other organisations such as places of worship. A third of business representatives (business, university, college etc.) made a comment on this issue:

"The bus gates will be detrimental to all small businesses, making deliveries and pickups of goods monetarily exorbitant."

"They should not be implemented in the Oxford university science area as a lot of employees will be negatively impacted."



Exemption for persons with a disability/vulnerable:

302 comments (10%)

Representatives of healthcare providers (38%) and respondents with a disability (20%) were most likely to comment on this issue. These comments tended to highlight that some residents (elderly and with disabilities or mobility issues) are reliant on transport by car:

"Elderly and mobility-impaired city centre residents will have their lives seriously restricted with consequent risk to their health. Being able to reach nearby supermarkets for food by car is essential for us. We cannot carry shopping."

"The bus gates do not serve members of the community reliant on their cars; e.g. the disabled and certain elderly residents."

Make Public Transport more appealing affordable/Reliable/Safe:

270 comments (9%)

There were a variety of comments about a need to improve both the affordability, quality and frequency of bus services in particular (in the wider context of concerns over Covid-19). Individuals living outside of Oxford were most likely to comment on this (11%).

"Bus services from villages are too expensive to be a viable option currently."

"Public transport should be subsidised. If it was cheaper and more reliable people wouldn't need to use their cars."

"You should change bus routes not inflict bus gates on Oxford. The issue is that bus don't connect and you can't get from one part of Oxford to another without switching. You should redesign bus routes!"

"Buses don't feel safe to many people at the moment and the bus gates won't make any difference to this."

Exemption for parents who have children in the schools/ universities in the city centre: 259 comments (8%)

Parents are concerned about the practicalities of getting children to school, particularly in winter, and this is exacerbated by concerns about Covid-19 which mean many prefer private transport; this was a particular concern for under 16s (25%), 35-44 year olds (17%) and females (10%) – in addition to those representing schools (68%).



"As a parent with children at school in Oxford, bus or train transport are not always possible. Coming into winter, increased Covid risk and increased congestion for those of us living outside Oxford already in play, it will be very hard to negotiate a bus gated system on top of it all."

"Zero consideration given to NHS shift workers who have to drop off children in Oxford City Centre at different schools where it is not practicable to travel via longer, more time-consuming routes or use different bus routes due to school and work start times. Not all of us spend all day shopping or sightseeing. Not all of us can start work at different times on a hospital ward and not all of us have the option to work from home."

Exemption for healthcare & emergency services: 173 comments (6%)

Amongst representatives of healthcare providers, 23% made a comment about this viewpoint. Many of those commenting feel strongly that this exemption is essential and needs to include the full range of health and care workers:

"The medical one seems absolutely essential - not just emergency vehicles but also e.g. GPs and District Nurses on home visits. Otherwise they will just spend more time on the road and less seeing patients!"

"Social care professionals and pharmacists who make home deliveries should be exempt too."

Enforce during limited/restricted hours: 163 comments (5%)

Comments suggest some support for a time-limited approach, although there is not a clear-cut consensus on what those times should be (in particular whether rush hour/commuter traffic should be restricted or not):

"I can see no reason why bus gates should not be implemented but you must allow people to get into and out of work without being penalised. Operate the gates between, say, 10am and 4pm when shoppers are most likely to be in town while allowing those who drive to work (and have parking facilities) to do so. Those who are parked all day while at work are adding no problems to the congestion in the city centre."

"By part time bus gates, I would suggest Monday to Friday but at the original hours (7:30-6:30). With current working habits, there is less 9-5 so I think there is less of a rush hour so we should be stopping all commuter traffic at any time of the day cutting through the court centre not just morning and evening."



Make cycling/walking more appealing e.g. more/better paths, made safer: 113 comments (4%)

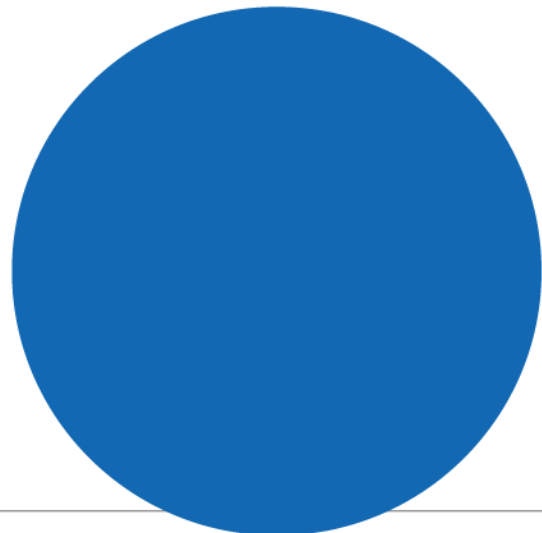
In addition to Oxford residents (including those supporting of the proposals), representatives of group/organisations were more likely to comment on this (8%). Some comments simply highlight that this should be top of mind when implementing the bus gates, but others suggest that wider work to improve cycling and walking infrastructure is required.

"Better cycle infrastructure should be implemented in conjunction with this. Current routes from the north of the city to anywhere other than the direct city centre are appalling and unsafe, especially for families who are either using bike carriers/trailers or have young children cycling with them."

"Do it like Ghent. Let's have streets fit for cycling and walking."



Reallocation of road-space





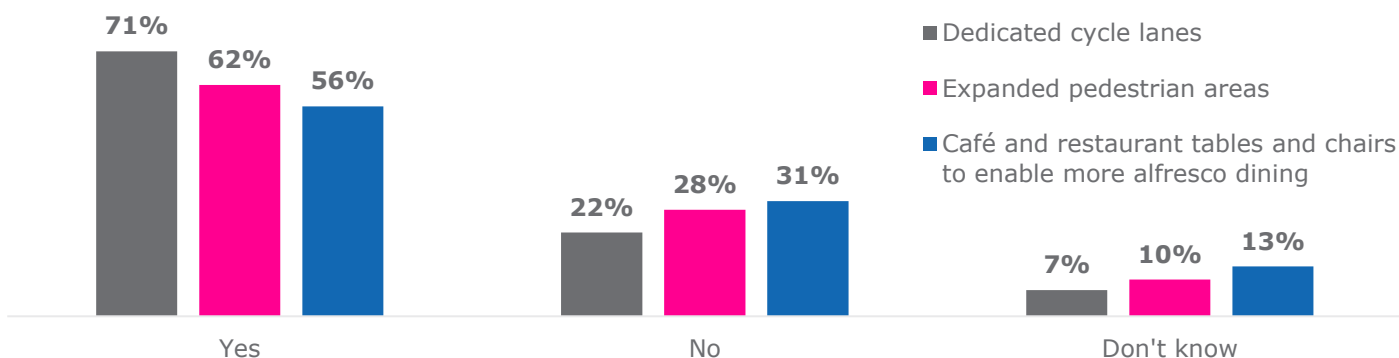
Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they support reallocation of road-space to cycle lanes, pedestrian areas and alfresco dining.

Headline findings

Overall results for this question are summarised in figure 6, below.

Figure 6: the proposed temporary bus gates will reduce through traffic that should free up some road space.

Would you support the reallocation of some road-space to any of the following...? OVERALL RESULTS (all responses: cycle lanes n=7,004; pedestrian areas n=4,970; alfresco dining n=6,883).



Overall, there is clear support for the reallocation of some road-space, particularly for dedicated cycle lanes (71% support). Sentiment is more mixed for alfresco dining, but a significant majority (56%) still support this.

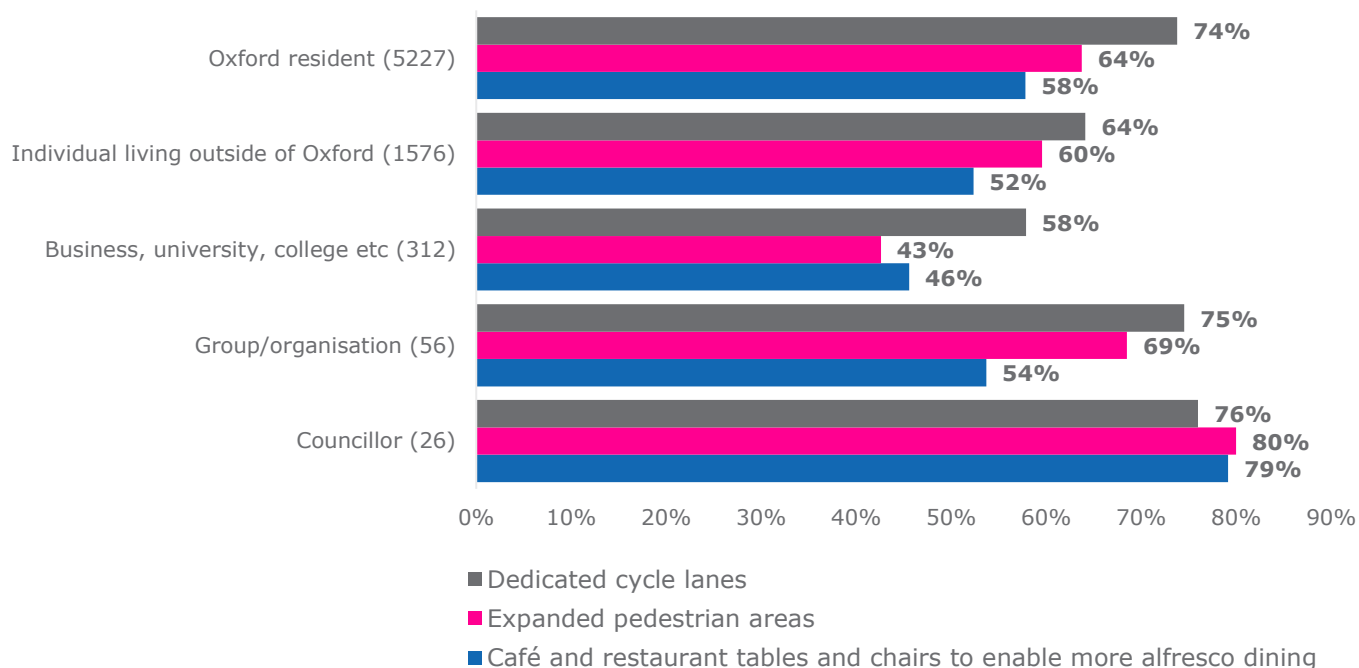
Results by respondent type

Figure 7.1 (overleaf) shows the proportions supporting each type of road-space reallocation by respondent type.



Figure 7.1: the proposed temporary bus gates will reduce through traffic that should free up some road space.

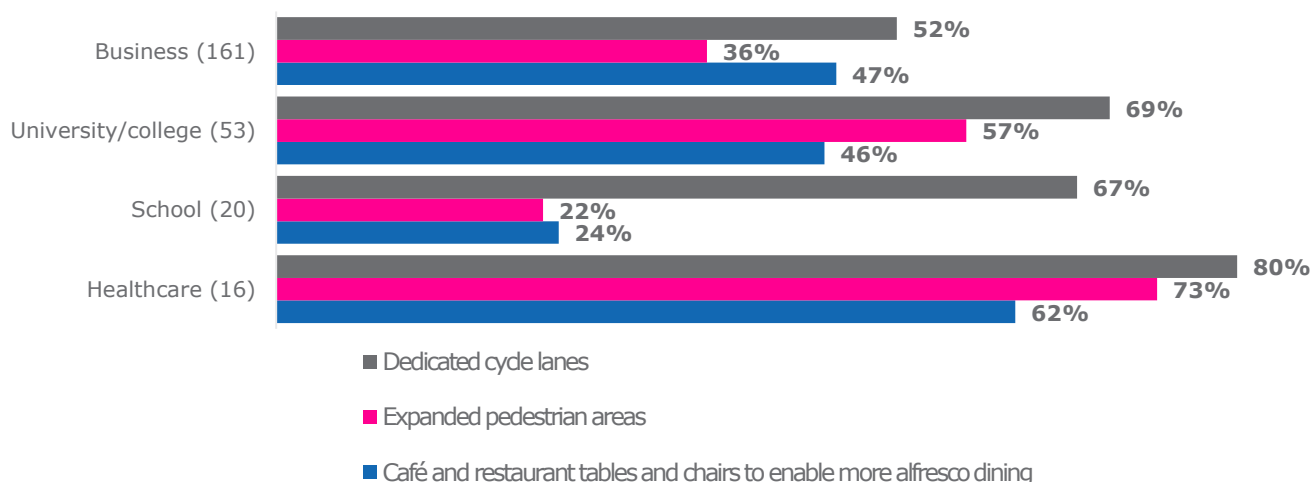
Would you support the reallocation of some road-space to any of the following...? % SUPPORT BY RESPONDENT TYPE (base sizes in brackets).



Representatives of a business, university, college etc. show the lowest levels of support for the various options, particularly expanded pedestrian areas (43% support) and alfresco dining (46%). Figure 7.2 (below) breaks down sentiment for the different types of organisation in the business/university/college etc. category (where the type of organisation is indicated). The statistics for schools and healthcare providers should be treated as indicative rather than statistically robust.

Figure 7.2: the proposed temporary bus gates will reduce through traffic that should free up some road space.

Would you support the reallocation of some road-space to any of the following...? % RESULTS BROKEN DOWN BY BUSINESS TYPE (base sizes in brackets).





Results by segment & demographic group

Support for **dedicated cycle lanes** is particularly high amongst those who think the bus gates are a good idea (95% support) and those who feel the gates are a good idea but are concerned about the details (87% support). Support for cycle lanes is also particularly high amongst residents aged 25-34 (79% support).

Segments more likely than average to oppose reallocation of road-space to cycle lanes include those who think the bus gates are a bad idea (44% oppose), and residents with a disability (29% oppose).

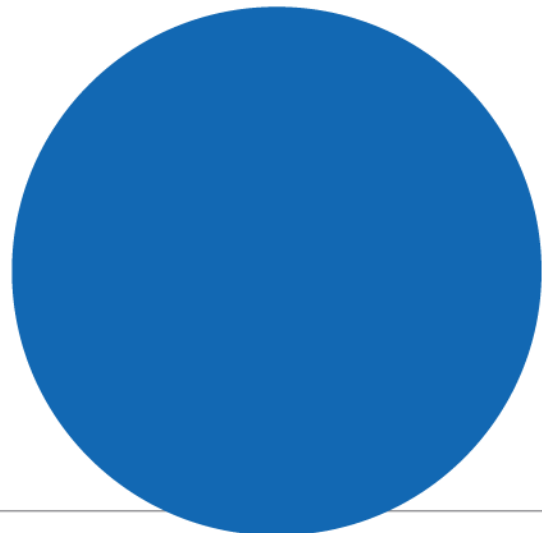
Support for **expanded pedestrian areas** shows a similar trend, with support high amongst those who think the bus gates are a good idea (92% support) and those who feel the gates are a good idea but are concerned about the details (80% support). Support is again particularly high amongst residents aged 25-34 (69% support).

Again, segments more likely than average to oppose reallocation of road-space to cycle lanes include those who think the bus gates are a bad idea (56% oppose), and residents with a disability (32% oppose).

Proposals for **café and restaurant tables and chairs to enable more alfresco dining** also see highest support amongst those who think the bus gates are a good idea (83% support) and those who feel the gates are a good idea but are concerned about the details (68% support). Younger age groups are again most supportive (64% for 25 to 34-year-olds and 61% for 16-24-year-olds).



Additional comments





Respondents were provided with the opportunity to make any other comments they wished to make about the proposed temporary bus gates.

This was an open-ended question; DJS Research have analysed the comments and coded them into themes to provide a quantified sense of the themes and sentiment.

Many of the comments re-iterate or elaborate on the points made in the earlier comments on the proposals, and again those in opposition to the proposals were more likely to comment; In total 3,158 comments were made: 796 from those who think the proposals are a 'good idea', 455 for 'good idea but concerned about the details', 1,753 for 'bad idea', and 134 for 'I need more information before I can give my view'.

Supporters of the proposals

For respondents who think that the proposed temporary bus gates are a **good idea**, of the 796 comments, the most common themes are as follows:

1. Good idea/support this idea: 176 comments (22%)
2. Safer/dedicated Cycle Lanes: 173 comments (22%)
3. Reduce pollution: 89 comments (11%)
4. Promote walking/cycling: 80 comments (10%)
5. Reduce traffic: 79 comments (10%)
6. Pedestrianise the area: 98 comments (9%)
7. Make the city centre more attractive: 51 comments (6%)
8. Should be made permanent: 50 comments (6%)

Many of these comments reflect comments seen earlier, but safer/dedicated cycle lanes/facilities and pedestrianisation of the area feature this time. Some **example comments** to illustrate these sentiments are provided below.

"Dedicated cycle lanes will also encourage more people to cycle. There are many benefits from having more people cycling, including economic, environmental and health related."

"Pedestrianise Broad St, George St, St Giles, and Cowley Road. Create a segregated cycle lane on Woodstock Road."

"Oxford has some very wide sections of road which are prime locations for expanded pavements, dedicated cycleway (NOT shared with pedestrians, they must be entirely segregated from pedestrians as shared paths are in neither cyclists nor pedestrians best interests) and more tables and chairs in the street."

"I would like dedicated cycle lanes. If you allow dining areas they you will have to expand pedestrian areas."

"Cars are a noisy, heavy, air-polluting, space-wasting and potentially lethal way of transportation. Dedicated cycle lanes, pedestrian areas and outside dining spaces make the living space so much more desirable for living and breathing and exactly what citizens need."



Respondents who think that the proposed temporary bus gates are a **good idea but are concerned about the details** again tended to use their comments to raise specific concerns; from 1,077 comments the most common themes are as follows:

1. Safer/dedicated Cycle Lanes: 76 comments (17%)
2. Increase congestion in other areas of Oxford: 69 comments (15%)
3. Increase journey time: 38 comments (8%)
4. Concerns over access for the vulnerable: 34 comments (7%)
5. OCC did not properly consult us/moving too fast: 31 comments (7%)
6. Exemptions for residents: 31 comments (7%)
7. Good idea/support this idea: 25 comments (5%)
8. Poor public transport: 24 comments (5%)
9. Concerns relating to Covid-19: 21 comments (5%)
10. Limit my access to work: 21 comments (5%)

Some **example comments** are provided below.

"I am all in favour of getting people out of their cars but you have to fix the routes into the city first and give safe alternatives, before you close down the city centre to private vehicles. Otherwise, the only people who will benefit are the residential university students who live in the central zone. Cowley Rd, Iffley Rd, Banbury Rd, Woodstock Rd, Abingdon Rd, Botley Rd need SEGREGATED CYCLE LANES FIRST if you want to make the city centre a safe and appealing place for Oxfordshire residents to visit & work in."

"Overall I support the idea of decreasing traffic flow in the city centre, and would support limiting private car access. However, not allowing it at all in certain areas can be very problematic. For example collecting large packages or people with mobility issues."

"Good that the council is taking measures to address climate change (although I notice it is no longer be promoted as such), but some there should be some consideration of the fact that this will not discourage drivers but rather just make them drive around Oxford – leading to congestion on Banbury and Woodstock Roads and increase car use - and how this created problem will be addressed."

"This is a bold initiative and I am excited to see how it works. I am unclear how or even if this is intended to work with the other bus gates that have been under consultation. I am very concerned that in both sets of consultation there has been very little mention of people with medical issues who rely on their cars: I've heard the complaint that they feel sidelined at the expense of the able-bodied, and I think that's entirely valid. We need a system that will work for everyone."

Require more information

Amongst respondents that stated **I need more information before I can give my view**, the most common themes from the 253 comments are as follows:

1. Increase journey time: 18 comments (13%)
2. Increase congestion in other areas of Oxford: 16 comments (12%)
3. OCC did not properly consult us/moving too fast: 13 comments (10%)
4. Poor public transport: 12 comments (9%)
5. Safer/dedicated Cycle Lanes: 10 comments (7%)
6. Concerns relating to Covid-19: 10 comments (7%)
7. Promote walking/cycling: 10 comments (7%)



8. Concerns over access for the vulnerable: 9 comments (7%)

9. Exemptions for residents: 9 comments (7%)

Example comments are provided below.

"Why are you funnelling all traffic round the already far too busy ring road. By cutting off further routes it will create even more traffic chaos in Oxford than there is now."

"I have no problem with the concept of bus gates but I feel it is important that staff and relevant individuals who require access (e.g. parents and their children who attend school in the centre of town) have access to the school and its facilities without fear of being fined/other. Perhaps if the bus gates could be located in places that do not affect access to any schools this would be more appropriate."

"All central Oxford residents and businesses are by definition located near one of the proposed bus gates. For every central Oxford location, the bus gates may entail a very long return journey (resulting in loss of time, extra traffic and additional air pollution) in the course of business or household routine. Therefore in my view there should be exemptions."

"I am worried by the increased traffic that will be squeezed out onto the various bypasses, link roads, and small city streets in the residential parts of the city, as we all try to access the different points of the compass without having to circle half the clock-face. And I dread ever greater proliferation of futile and fatuous road furniture. Fewer signs and more trees and green spaces, please."

Opposition to the proposals

Amongst respondents who think that the proposed temporary bus gates are a **bad idea**, the most common themes in the 1,753 comments are as follows:

1. Increase congestion in other areas of Oxford: 300 comments (17%)
2. Bad idea/cancel plans: 248 comments (14%)
3. Concerns relating to Covid-19: 210 comments (12%)
4. Damage to economy by reducing customer access: 201 comments (11%)
5. OCC did not properly consult us/moving too fast: 155 comments (9%)
6. Increase journey time: 144 comments (8%)
7. Reduce customer access to shops/services: 127 comments (7%)
8. Concerns over access for the vulnerable: 116 comments (7%)
9. Increase pollution: 110 comments (6%)
10. Safer/dedicated Cycle Lanes: 108 comments (6%)
11. Poor public transport: 105 comments (6%)

Again, many of these comments reflect comments seen earlier, but there are also a significant number of comments suggesting that the councils have not properly consulted on the proposals and that they are being rushed. Some **example comments** to illustrate these sentiments are provided overleaf.



"Managing traffic into the city is a good idea. Pushing it without much consultation is not. Spinning the request under the remit of social distancing is frankly insulting."

"I think the scheme has been rushed through without thought about the impact on people working in Oxford. Many people employed by the university live outside of Oxford due to cost of housing, and have jobs that require uncertain hours (experiments, lecturing commitments).

Whilst some of these activities may move online it is not possible to deliver all things remotely.

If you are going to restrict car drivers, then make sure you come up with some effective public transport options."

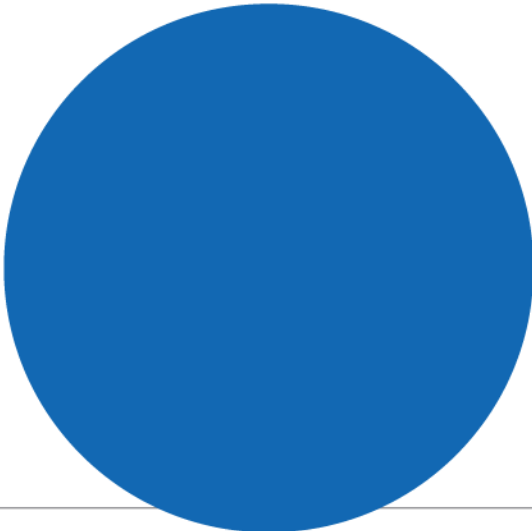
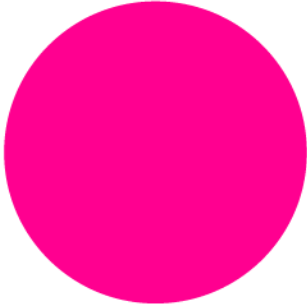
"I feel that the public should have been given longer to consider these proposals. I think that doing this during the coronavirus crisis is particularly ill-judged. People have a lot to think about at this time, and making their lives more difficult and complicated, at a time when we do not wish to use public transport, is insensitive and unreasonable."

"I am appalled that the only way I heard about this consultation was by picking up a Facebook post by a councillor (not even one of my councillors)."

"Absolutely shocked local businesses were not fully consulted with and we were only made aware of the proposal via Facebook posts."



Safe, socially distanced transport



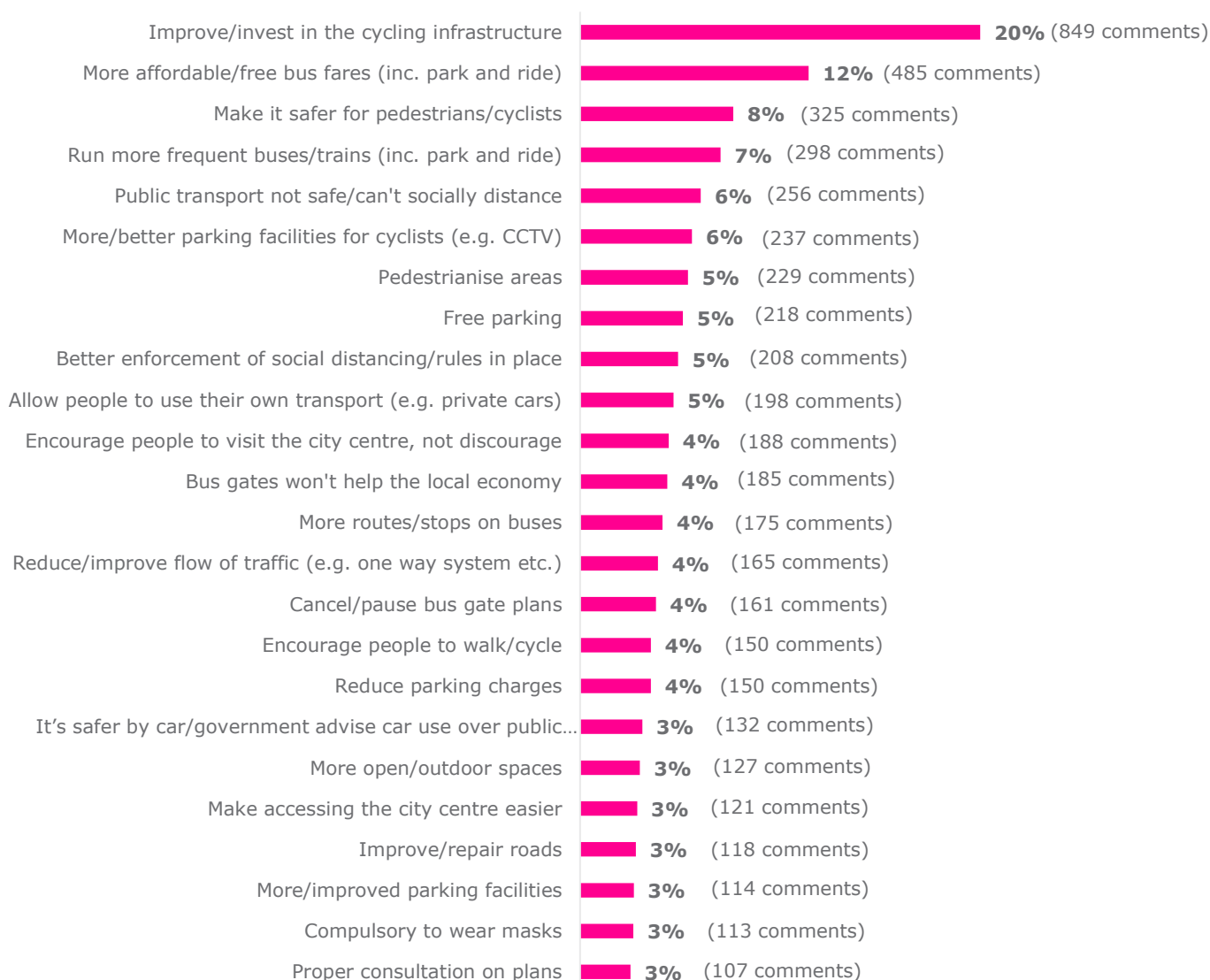


Respondents were asked to comment on what else the councils should do to help facilitate safe, socially distanced transport in Oxford and restart the local economy.

This was an open-ended question; DJS Research have analysed the comments and coded them into themes to provide a quantified sense of the themes and sentiment.

There were 4,216 comments, with good contributions from those supporting and those opposing the proposals. The main/themes/suggestions are summarised in figure 8, below:

Figure 8: Finally, what else do you think the councils should do to help facilitate safe, socially distanced transport in Oxford and restart the local economy? OVERALL RESULTS (all responses: n= 4,216).





The most common suggestions are around improved cycling infrastructure, improved cycling and pedestrian safety and better bus services (both in terms of frequency/coverage and affordability).

The list of suggestions was quite diverse; other themes not shown in figure 8 (mentioned in 1% to 2% of comments) **included:**

- Reduce/help with rent for tenants/businesses
- Low Traffic Neighbourhoods
- Enforce/reduce speed limits
- Reduce/remove on street parking/parking in cycle lanes
- Reactivate the old train/tram lines
- Less use of private cars/taxis
- Encourage electric vehicle use
- Convert public transport/taxis to electric
- Widen pavements
- Better/visible signage
- Bring back 'Pick-me-up'/'Dial-a-ride' services
- Congestion charges
- Allow electric vehicles to have access
- Take bike theft more seriously (e.g. better policing regarding this)
- More seating in and around Oxford
- Stop/reduce tourist buses in the city

The main suggestions are similar across segments; looking at the results by respondent type, the top three suggestions from **Oxford residents** are:

1. Improve/invest in the cycling infrastructure (e.g. cycling lanes etc.)
2. More affordable/free bus fares (inc. park and ride)
3. Make it safer for pedestrians/cyclists

The top three suggestions from **individuals living outside of Oxford** are:

1. Improve/invest in the cycling infrastructure (e.g. cycling lanes etc.)
2. More affordable/free bus fares (inc. park and ride)
3. Free parking



The top three suggestions from **business representatives** are:

1. Free parking
2. Improve/invest in the cycling infrastructure (e.g. cycling lanes etc.)
3. Reduce parking charges

The top three suggestions from **university/college representatives** are:

1. More affordable/free bus fares (inc. park and ride)
2. Improve/invest in the cycling infrastructure (e.g. cycling lanes etc.)
3. Run more frequent buses/trains (inc. park and ride)

The top three suggestions from **groups/organisations** are:

1. Improve/invest in the cycling infrastructure (e.g. cycling lanes etc.)
2. Make it safer for pedestrians/cyclists
3. Pedestrianise areas

The top three suggestions from **councillors** are:

1. Improve/invest in the cycling infrastructure (e.g. cycling lanes etc.)
2. More affordable/free bus fares (inc. park and ride)
3. Pedestrianise areas

Supporters and opposers to the proposals also make similar suggestions, although those opposing the scheme are more likely to comment around Covid-19 safety concerns; The top three suggestions from **those who think the proposals are a good idea** are:

1. Improve/invest in the cycling infrastructure (e.g. cycling lanes etc.)
2. Make it safer for pedestrians/cyclists
3. Pedestrianise areas

The top three suggestions from **those who think the proposals are a bad idea** are:

1. More affordable/free bus fares (inc. park and ride)
2. Public transport not safe/can't socially distance
3. Improve/invest in the cycling infrastructure (e.g. cycling lanes etc.)



Below and overleaf we provide some **example comments** to illustrate some of the key themes and suggestions.

Wider pavements and spaces for cycling. Remove parking from Broad St, it makes no sense to devote one of the most beautiful streets of our city to a few parking spaces. Make it bike and pedestrian only. In Antwerp, there's lots of shared space between bikes and pedestrians. This works well as both sides become more considerate of each other. Broad St could be like this. Beaumont St is currently very dangerous for cyclists and could be improved.

"Dedicated cycle lanes along arterial routes into the city. Low traffic neighbourhoods. Pedestrianisation of quality public spaces such as Broad Street and large parts of St Giles - and pavement widening in areas of high footfall."

"Simple question with a simple answer, increase the spaces for park and ride and make it free with more buses! You don't need much intelligence to work that out!!"

"Implement free parking at all Park & Ride sites to help remove barriers to usage and support the City Centre economy."

"Pedestrianisation of city centre areas, more like Continental-style outdoor eating and drinking spaces, with more room for cycling. Electric trams have proved to be very successful in other cities. The proposals of even more buses is not exactly aspirational and world class. Buses clog up the centre, are noisy and polluting."

"Convert more roads into pedestrianised streets with outside terraces for cafes bars and restaurants. For example Cornmarket, Broad street, George street and surrounding areas, Cowley road, Temple Cowley."

"Stop forcing people onto public transport they simply don't trust this as a safe form of travel when they can socially distance far better in their own isolated family transport."

"I feel the only way to increase the possibility for safe, distanced travel in Oxford is to facilitate more space efficient forms of transport. I heard you can fit something like 14 times more people in bikes in the same space as in cars, so seems that safe cycles lanes are a good idea. Putting enough in that you could use them to travel to any part of the city would make them more useful."

"Cycle lanes should be made much safer and, where possible, should be separate from motorized traffic. Cycle lanes at present are very hazardous due to poor maintenance which means that cyclists are constantly having to avoid huge potholes and protruding manhole covers, etc."

"Spend the council money and Subsidise bus prices to encourage more people to use the buses and make them more reliable. Rather than stopping people who need to use their cars to get to work, home etc... from using their cars."

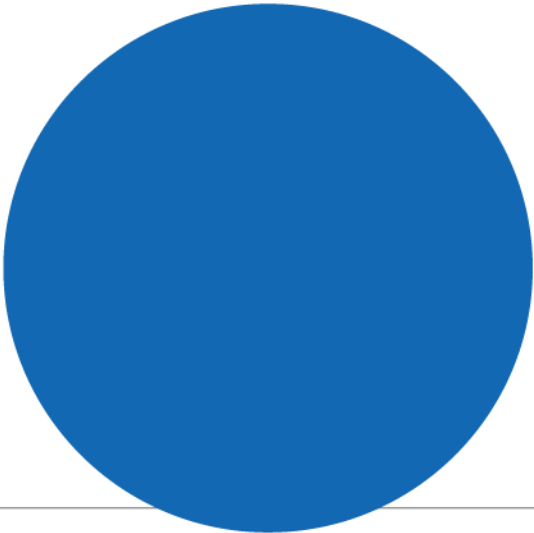
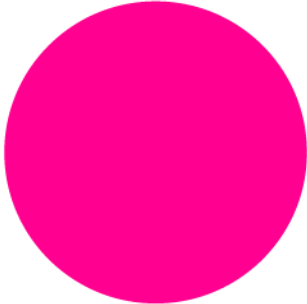
"Subsidise bus fares to encourage use of public transport. Work with bus companies to enhance frequency and capacity of services on longer range routes (e.g. 4 and 35) to make them a truly feasible choice for car owners for quicker and easy commutes."

"Concerned that our patients may find it difficult to reach the surgery e.g. those living close to Botley road. There are no direct buses to Jericho from Botley. Elderly can not necessarily travel by bus and often rely on relatives driving them to surgery. Patients rightly remain anxious about Covid risk on public transport and those at higher risk should not be expected to travel by bus. It would also cause significant difficulties for District Nurses visiting patients across the city."

"How and why can transport be socially distanced? People can socially distance not cars or buses. People in cars are socially distanced. More difficult to socially distance on a bus."



Social media analysis





In addition to analysing the survey results, we have reviewed comments and sentiment of social media regarding the proposed bus gates.

There were several hundred relevant comments. Many raised concerns around the implementation of bus gates. Residents particularly felt that there was a conflict between government Covid-19 advice to avoid public transport and what they considered to be councils encouraging those entering the city to now use buses. Many felt that social distancing would be too difficult on a crowded bus and ultimately this change would result in them avoiding the city centre completely. They felt these concerns would be matched by others in similar situations, leading to another worry that businesses impacted by the bus gates would suffer at a time when they need support most.

Being required to travel by bus seemed to generate negative feedback, specifically around carrying large objects/shopping on buses, cost of travel, pollution caused by buses and more prominently a concern that there is a lack of relevant bus routes. Comments suggest this is a concern for those on the outskirts of the city and surrounding areas trying to travel in to the city centre.

Congestion was another key concern, specifically that bus gates won't eliminate traffic but rather relocate it to areas already majorly effected by congestion. It is felt that this would lengthen journeys that would otherwise be short and easy. Access for delivery workers, essential workers, people commuting or dropping children at school are all a particular concern as well.

The travel and access concerns outlined above are regularly restated by an active campaign group on Twitter that has just under 100 followers. The group shares articles and documents opposing the change online, as well as advocating for the cause on the street.

Access by car to certain key locations in the city centre is also considered important on social media, specifically to the train station and car parks.

However, there is some support of the bus gates by the minority on social media that argue the bus gates will make Oxford city safer for cyclists and have environmental benefits. Also, a small number of charity/community groups commented that the gates would in fact support local businesses rather than damage them.

Another sentiment raised in multiple comments is that some residents don't expect anything to come from the consultation survey and/or feel that the council has already made up their minds and that getting feedback from residents is an empty gesture.

For more information

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