

Oxford temporary congestion charge for cars

Report of June-July 2025 consultation

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Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of a public consultation held in June and July 2025 regarding a proposed temporary congestion charge for cars in Oxford. The scheme aims to alleviate traffic congestion until the reopening of Botley Road and the initiation of the traffic filters trial, with revenue intended to fund transport improvements such as discounted bus and park and ride services.

A six-week consultation took place on the proposals from 23 June to 3 August this year. The consultation gathered feedback on the proposed scheme's impact and details, including a survey on the council's digital engagement platform. The survey received 7,165 responses. Key themes from the responses included concerns about the scheme's effectiveness, public transport, impact on local businesses, fairness, and financial impact. Positive comments highlighted reduced traffic congestion, environmental benefits, improved bus services, and enhanced wellbeing.

While most people said, in their response to direct questions, that there shouldn't be a charge at all (66%), or that the charge was too high (7.7%) or that the proposals would negatively impact them (73.9%), there was also support for the scheme's potential to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and enhance public transport services.

Council officers have responded to feedback received during the consultation period and it has been used to shape the proposals recommended.

Background

Oxfordshire County Council is committed to addressing congestion in the short-term, after the traffic filters trial was postponed due to the ongoing closure of Botley Road, now expected to reopen in August 2026. Officers explored measures to alleviate traffic congestion until the traffic filters trial can start.

Proposed options to manage congestion in and around Oxford were discussed by [the council's cabinet on 17 June](#). These options included a temporary congestion charge for the city, and the council's cabinet agreed to proceed with a public consultation on the proposals.

A temporary congestion charge could make use of the existing infrastructure and back-office systems intended for the traffic filter trial. Any surplus income from the proposed scheme could be used to fund travel improvements like cheaper bus tickets including park and ride.

The scheme would improve bus services and make it easier for those with permits, including carers, traders and blue badge holders, to travel by car around the city.

The proposed scheme

The proposed scheme consists of six temporary congestion charge locations in Oxford. The temporary congestion charge only applies to cars. All other types of vehicles will be automatically exempt. It would be an interim measure, introduced on a temporary basis until Network Rail is able to reopen Botley Road and the traffic filters trial can start.

How it would work:

- A daily charge of £5 would allow cars without a permit or day pass to go through all six charge locations on roads in Oxford until the end of the day

- All other vehicles would be able to go through at all times without paying the charge
- Cars with a permit or day pass would be able to pass the charge locations free of charge. One day pass would allow travel through all six congestion charging locations for the rest of that day
- Traffic signs and road markings would mark the locations of the charging cameras
- The scheme would be enforced using automatic number plate recognition cameras (ANPR) positioned at the listed congestion charge locations.
- Most areas of the city will be accessible by car without having to pass through a congestion charge location, except for an area of the city centre.

The temporary congestion charge locations would be the same as for the planned traffic filters trial:

Charging point	Charging days	Charging times
Hythe Bridge Street	Monday to Sunday	7am-7pm
St Cross Road	Monday to Sunday	7am-7pm
St Clement's Street	Monday to Sunday	7am-7pm
Thames Street	Monday to Sunday	7am-7pm
Marston Ferry Road	Monday to Saturday	7-9am and 3-6pm
Hollow Way	Monday to Saturday	7-9am and 3-6pm

Income generated by the proposed temporary congestion charge would be used to cover the cost of setting up and operating the scheme. Any money in addition to this would be used towards discounted park and ride services and improved bus services. This could include:

- free or discounted parking at park and ride sites
- discounted bus and park and ride fares
- improved bus services.

Any surplus income may be used for other transport schemes. By law, we can only use the income for transport – it can't be spent on anything else.

The temporary congestion charge would only apply to cars. All other vehicles would not need to pay a charge and would not need a permit.

Permits would be available for certain groups including community health and care workers, carers, blue badge holders, and mobile traders - exactly the same as for the

planned traffic filters trial - allowing them to pass through the charge locations without incurring a charge.

For this proposed scheme, a new central permit area would be created. Permits would be available for residents, their visitors and commuters in this central area where car drivers would have no option but to pass through a charge location.

As with the planned traffic filters trial, residents in the wider [Oxford permit area\(External link\)](#) would be eligible for 100 day passes each year, while residents in the [Oxfordshire permit area\(External link\)](#) would be eligible for 25 day passes each year, allowing free travel through the charge locations on days of your choice. Each day pass would allow unlimited car access through all six charge locations on that day.

All permits would be free and valid for 12 months unless stated otherwise.

Without a permit, car drivers could choose an alternative route or pay the daily charge.

Consultation overview

About the consultation

A six-week public consultation on the introduction of the proposed temporary congestion charge took place from 23 June to 3 August 2025. The consultation gathered feedback on the proposed scheme's impact and details. It included a survey on the council's digital engagement and consultation platform, Let's talk Oxfordshire. Paper copies of information and surveys were available in main libraries and at County Hall, and by request. A series of online information and Q&A events for the public took place.

As well a description of the proposed scheme, information was made available for reference. The further information items provided with the consultation were:

- a. Details of proposed permits for cars
- b. Equalities impact assessment
- c. Business impact technical note
- d. Modelling and income forecasting report
- e. Air quality technical note
- f. Climate impact assessment
- g. Maps of proposed charge locations
- h. Paper survey form
- i. Presentation and recordings from public events
- j. Frequently asked questions and answers

On 26 June, the *details of proposed permits for cars* document was updated to include more detail, following questions to the project team. The same document was updated again on 1 July to improve clarity by changing the word 'household' to 'eligible address'.

Initially, the online survey did not mandate registration to complete. On the second day of the consultation there were 18 more responses than contributors recognised by the system, and registration requirement was added to ensure responses could not be duplicated. Residents also had the option to complete a paper survey if preferred.

Promoting the consultation

A variety of methods was used to inform residents of the consultation and to signpost them towards the materials.

A press release was issued and media engagement took place with key local media. Extensive media coverage included local broadcast TV, radio and print/online publications.

Social media posts were published on the council's channels and on Next Door throughout the consultation period. Paid content on social media and other digital ads ensured a wide reach and encouraged engagement with the survey page as well as publicising events.

News items were included in the county council's digital resident newsletter, digital travel bulletin, and consultation newsletter.

A toolkit of images, posters and explanatory text was sent to councillors, community partner organisations, stakeholders and large employers to use to cascade information through their local channels and to their audiences, who may be non-digital.

Stakeholders and local councillors were also updated by email when the consultation opened.

Engagement activity

Information and question and answer events were held for NHS staff and Oxford University staff. There were also four online information and question and answer events open to all.

Officers met with many key stakeholders in person.

In total, events were attended by more than 2000 people.

Survey data

Survey responses are published on the council's website, redacted according to requests from respondents and anonymised.

63,444 people viewed the project landing page on the Let's talk Oxfordshire portal. 4,657 people downloaded at least one of the accompanying documents and 2,281 people read frequently asked questions.

17,489 people visited the survey itself and 7,140 people completed the survey online, with 25 paper or email responses received.

Feedback comments were also received from 78 people by email.

Demographic profile of respondents

The answers to demographic survey questions are presented in this section of the report.

The proportion of 'Prefer not to say' responses make it difficult to compare to the overall Oxford and Oxfordshire populations.

Question: What is your age?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Under 16	5	0.1
16-24	182	2.6
25-34	879	12.4
35-44	1,341	19
45-54	1,536	21.7
55-64	1,525	21.6
65-74	908	12.8
75-84	321	4.5
85 or over	34	0.5
Prefer not to say	338	4.8

There were 7,069 responses to this question

Question: What is your sex?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Female	3,117	44.6
Male	3,142	44.9
Prefer not to say	710	10.2
I use another term	21	0.3

There were 6,990 responses to this question

Question: What is your ethnic group or background?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Asian or Asian British (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi or any other Asian background)	221	3.2
Black or Black British (Caribbean, African, or any other Black background)	62	0.9
Chinese	61	0.9
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups (White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, and any other mixed background)	113	1.9
White (British, Irish, or any other white background)	5,168	73.9
Prefer not to say	1,272	18.2
Other ethnic group or background (please specify)	79	1.1

There were 6,996 responses to this question

Question: What is your current religion if any?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Buddhist	42	0.6
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	2,070	29.8
Hindu	44	0.6
Jewish	44	0.6
Muslim	108	1.6
Sikh	14	0.2
No religion	2,923	42.1
Prefer not to say	1,629	23.5
Any other religion	69	1

There were 6,943 responses to this question

Question: Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a long-term illness, health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Yes – a lot	349	5
Yes – a little	799	11.4
No	4,979	71.1
Prefer not to say	879	12.5

There were 7,006 responses to this question

Question: Are you a carer?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Yes	154	2.2
No	6,172	88.6
Prefer not to say	642	9.2

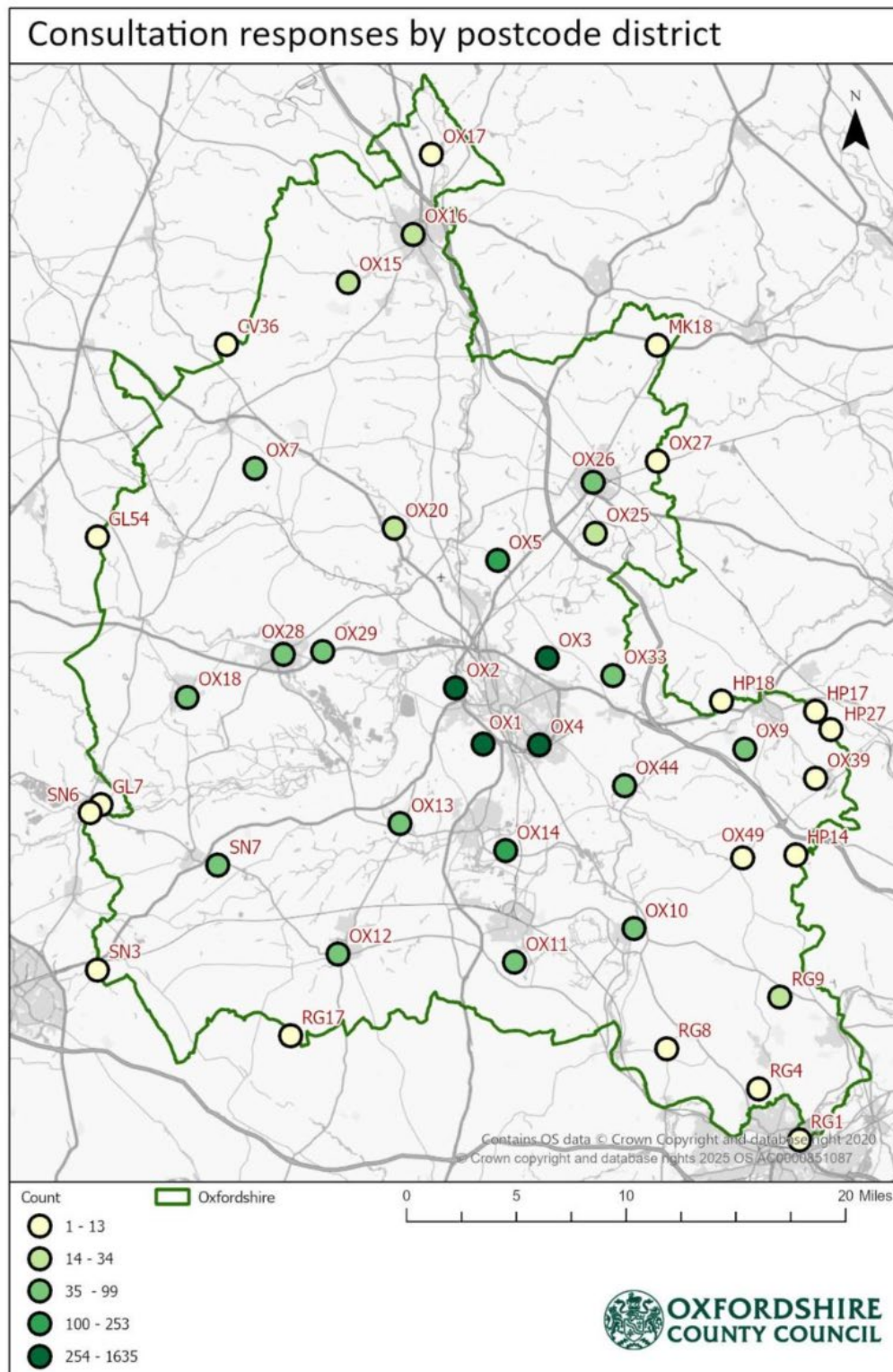
There were 6,955 responses to this question

Question: Are you pregnant, on maternity leave, or returning from maternity leave?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Yes	154	2.2
No	6,172	88.6
Prefer not to say	642	9.2

There were 6,968 responses to this question

The map below shows the volume of responses by postcode district.



There were also 122 responses from respondents outside of the Oxfordshire boundary which have not been visualised here.

Responses to survey questions

This section provides a record of the responses to substantive survey questions.

About you section

Question: I am responding to this survey as:

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Oxford resident	4,251	59.4
Resident of Oxfordshire living outside Oxford	2,479	34.6
Member of the public living outside Oxfordshire	206	2.9
Business	91	1.3
Representative of a group or organisation	48	0.7
Parish, town, district or county councillor	22	0.3
Other	60	0.8

There were 7,157 responses to this question

Question: How often do you travel around Oxford?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Daily	4,679	65.4
Weekly	1,646	23
Less than weekly	821	11.5
Never	4	0.1

There were 7,150 responses to this question

Question: Please tick which of the following free permits and passes you think you may be eligible for

Response	Number
100 day passes for residents in the OXford permit area	3,657
25 day passes for residents in the Oxfordshire permit area	2,061
Blue badge holders	426
Disability benefit claimants	187
Disabled tax cars	131
School students with special educational needs	164
Unpaid carers	289
Community health or care workers who need to visit multiple locations or travel urgently	304
Frequent hospital patients	344
Emergency service vehicles	136
Firefighters	123
Taxis and private hire vehicles	110
Registered car clubs	124
Business cars used as goods vehicles	147
Personal cars used as goods vehicles for business purposes	311
Driving instructors	78
Hearses and funeral cars	94

There were 6,025 responses to this question

New permit types

This section described the proposed new permit area and new permit types before asking for feedback.

Question: Do you live, visit a resident by car or commute by car to the proposed Oxford permit area?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
I live in the central permit area, or visit a resident of the central permit area by car	1,818	25.5
I commute to the central permit area by car	1,956	27.5
I don't	3,342	47

There were 7,116 responses to this question

Question: What impact would the introduction of a central Oxford area residents' permit have, as part of the proposed scheme, on you or the people you represent?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Very positive	794	11.3
Positive	554	7.9
Neutral	1,019	14.5
Negative	734	10.4
Very negative	2,551	36.2
No impact	1,398	19.8

There were 7,050 responses to this question

Of the responses through Let's Talk Oxfordshire, 46.6% said a new permit type for central Oxford residents would have a negative or very negative impact. 19.2% said it would have a positive or very positive impact. 34.3% said it would have a neutral or no impact.

Question: What impact would the introduction of a central permit area commuters' permit have on you or the people you represent?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Very positive	777	11
Positive	616	8.7
Neutral	1,160	16.4
Negative	851	12.1
Very negative	2,211	31.3
No impact	1,439	20.4

There were 7,054 responses to this question

Of the responses through Let's Talk Oxfordshire, 43.4% said the introduction of a central area commuters' permit would have a negative or very negative impact. 19.7% said it would have a positive or very positive impact. 36.8% said it would have a neutral or no impact.

Charging levels and use of income

Question: We are proposing a single charge of £5 to allow cars without a day pass or permit to go through all of the temporary charge locations on one day. What do you think of the level of this charge?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Too low	658	9.2
About right	1,254	17.6
Too high	513	7.2
There should be no charge at all	4,715	66

There were 7,140 responses to this question

Of the responses, 73.2% of respondents said that the charge was too high or there should not be a charge at all. 26.8% thought it was too low or about the right level.

Question: Do you think that charges should vary, with drivers of larger cars paying more and drivers of smaller cars paying less?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Yes	1,978	27.9
No	4,224	59.6
Not sure	888	12.5

There were 7,090 responses to this question

Of the responses through Let's Talk Oxfordshire, 59.6% of people said there should not be different charges based on the size of cars. 27.9% said there should be different rates 12.5% said they were not sure

Question: As this is expected to be a short-term scheme, we are considering improvements that can be introduced quickly. To help us prioritise potential funded improvements, please choose your top three from the proposals below.

Response	Number
Make Park & Ride cheaper	2,435
Make Park & Ride buses cheaper	2,080
Make buses cheaper for all	3,877
Make buses cheaper for young people	648
Add new bus routes	2,219
Make bus services more frequent	2,934
Extend hours of operation for buses	1,406
Add public cycle parking	1,137
Other, please state	1,598

There were 6,912 responses to this question

There was strong support for revenue generated by the proposal to be spent on new bus routes, more frequent buses and cheaper buses including making P&R cheaper. Themes within the 'other suggestion' category included: not implementing the proposal at all, removing LTNs, fixing potholes, improving cycling infrastructure and specific bus service enhancements. Some thought it was important to extend the hours of operation of bus services (earlier and/or later in the day, at the weekend). A

smaller proportion thought more public cycle parking should be funded. An even smaller group thought the revenue should be used to make buses cheaper for young people specifically.

Overall impact

Question: Taking into account all the information we have provided about the proposal to introduce six temporary congestion charge locations in Oxford for cars, what overall impact will this proposal have on you or people you represent?

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Very positive	883	12.4
Positive	563	7.9
Neutral	327	4.6
Negative	943	13.2
Very negative	4,347	60.8
No impact	81	1.1

There were 7,144 responses to this question

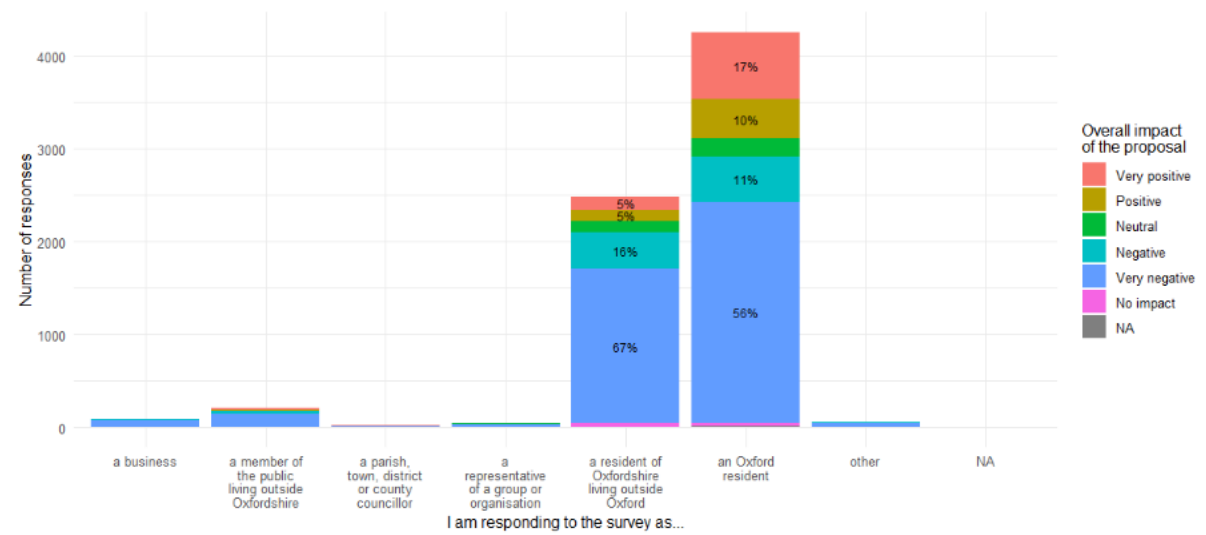
Of the responses, 74% of respondents said the proposal would have a negative or very negative impact overall. 20.3% said it would have a positive or very positive impact overall. 5.7% said it would have a neutral or no impact.

A summary of responses to free text questions is presented in a later section of the report.

Data analysis

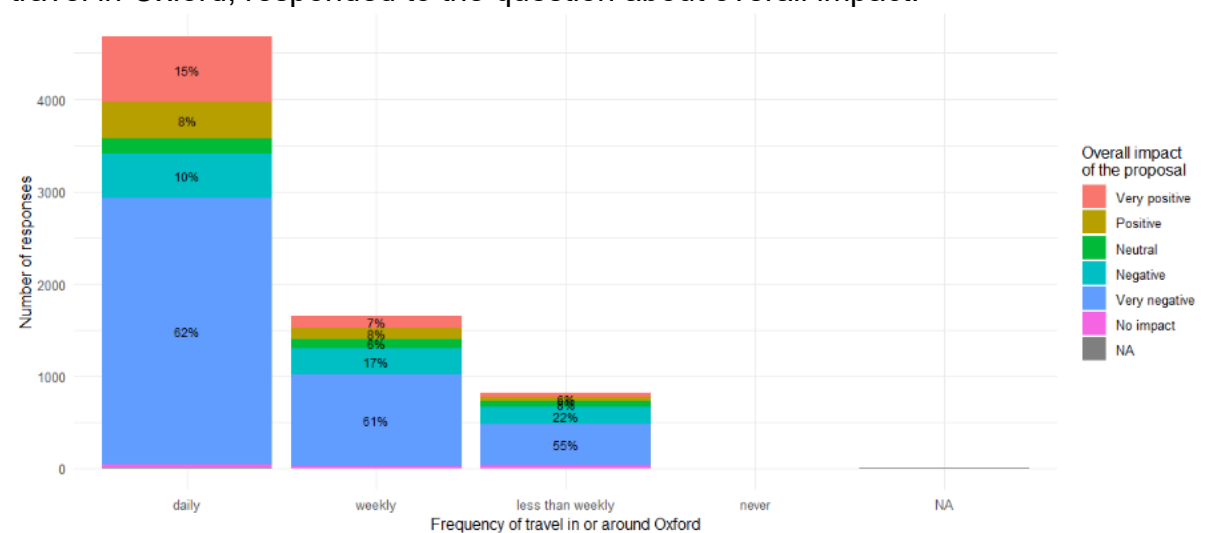
Overall impact response variation. The charts below show how responses varied by respondent type

The chart below shows how people who responded differently to the question ‘I am responding as’, responded to the question about overall impact.



For those living outside of Oxford, 83% indicated a negative or very negative response compared to 66% of those who are residents of Oxford. 10% of those living outside Oxford indicated a positive or very positive overall impact compared to 27% of Oxford residents.

The chart below shows how people responding differently about the frequency of travel in Oxford, responded to the question about overall impact.



23% of daily travellers gave either positive or very positive responses to this question, 15% of weekly travellers and around 11% of less than weekly travellers.

Bivariate analysis

Bivariate analysis was undertaken with the survey data to look for any relationships between independent and dependent variables. This includes whether there is a statistically significant association between each pair of variables. If there was, the strength of this association indicated how closely related the variables were to one another.

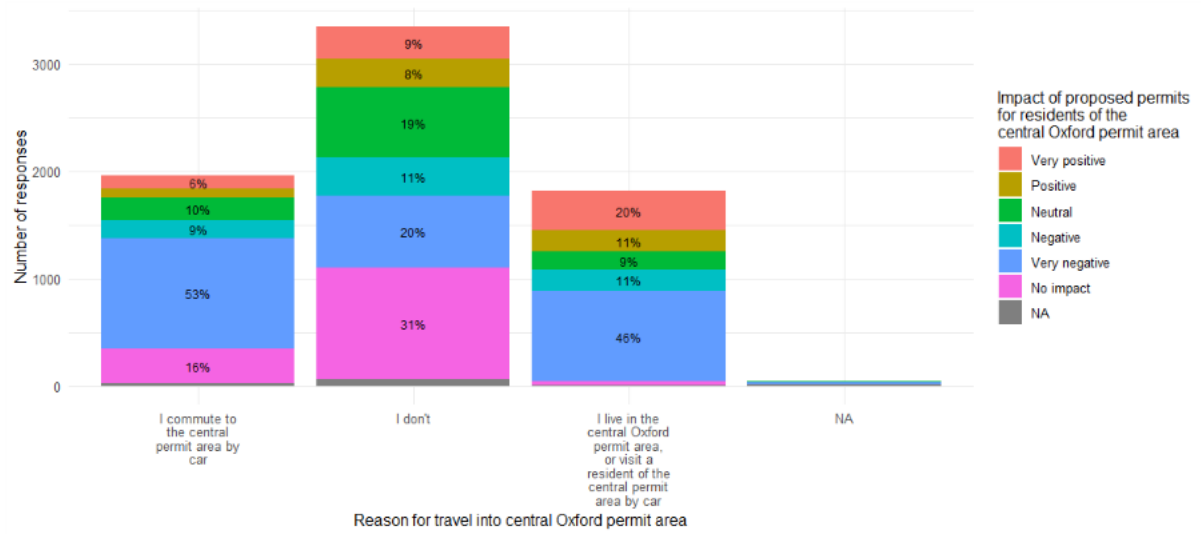
The bivariate statistical analysis started with a calculation of the chi-squared statistic to determine whether there was a significant correlation between each independent and dependent variable pairing. This test determined that there was a significant correlation for each of the pairings. The sample size is 7,000 which is large when calculating a chi-squared statistic as small differences between observed and expected counts return a result of statistical significance.

To give context to the chi-squared statistic, it was decided to calculate the effect size using Cramér's V. This helps understand the strength of association, not just whether it exists, and enabled identification of which combinations of independent and dependent variables to highlight.

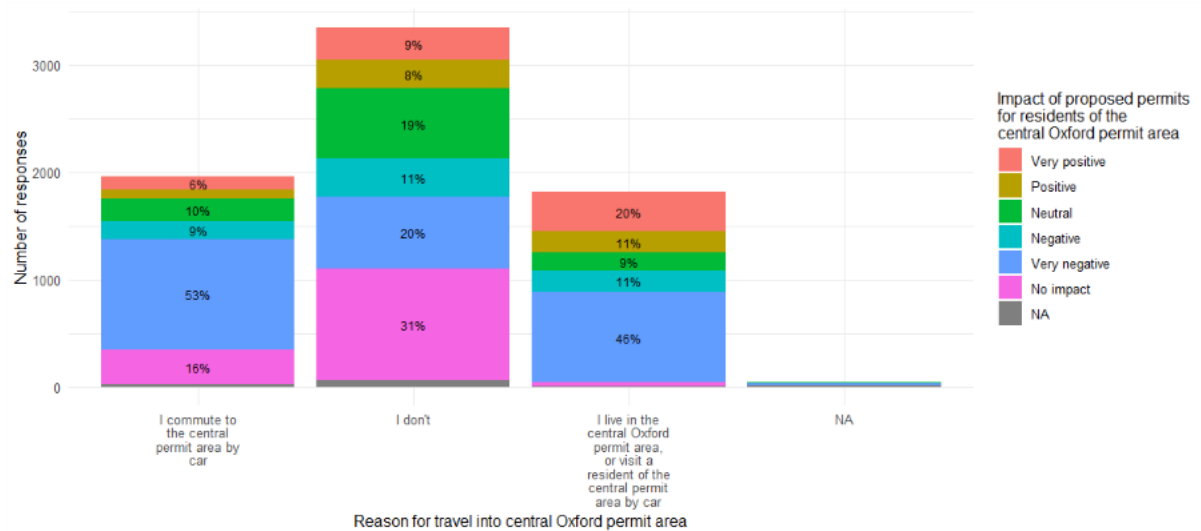
From these calculations, the following variable pairs were shown to have a strong association:

Independent variable	Dependent variable
Do you live in, visit a resident by car, or commute by car to the central Oxford permit area (cOpa)	Impact of proposed permits for residents of the cOpa
Do you live in, visit a resident by car, or commute by car to the cOpa	Impact of proposed permits for commuters to the cOpa
Do you live in, visit a resident by car, or commute by car to the cOpa	Overall impact of the proposal
What is your religion?	Opinions on the proposed £5 charge for cars without a permit
What is your religion?	Overall impact of the proposal

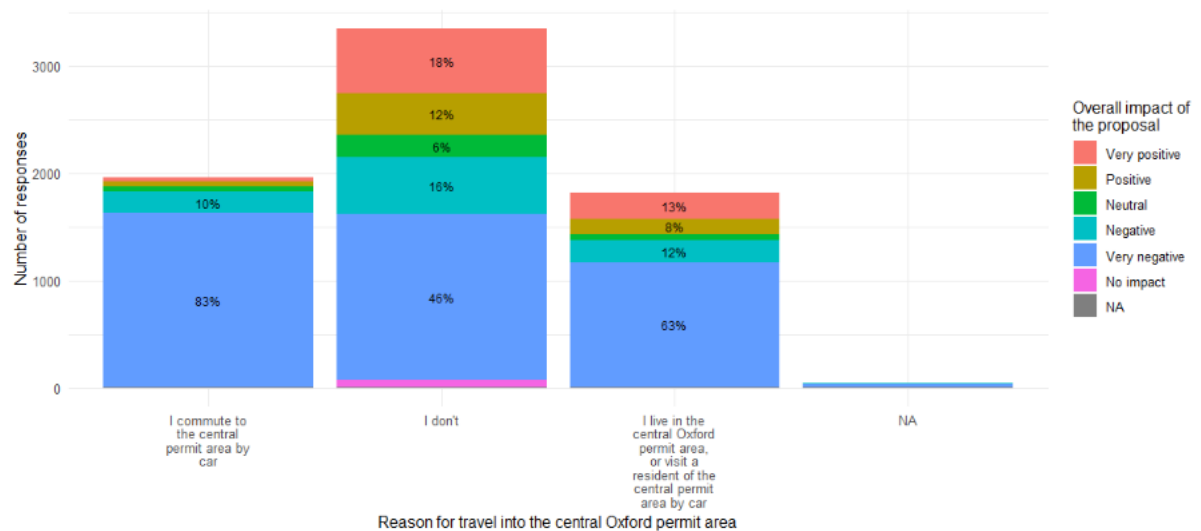
The graph below shows how people who responded differently to the question about the central Oxford permit area responded to the question about overall impact.



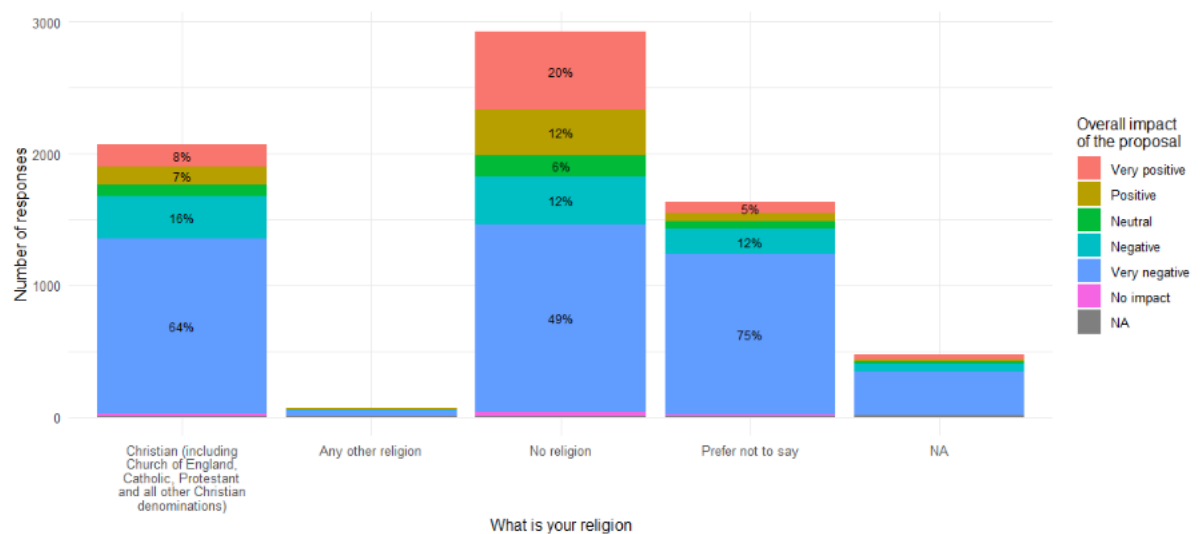
The graph below shows how people who responded differently to the question about the central permit area responded to the impact of a residents permit for the area.



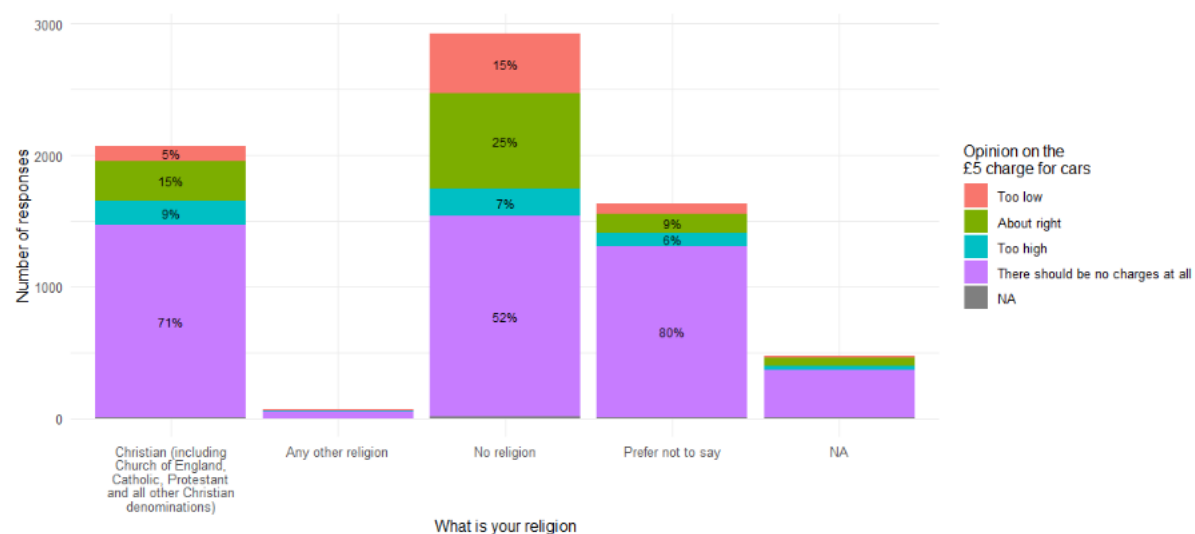
The graph below shows how people who responded differently to the question about the central permit area responded to the question about overall impact of the proposal.



The graph below shows how people responding differently to the question about religion, responded differently to the question about overall impact.



The graph below shows how people responding differently to the question about religion, responded differently to the question about the proposed level of charge.



Key themes from free text questions

This section provides a thematic summary of responses to free text questions in the survey. Council officers have read and considered all comments provided as part of the consultation.

The section begins with a summary of key themes from free text responses, before looking in more detail at each free text question and providing verbatim comments to illustrate identified themes.

Summary findings from free text responses

Summary key concerns and objections to the scheme from free text responses

1. **Effectiveness of the scheme:** Responses showed scepticism about whether the congestion charge will effectively reduce traffic congestion. This was either alongside concern about redistributing traffic, or the number of permit types available.
2. **Public transport:** Responses talked about bus and train services being insufficient for their needs. Either too expensive, infrequent or not serving required routes. Particularly for families, people with mobility problems, rural residents and those preferring a radial route around the city.
3. **Local businesses:** Responses expressed concern that journeys would be more difficult, people would be deterred from visiting the city and businesses and other organisations would struggle with a loss of customers and difficulty recruiting staff and delivering services.
4. **Fairness:** Responses expressed concern that the charges would more negatively impact those with lower incomes who would find it harder to pay, or those with mobility problems, key workers who can't work at home, working

families with children at school or nursery, older people, and some parts of the city more than others.

5. **Financial impact:** Respondents highlighted the additional cost burden the congestion charge could add for them, especially those who need to drive frequently because they don't have an alternative. In some cases respondents said they would no longer be able to take part in activities or work in the city because of the added cost.

Positive comments from free text responses

1. **Reduced traffic congestion:** Responses were positive about the prospect of reduced traffic congestion, speeding up occasional car travel and improving other modes.
2. **Environmental benefits:** Responses highlighted the benefits of a reduction in air pollution.
3. **Improved bus services:** Responses expressed hope that bus journeys would be quicker and more reliable.
4. **Enhanced wellbeing:** Responses reference improvement in wellbeing due to less noise and air pollution, and more physical activity, with improvements to walking and cycling experience and making the city more pleasant to visit.
5. **Funded improvements:** Responses expressed support for measures to improve public transport, funded by the scheme.

Other key themes in free text responses

1. **Remove LTNs:** Many responses suggested that removing LTNs would reduce traffic, and said that LTNs had caused more traffic and more difficult journeys.
2. **Addressing school traffic:** School traffic was identified by many respondents as a major cause of traffic and suggestions were made to address that, including providing more dedicated school transport and working with schools to help them reduce the number of car journeys to site.
3. **Improving bus services:** Many responses said that bus journeys needed to improve and suggested additional routes, extended hours, improvements to comfort, facilities and price.
4. **Impact of Botley Road closure:** Many respondents expressed frustration about the impact of the Botley Road closure on travel in the city and urged more action to get Network Rail to complete the work and re-open the road.

Suggested amendments to the scheme

Respondents to the survey suggested a variety of amendments to the scheme. A range of these is listed below.

- Making the payment system more lenient/simple
 - Allowing longer to pay
 - Ensuring offline option
- Adjusting hours of operation
 - Finishing at 6pm instead of 7pm
 - No charge on Sundays
 - Operating only in am and pm peak

- Removing some filters from the scheme, commonly Marston Ferry Road, Hollow Way and Thames Street
- Providing additional permits for certain groups including:
 - Car sharing
 - Teachers and nursery staff
 - Parents with children at schools or nurseries in the city
 - NHS workers
 - Ice rink users
 - Golf club users
 - Those accessing health services and leisure
 - Working people with no alternative option but car travel, eg from rural areas or other reason for essential car use
 - Access to education
 - Electric cars
 - Students on moving days
 - Factory workers
 - Self employed health and care workers
 - Residents living close to a congestion charge point
- Providing fewer exemptions and permits

Summary of observed themes in free text responses

The tables below show the number of occurrences of observed themes in free text comments.

A code frame to categorise response themes was established by a group of officers working independently and cross referencing each other's work with moderation, based on a sample of 100 responses. The set of themes developed was then used to categorise responses as they were reviewed by officers.

Please explain your answer

Please explain your answer (impact) text response	No.	%
Concern that traffic will increase or be redistributed	995	14%
Concern that journeys will be worse (longer or more complicated)	1271	18%
States some car use is essential/depend on car	724	10%
States scheme should be amended for leniency (widen exemptions, change hours, change charge points)	310	4%

States need to do more to reduce traffic/too many exemptions/increase charge	159	2%
States need to/will improve bus journeys/public transport	514	7%
States will improve cycling and/or pedestrian experience	413	6%
States need to/will reduce traffic/congestion/encourage mode shift	1019	14%
States will free up road space for essential car journeys	53	1%
States bus services are not good enough (too expensive, poor connections, safety/security concern etc)	1002	14%
Suggests make other changes (eg remove LTNs, one way streets etc)	165	2%
Concern about cost impact	1323	18%
Concern about negative impact on Oxford businesses/organisations including discouraging visitors	1369	19%
Concern about increased pollution in some areas	162	2%
Concern about speed of implementation	27	0%
Concern about restricting freedom of travel for residents	710	10%
Perception traffic problems caused by Botley road closure	207	3%
Perception traffic problems caused by LTNs	440	6%
Concern about access to bus/train station	64	1%
Sates will reduce pollution	210	3%
Sceptical of council's intentions	548	8%
States will test traffic filter principles	10	0%
Concern about access to ice rink	92	1%
Concern that council is not listening	105	1%
States better than traffic filters	9	0%
Concern about risk of isolating people	126	2%
Sceptical of impact	559	8%
Concern about inequity	634	9%
Concern about impact on wellbeing	496	7%
Other	304	4%
Blank	657	9%

Any other comments

Any other comments text response	No.	%
Concern that traffic will increase or be redistributed	500	7%
States need to do more to reduce traffic/too many exemptions/increase charge	425	6%
States scheme should be amended for leniency (widen exemptions, change hours, change charge points etc)	537	7%

States it is a good idea	216	3%
States bus services are not good enough (too expensive, poor connections, safety/security concern etc)	501	7%
Concern about cost impact	437	6%
Concern that council is not listening	500	7%
Concern about negative impact on Oxford businesses	773	11%
Perception that buses cause traffic problems	11	0%
States it is a bad idea/don't do it	1249	17%
States some car use is essential/depend on car	290	4%
Suggests other changes	536	7%
Concern about restricting freedom of travel for residents	364	5%
Concern that fewer cars on the road might lead to speeding	10	0%
Perception that traffic problems caused by LTNs	351	5%
States scheme will encourage public transport and cycling	51	1%
Concern no plans to improve cycling routes as part of scheme	73	1%
Concern implementation will be poor/too soon/short notice/insufficient communications	231	3%
Concern about negatively targeting car drivers	257	4%
Perception traffic problems caused by Botley road closure	168	2%
States will reduce traffic/congestion	27	0%
States better than traffic filters	34	0%
States will test traffic filter principles	21	0%
Concern that journeys will be worse (longer or more complicated)	228	3%
Concern about inequity	676	9%
Concern about access to ice rink	38	1%
Other	418	6%
Blank	2399	33%

Other suggestions to reduce traffic

Other suggestions to reduce traffic - text response	No.	%
Suggests alternative transport option (tram, train, river, underground, etc.)	398	6%
Suggests disincentivise parking (reduce spaces, increase charges)	217	3%

Suggests improve bus services (Free/cheaper buses (including P&R), more frequent buses, more routes, simpler fares)	2002	28%
States scheme should be amended for leniency (widen exemptions, change hours, change charge points)	346	5%
States need to do more to reduce traffic/too many exemptions/increase charge	391	5%
Suggests other changes (introduce one way streets, provide more parking etc)	834	12%
Suggests alternative options for school traffic (e.g. shuttle buses)	432	6%
Suggests stop or slow house building/other development	81	1%
Suggests better enforcement (including LTNs, bad driving, parking, cycling, e scooters, bike theft)	371	5%
Suggests better separation of modes (e.g. proper cycle lanes)	326	5%
Suggests improve how roadworks are managed	103	1%
Suggests improve walking and cycling infrastructure/availability of bike hire and scooters	722	10%
Concern that journeys will be worse (longer or more complicated)	99	1%
Concern about negative impact on Oxford businesses	146	2%
Suggests introduce traffic filters	20	0%
Suggests do more traffic flow or behaviour research	86	1%
Suggests general road infrastructure investment or improvement or traffic management/relocating services	507	7%
Suggests council should retain/improve access for cars	496	7%
Suggests remove LTNs	1169	16%
Other	663	9%
Blank	1636	23%

Free text themes and verbatim comments from personal impact question

The first survey question with a free text field asked the respondent to explain their answer to how positive or negative they expected the impact of the scheme to be, for them or those they represent.

In answering this question, many people specified the benefits expected or the concerns they had.

Sceptical of impact

Some negative comments were based around scepticism of the impact of the scheme. People highlighted concerns that traffic would increase, journeys would worsen, and air quality would decrease.

Example responses:

"It will cause more traffic build up in the morning because people who usually use these routes will now have to find another route and build up more traffic that way instead. People like me who work at the hospitals in Oxford will be charged despite our job status and be told to get the bus instead of driving which is over an hour's journey each way."

"It's just going to force the traffic that uses the 6 roads to the main roads, which are already overly busy due to there being 3 main artery roads into the Plain. So this is just going to make traffic worse even for buses. Buses will go through the congestion charge zones no problem but when they come out of these roads they'll just join the mayhem that is main road and buses will continue to be unreliable."

"You will not stop people driving cars. If you charge for certain areas drivers will use the other areas causing additional traffic and congestion/pollution in those areas. It's very short sighted & naive to expect everyone to use public transport."

Bus services not good enough

Many respondents said that bus services were not good enough; including that areas of the county are not well served by buses, or that buses are too expensive, infrequent or slow for their needs. Some said they relied on their cars partly because public transport is not good enough.

Example responses:

"We travel to central Oxford to drop our kids to school. We live outside of Oxford and bus service is rubbish or unreliable. We have no choice but to travel by car."

"You should improve the bus services from villages before trying to reduce car use. Kirtlington only has a handful of buses throughout the day available to use (the service has reduced greatly over recent years) making commuting difficult at times. Plus it is very expensive. Adding the charge will merely snarl up other roads and cause more congestion on these longer routes. Make service infrastructure better first for villages like Kirtlington."

"Oxford transport infrastructure is not well set up. Buses are too expensive for families and take too long to get anywhere. They are not frequent enough to meet my needs."

Access to centre and ice rink

Some respondents said that access to the ice rink would be difficult for people with heavy kit. Concern was also raised about access to the bus and train station for onward travel, and access to the Westgate.

Example responses:

"My son plays Ice Hockey for Oxford Stars. We drive from the New Forest to play. It costs at present £6 to park. In addition to the £40 in fuel, the additional charge for getting him to the ice rink, which incidentally would not be until approximately 6pm (an hour before the end of the time the scheme will be in force). This extra cost will most likely mean my son will need to seek a new team to play for and I suspect the same will apply for many teams."

mates. You cannot take the equipment needed for this sport on a bus, the bags are huge plus the sticks and often the smell is awful. If ice users who pay already a princely sum to park at Oxpens now have to pay an additional cost doubling their spend, players will leave the sport will die out in Oxford and the rink will become untenable.”

“We can Not carry all our equipment on public transport to Ice rink”

“The ice hockey community cant get on public buses with kit bags and sticks. I tried twice and was refused due to the size of the bag and the fact that my son had his sticks! You will kill ice hockey in oxford.”

“It will limit the ability to access the train station for business / work. We will no longer use this station as we will have to pay a charge to get anywhere near it, it will make living in Oxford even more difficult.”

“The proposals seem to suggest the Westgate car park will no longer be accessible by car without paying the congestion charge. I enjoy visiting Oxford city centre with my 2 year old and the Westgate car park is very convenient for us, especially transporting a pram.”

Journeys needing a car

People highlighted that certain journeys require a car and expressed concern that not all of these needs are covered by permits, for example taking children to activities after school, or journeys for people who have limited mobility.

Example responses:

“I have several drop offs in the morning and then again in the evening (two schools, then I need to get to work in Jericho). Due to the locations I'm not able to do this by bus. I also have to get the children to after school sports activities in Oxford which won't be possible with 25 permits. People's lives are complicated - especially when you live a full family life and have commitments.”

“I commute from oxford station on average a couple of times a week. There are no options to park at the train station without paying the congestion charge. I have limited mobility which is not bad enough for a blue badge but would be very difficult for me to walk from the centre if I was able to catch a bus first thing in the morning. I would be severely penalised for having no option but to use the train station and my free passes would only last about 2 months. Potentially I would choose to drive to another station contributing to more congestion on the roads.”

“It will have a bad effect on people with limited mobility working in the city centre who are not severely affected enough for a blue badge but are not able to trek from bus stop and do a full day of work. I fall into this category.”

Suggested amendments

Some responses suggested amendments to the scheme to make it more lenient, while others suggested amendments to make it less lenient. Suggestions included adding or removing charging locations, and widening or reducing exemptions and permits.

Example responses:

"I think it should stop a bit earlier to let people attend evening shows and there should be an access to the Westgate shopping centre "

"I think it is a good idea, but it does not go far enough. The charge is too low. To act as a deterrent to driving into the city, it needs to cost more than the alternative modes of transport (for example, a return bus ticket is likely to be £6 per person, so the convenience of driving is still there). It also has too many exemptions."

"The cost of travelling into Oxford via train is too high (£22 per day) and the service is not reliable, myself my partner and my mother lift share into Oxford as we all live outside the area and we use an EV so I feel this should be exempt"

"Living outside the ring road means I'd only get 25 passes consideration should be taken to areas such as Kennington where many people would need to cross the charge locations for work. Also consideration for those whose workplaces don't have parking but need to drive to work."

"I feel the bus gate on Marston Ferry Road is unnecessary. This is already an out-of-town route so doesn't need restricting."

Concern for businesses

Many respondents highlighted a concern that the scheme would negatively impact Oxford business or other organisations, because they think the scheme will discourage visitors to the city. Potential difficulty with recruitment was also stated as a concern.

Example responses:

"If this goes ahead my job will be at risk, I work in Headington and we have already seen a dramatic loss of customers since the LTN's in Cowley as people don't want to go around the houses to get to us."

"The impact of the closure of Botley Rd has been hugely impactful on local businesses and residents of the area and further afield. To now introduce a charge on the route into the city centre could, and quite possibly will, have a negative impact on Oxford city centre / businesses. I believe people will avoid Oxford centre completely if they have a choice."

"It will deter visitors and shoppers coming into Oxford and therefore will hit businesses and the hospitality industry."

"This will be detrimental to business in Oxford, putting off customers and will make it extremely difficult to recruit people to work in Oxford"

Inequality

Responses talked about expected inequality in different ways. There was concern raised that the scheme may disproportionately affect poorer people as more wealthy people would find the charge easier to pay. There was also a concern raised that the scheme was impacting some areas more than others, or discriminating against

certain groups of people who need to travel, for example to a particular church. Others mentioned that the charge could disproportionately affect people who rely on their cars for work, those with mobility challenges, and residents of areas poorly served by public transport.

Example responses:

“You are further restricting travel in and around Oxford & will possibly prevent people with less income from travelling to work/education or medical care”

“I am extremely worried about how my elderly parents will manage this. You’ve only just switched to the online permits system and they are struggling to access that - you did it without any support available to them. They will end up isolated and disadvantaged- it’s like elderly discrimination at this point.”

“I live and work in an area of higher deprivation and I think this would again be seen as a move by the council to push out the poor from the centre of their community in Oxford. This will no doubt affect the poor more substantially than the rich. Use more carrot, less stick.”

“You hit in the pocket vulnerable people with this measure, basically allowing people who has the means to have little to no issue at all. Also you are allowing a gate from Summertown to city center with no penalties. That is actually elitist.”

LTNs and Botley Road closure

Some respondents said the traffic problems in Oxford exist because of LTNs or the Botley Road closure.

Example responses:

“The residents of Oxford already can’t use many roads due to LTNS . It takes me 40 minutes to get done Holloway to my drs . Open the ltns which have proven to increase congestion”

“The introduction of LTN’s in East Oxford has increased pollution, congestion and travelling times. This proposal will exacerbate the problem.”

“In theory the plan sounds great, but with Botley Road closed off and the buses running less and less frequently the traffic only gets worse. New tragic charges will make it hell!”

Cost impact

There are responses that express concern about the cost impact, often linked to concerns about isolation or impact on wellbeing, employment or quality of life. These responses often also highlight concern for the impact on teachers, hospital workers, students and working families.

Example responses:

“We are living at a time where everything has become more expensive (at a higher rate than wage increases). Implementing another charge is not helpful to residents.”

“I am a teacher and I drive to work with my laptop, work etc I will leave next year because of the scheme because of the cost and traffic. Many others are saying the same. We are already struggling to recruit teachers.”

"I'm a single parent working part time, I am unable to bus as we have after school activities that are time limited and the other end of oxford. I would not be able to afford £ 5 charge daily to get to work!"

Concern about restricting resident travel

Some responses express concern that the scheme will restrict residents' travel or freedom of movement.

Example responses:

"This is limiting the freedom we have for travelling to city centre by car and while buses can be an option, carrying your bags to and from the bus stops is not fun. We already pay so many taxes as drivers, so I'm strongly against paying even more."

"Obstructs freedom of travel. Makes an already challenging and expensive life even more so. It's horrible 😞"

Listening and timing

Other comments include that the council isn't listening, or the proposed implementation timeline is too quick.

Example responses:

"I think our concerns are that you guys are not listening to any of our comments..."

"Although I broadly support the proposal as a way of dealing with the traffic problem, especially for bus users, I understand the negative reaction because of the timing - no hint of it was made I believe until after the local elections in May 25."

"You stated that the traffic filter trial would not be introduced until the Botley Road was re-opened, presumably recognising that the travel disruption caused by the Botley Road closure was already significant. Introducing the congestion charge before the Botley Road is open is equivalent to starting the traffic filter trial early."

Expected improvements

Many responses highlighted the improvements respondents expect to see, to air quality, public transport, essential car use and walking and cycling, with reduced traffic. Some responses said it was a way to test some traffic filter principles, and others said they preferred the idea of the proposed scheme to the idea of traffic filters. Some responses highlighted potential improved public health and wellbeing with fewer cars on the road.

Example responses:

"Cars are a constant issue with my commute in by bike. Not only are they the sole cause of traffic and the blocks on the roads. It then becomes an issue of safety when they then decide to drive in or block cycle lanes because they can't go anywhere. Removing a large number of vehicles from inside the ring road will increase cycle safety and reduce pollution."

"I work in community respiratory care, so I'm aware of the negative impact of pollution on people's health. I'm also concerned about climate change. Because my patients are often poor they live outside the expensive and central parts of Oxford, but might be reliant on public transport to get them to the hospital, or have to travel through the central part of

Oxford, so i'm glad to see that frequent hospital patients are exempt, and that's why i would like to see cheaper buses for all."

"If this reduces traffic generally within the city then that would be positive for quality of life of residents and those visitors who walk/cycle in this area. If it reduces the congestion at St Clements then that would benefit our car journeys and those of many other people."

"I use buses and due to the very high levels of congestion, they are regularly late and the journeys take longer. Reducing the number of cars on the roads will create more room for buses, so their journeys take longer times will get quicker. A member of my family is disabled and is a Blue Badge holder. Being in a car causes him great physical pain, so the longer a car journey takes due to congestion, means that he is in more pain and for longer than necessary. Reducing the number of cars on the road, would make his journeys much quicker."

"I hope this will reduce traffic and pollution and permanently change travel habits. I hope this is the start to improving space allocated to active travel rather than motor vehicles."

"Traffic is horrendous and makes buses unusable. They are often late, slow, unpredictable and full. Anything to encourage fewer car journeys is helpful."

"Anything that reduces cars in the city centre improves air quality and therefore health, as well as general well-being, the walkability of the city and the pleasantness of the city"

Free text themes and verbatim comments in answer to any other comments

The second free text field invited respondents to share any other comments about the proposed scheme.

Many themes and issues were repeated from the previous question. In addition:

Encouraging public transport and cycling

Some respondents said they thought the scheme would encourage public transport and cycling.

Example comments:

"Go for it! Anything to encourage active travel"

"Oxford has far more traffic than it can deal with. This scheme helps to encourage people to use buses - because the buses should be quicker and cars more expensive - which allows more people to travel to and from the city"

"It will reduce pollution, reduce climate warming and encourage more people to walk, take buses or cycle. It will improve bus journey times and create a more amenable city environment"

"Congestion is a problem in Oxford because there are too many journeys taken by car. Buses journeys need to be quicker and cheaper to get people to switch from cars to buses. Something must be done and we won't really know how it works until it's implemented."

Perception that car drivers are targeted negatively

Some responses said the scheme negatively targets car drivers, or that traffic problems are caused by buses.

Example responses:

“Yet another tax this time targeting only car drivers. Why not van & lorry drivers and motorcyclists? If you really wish to reduce congestion simply pedestrianise the area. This charge just means that those people for whom £5 is inconsequential have free run of the city and for those for whom it isn't, do not.”

“Again you target motorists but there are more others on the road than motorists”

“An enormous amount of congestion in east Oxford is actually caused by buses. They frequently get stuck on Cowley Rd due to their being insufficient space for them to pass each other in their bunched distribution.”

Other suggestions

Some respondents said that electric cars should be exempt or that an expanded ZEZ or ULEZ would be a better option.

Suggestions to reduce traffic and tackle congestion from free text responses

This final free text survey question asked for suggestions for other ways to reduce traffic and tackle congestion in and around Oxford. Respondents shared their ideas in a free text field.

Proposals included:**Tackling school travel**

- Incentives for schools to discourage cars
- Shuttle buses from park and rides for schools
- More dedicated school buses
- Working with schools travel planning

Bus

- Buses should be cheaper than driving
- Air conditioning and other comforts on buses
- More services from rural areas into the city
- Bookable buses
- More buses at times suitable for school and work
- More dedicated school services
- Facilities to improve sense of safety at stops including lighting and staffed facilities at park and ride
- Radial bus services around the city
- Bringing Eynsham park and ride into use

Cycle

- Cycle lane connectivity
- Better path/road surfaces

- Taking steps to tackle bike theft
- More dedicated cycle routes
- Better separation from traffic

Walking

- Better separation from cyclists
- More reactive road crossings
- More safe crossings

Other types of mass transit

- Trams
- More local train lines and stations
- Underground network
- Using the waterways

Traffic flow

- Better phasing of traffic lights
- Removing LTNs
- Improvements to ring road
- Advance bookings for westgate car park
- Open rear gate of JR hospital
- Double red lines to Plain roundabout
- Laybys at bus stops
- Widening roads
- Removing bus lanes
- Better management of road works
- Introduce more one way streets
- Provide more parking

Other restrictions

- Restrictions for lorries, vans, tour buses and tourist coaches
- Disincentivising parking, by removing spaces or increasing cost
- ULEZ/increased ZEZ
- Introduce a defined congestion zone or car-free city centre

Encouraging different modes of travel

- Incentivise active travel
- Communicate benefits of not using a car

Reducing need to travel

- Locate more health and other services outside the city centre
- Businesses encourage flexible working
- Reduce house building and other development

Enforcement of:

- Safe driving
- LTNs

- Safe cycling
- Parking restrictions

Other sources of information

Alongside the consultation survey, the council received information and questions to the project email inbox, from individuals and on behalf of stakeholder groups. Focussed work was also undertaken to discuss and explore the proposals with members of the council's recent citizens' assembly, and with a group of young people. These inputs are summarised in this section.

Responses from stakeholders

Some stakeholder responses were provided as emails or letters to the project team and others were received through the Let's talk Oxfordshire survey. Within the Let's talk survey responses, totalling 91 categorised as businesses and 48 as group/organisational responses, 29 either were not verified as organisational responses, didn't give an organisation name, duplicated entries or preferred to remain anonymous. These responses have been retained in the Let's talk aggregated data reporting and in the publication of all consultation responses with relevant permission.

Summaries of stakeholder submissions and responses to issues by council officers are available on the Let's talk Oxfordshire portal, along with submissions published in full.

Stakeholders had a diverse range of perspectives and priorities and these are summarised individually in this section.

Benefits desired included reduced traffic congestion and improved bus services, and enhanced safety for walking and cycling. Concerns raised included potential impact on vulnerable residents and small businesses, including a financial burden on families and volunteers. There were also concerns about potential traffic displacement and access issues.

Suggestions for changes included exemptions or permits for certain groups, a dynamic permit registration process and amendments to hours of operation.

Stakeholder responses include representations from:

- Activate Learning
 - Activate Learning supports initiatives to improve Oxford's transport infrastructure but is concerned that temporary congestion charges could impact its delivery of services.
 - They seek clarification on permit accessibility for staff and vulnerable students and request that surplus revenue be reinvested to support learners.
- BMW
 - BMW (UK) Manufacturing Ltd supports Oxfordshire County Council's goals to reduce congestion and promote sustainable travel.

- They have concerns about the transparency of the modelling used to support the scheme and its potential impact on logistics and employee travel. They request greater clarity on traffic forecasting and mitigation of displacement effects.
- COLTA - City of Oxford Licensed Taxicab Association
 - Hackney carriage drivers believe the traffic filters will reduce daily traffic.
 - They advocate for promoting their trade as a viable transport solution, alongside buses, to ensure accessible public transport in Oxford.
- CoHSAT – Coalition for Healthy Streets and Active Travel
 - The Coalition for Healthy Streets and Active Travel (CoHSAT) strongly supports the Temporary Congestion Charge for Cars in Oxford, citing benefits such as improved fairness, health, and wellbeing.
 - They criticise a misleading petition opposing the charge and support alternatives like car-free zones and weight-based charging
- Community safety services - (Including Fire and Rescue Service, Joint Oxfordshire Resilience Team and Trading Standards)
 - Community Safety Services believe they can continue operating effectively under the proposed congestion charge due to the availability of permits..
 - They highlight the need for a dynamic permit registration process, to enable staffing changes at short notice.
- CycloX
 - CycloX strongly supports the temporary congestion charge in Oxford, believing it will significantly reduce motor traffic, improve bus journey times, and make cycling and walking more attractive and safer.
 - They also believe the proposal will help those on lower incomes to get around the city more easily.
- Headington Liveable Streets
 - Headington Liveable Streets (HLS) strongly supports the temporary congestion charge and associated traffic reduction measures. They believe the scheme is essential for reducing through-traffic, improving bus services, and promoting sustainable transport.
 - HLS calls for stronger pricing, stricter permit controls, and additional traffic mitigation in residential areas
- Ice Hockey UK
 - Ice Hockey UK (IHUK) expresses concern over the impact on the local ice hockey community regarding the proposed congestion charge.
 - They highlight the financial burden on families, potential reduced participation, and the impact on the rink's sustainability.
- Layla Moran MP
 - Layla Moran MP supports reducing traffic in Oxford but raises concerns about permit allocation, the impact on Kennington and Cumnor residents, and the need for better bus services to rural areas and schools.
 - She also highlights the financial impact on Oxford Ice Rink users during the Botley Road closure
- Lowland Rescue Oxfordshire

- Lowland Rescue Oxfordshire (OxSAR) is concerned about financially burdening volunteers, potentially impacting their operations.
 - OxSAR urges exemptions for volunteer response teams to ensure their continued support for emergency service
- Meadowbrook College
 - Meadowbrook College is concerned about the potential unintended consequences of the proposed congestion charge, particularly regarding traffic displacement and access for vulnerable students and staff.
 - They urge Oxfordshire County Council to adopt a broader monitoring strategy and ensure exemptions for essential school-related travel
- My Life My Choice Oxfordshire group
 - My Life My Choice stated in their neutral response that public transport services need improvement before implementing the charge.
 - They are concerned about park and ride sites becoming busier, and feel buses are too expensive.
- Open Roads for Oxford
 - Open Roads for Oxford outlines concerns regarding the proposals.
 - It highlights issues such as scepticism about the scheme's effectiveness, potential economic impact, inequality in outcomes, disregard for alternative solutions, and data and process concerns.
- Oxford Brookes University
 - Oxford Brookes University supports the congestion charge's goals but raises concerns about its impact on students and operations.
 - They seek confirmation on permits for health and care workers, alternative arrangements during student move-in/out, reassurance on bus services, permits for operational vehicles, and consideration of suburban and rural bus travel.
- Oxford Bus Company
 - OBC supports the proposals.
 - They say the proposed congestion charge is expected to significantly reduce traffic congestion, improving bus journey times and reliability. This will make buses more attractive to users, reduce operating costs, and generate revenue for sustainable transport improvements, ultimately enhancing air quality and public health.
- Oxford Business Action Group
 - Oxford Business Action Group (OBAG) opposes the proposed Oxford temporary congestion charge for cars, citing concerns about severe economic risks, workforce disruption, insufficient evidence, and lack of safeguards.
 - They call for postponement, clear harm thresholds for monitoring the scheme, a support package, and transparent feedback mechanisms.
- Oxford City Council
 - Oxford City Council opposes the proposed temporary congestion charge, citing its unequal impact on vulnerable residents, inadequate public transport, economic harm to small businesses, and administrative burdens.
 - The council calls for reconsideration and further consultation.
- Oxford Health NHS foundation trust

- The Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust supports the proposed congestion charge for its potential benefits but raises concerns about the financial burden on staff who rely on personal vehicles.
- They request permits for work-related vehicle use and improved public transport options to mitigate these challenges
- Oxford University Hospitals NHS trust
 - Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust acknowledges the aims of the proposed congestion charge but raises concerns about its impact on patients, visitors, and staff.
 - They request clear signage, simplified permit processes, and investment in public transport links to mitigate disruption and protect vulnerable groups.
- Oxford University Press
 - The response highlights concerns about the proposed congestion charge in Oxford. It argues that the scheme will reroute traffic, increase pollution, and negatively impact employee recruitment and retention.
 - It also stresses the need for improved public transport before implementing the charge, to avoid detrimental effects on businesses and the environment.
- Oxfordshire Liveable Streets
 - Oxfordshire Liveable Streets supports the temporary congestion charge. They highlight benefits such as faster, more reliable journeys, fairness for those with the greatest need, expanded travel choices, and improved health and wellbeing through cleaner air and safer streets.
 - They say weight-based charging is fairer as larger vehicles are more polluting and cause more wear on infrastructure.
 - Revenue should support cheaper fares and better bus services. Stronger incentives are needed to switch modes, and recommendations from Oxford's Citizens' Assembly should be implemented.
- Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership
 - The Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership requests that the exemption currently applied to NHS health and social care workers be extended to voluntary sector staff delivering similar functions.
 - The organisations point out that their services are essential and that the proposed congestion charges could negatively impact their ability to provide support to vulnerable individuals in the community.
- Oxon4buses
 - Oxon4Buses expresses strong support for the proposed temporary congestion charge. The group views the measure as a necessary step toward improving Oxford's bus services, which are vital for low-income residents, disabled individuals, and those with health conditions.
 - They advocate for the scheme to be implemented as part of a broader transformation of Oxford's transport system, with fairness and social justice at its core.
- OXPA – Oxford Pedestrians Association
 - The Oxford Pedestrians Association (OxPA) supports the Council's congestion charging proposals, which aim to reduce traffic congestion, danger, and air pollution in Oxford.

- The proposals are expected to benefit walking and wheeling, improve bus service reliability, and align with the council's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) adopted in 2022.
- POETS - Planning Oxfordshire's Environment and Transport Sustainably
 - POETS supports the proposed congestion charge but has concerns about charging locations and exemptions.
 - They recommend a publicity campaign to explain the scheme, financial incentives for bus and park & ride use, and introducing new or additional bus services simultaneously.
- Reconnecting Oxford
 - Reconnecting Oxford criticises the congestion charge proposal, arguing it won't ease congestion and may harm residents, businesses, and hospital access. It highlights issues with traffic reduction, bus service reliability, and local air pollution.
 - The report provided says the scheme is unlikely to meet its objectives and calls for the council to reconsider
- Rescue Oxford (ROX)
 - ROX raises concerns about the proposed congestion charge in Oxford, highlighting potential bureaucratic challenges, the impact on businesses, and the need for clear communication to residents and visitors.
 - They question the logic behind the proposed traffic filter sites and suggest alternative strategies to reduce congestion without harming the local economy
- River Learning Trust
 - The River Learning Trust (RLT) opposes the proposed congestion charge, citing concerns about its impact on staff recruitment and retention at several Oxford schools.
 - They warn that the charge could undermine educational quality and urge the Council to find alternative solutions that do not compromise education.
- South Oxfordshire District Council
 - South Oxfordshire District Council supports the goals to reduce traffic, improve bus services, and promote safer walking and cycling.
 - Concerns about permit area boundaries, exemptions for commercial vehicles, impact on the ring road, and through traffic.
 - Suggest charging for permits to reduce abuse, imposing time restrictions for commercial vehicle access, and providing advance warning signage for effective operation and compliance.
- St Thomas Nursery
 - St Thomas' Day Nursery is concerned about the financial and operational impact of the proposed congestion charge on staff and clientele.
 - They highlight the impracticality of public transport for staff with childcare responsibilities and request clarification on exemptions to support continued access for staff and families.
- Stagecoach West
 - Stagecoach West supports the proposed scheme. They say Oxford faces critical congestion levels, with bus services running significantly

slower than in 2022. This impacts investment and bus attractiveness, failing to meet guidelines.

- A congestion charge is seen as a temporary solution to reduce congestion and improve bus services until Botley Road reopens.
- Thames Valley Police
 - Thames Valley Police acknowledges the exemption for "Police Vehicle on Patrol" under the proposed congestion charge scheme but expresses scepticism about the necessity and design of the restrictions.
 - Key concerns include signage clarity, manoeuvring space, and the ability to suspend restrictions during spontaneous incidents.
- Uber
 - Uber Ltd supports the Oxford temporary congestion charge initiative, highlighting its goals of reducing traffic and improving public transport, cycling, and walking conditions.
 - They welcome the exemption for Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles and stress the importance of a streamlined registration process for PHV exemptions to ensure operational continuity and driver compliance
- Vale of White Horse District Council
 - Vale of White Horse District Council supports the temporary congestion charge proposal's objectives.
 - Concerns about the number of permits and exemptions reducing effectiveness. Concern about potential increases in traffic in some areas

Citizens' assembly members' feedback

Participants of the Citizens' Assembly on Travel and Transport reconvened on 15 July 2025 to discuss the proposed temporary congestion charge for Oxford. The assembly broadly supported the proposal but raised concerns about its effectiveness in changing behaviour.

Many participants questioned whether a £5 daily charge would be sufficient to deter car use, suggesting a higher fee of £10–£15 instead. They emphasised the need for visible reinvestment in alternatives like free Park & Ride shuttles and standardised, affordable bus fares. Fairness was a concern, particularly for low-income workers and residents with limited alternatives.

Suggested mitigations included income-based discounts and clearer communication around exemptions. Transparency was deemed vital for public trust, both in explaining the charge's purpose and showing how revenue would be used to support travel behaviour change.

Young people's pizza and perspectives event feedback

During a Pizza and Perspectives event held on 6 August 2025, ten young people aged 11 to 17 shared their thoughts on the temporary congestion charge proposals. This provided an opportunity to hear and understand their perspectives.

They expressed hopes that the charge would lead to improved and cheaper bus services, safer and more considerate driving, and a better environment with less noise and pollution. They also hoped it would encourage more cycling and walking.

The young people were particularly positive about the proposal's potential to protect the environment and improve safety for cycling.

They had concerns about the potential for increased traffic congestion in other areas, the impact on people who rely on cars, and the possibility of overcrowded buses. They also highlighted the potential financial burden on those less able to pay and the accessibility of digital permits for older people.

Email inbox summary

A project email inbox was created to receive questions and comments related to the proposal.

During the consultation period, feedback was received from 78 unique email addresses. This feedback is summarised below. All comments were read and considered by officers.

Key Concerns and Objections from email feedback

There were concerns that the congestion charge is costly, unfair, and creates barriers to essential services, especially for carers, NHS staff, and families. There were equity concerns due to insufficient exemptions and the charge's impact on less affluent areas. There was concern for businesses fearing economic harm, while public transport alternatives were described as inadequate. There was criticism of the consultation process and complex permit systems. Correspondents highlighted risks of traffic displacement, pollution, and negative effects on sports clubs and specific neighbourhoods. There were calls for clearer communication, broader exemptions, and genuine engagement

What people like or support in email feedback

1. Principle of reducing congestion

Among correspondence there was support for reducing car traffic in Oxford to improve air quality and safety. There was also support for using surplus income to enhance public transport, with a focus on cheaper, more frequent buses and better Park & Ride options. The temporary nature of the scheme was seen positively by some.

2. Specific suggestions and positive feedback

Some correspondents suggested varying the charge according to car size, emissions, or time of day, to reduce the impact on lower-income drivers and encourage greener vehicles.

There was support for clearer information about how the scheme works, especially for elderly or disabled residents.

There was support or suggestions for exemptions or special permits for NHS staff, carers, teachers, and those with essential needs.

Some welcomed the potential for safer cycling and walking if traffic is reduced.

Next steps

In conclusion, the consultation has provided a considerable volume of information about public concerns and hopes regarding the temporary congestion charge proposal. While there are concerns about the scheme's effectiveness, impact on local businesses, and fairness, there is also support for its potential to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and enhance public transport services. The feedback gathered will help shape the final proposals.

Appendix – Survey questionnaire

Oxford temporary congestion charge for cars - survey

We are asking for your views on six temporary congestion charge locations for cars in Oxford.

The temporary congestion charge is being proposed to reduce traffic around Oxford during Network Rail's extended closure of Botley Road. When Botley Road reopens, we will be able to introduce the [traffic filters](#) trial as planned and the temporary congestion charge would end.

The scheme is designed to improve bus services and make it easier for those with permits, including community health and care workers, carers, blue badge holders and traders, to travel by car into and around the city.

Your feedback will help shape the proposals and help councillors make an informed decision about the temporary charge.

How would it work?

- From autumn 2025, a daily charge of £5 would allow cars without a permit to go through six charge locations on roads in Oxford until the end of the day
- All other vehicles would be able to go through at all times without paying the charge
- Cars with a permit or day pass would be able to pass the charge locations free of charge.

Details of available permits are at question five of the survey below.

- Traffic signs would mark the locations of the charging cameras
- The scheme would be enforced using automatic number plate recognition cameras (ANPR) positioned at the listed congestion charge locations.

Why are we proposing this and what would it achieve?

The objectives of the scheme are the same as for traffic filters. The scheme aims to:

- reduce traffic
- make bus journeys faster and more reliable
- allow for new and improved bus routes
- make walking and cycling safer
- reduce local air pollution
- improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Where would the congestion charge locations be?

The temporary congestion charge locations would be exactly the same as the planned traffic filters.

Charging point	Charging days	Charging times
Hythe Bridge Street	Monday to Sunday	7am-7pm
St Cross Road	Monday to Sunday	7am-7pm
St Clement's Street	Monday to Sunday	7am-7pm
Thames Street	Monday to Sunday	7am-7pm
Marston Ferry Road	Monday to Saturday	7-9am and 3-6pm
Hollow Way	Monday to Saturday	7-9am and 3-6pm

The temporary congestion charge would be payable all year round, including bank holidays.

Where would the income go?

Income generated by the temporary congestion charge would be used to cover the cost of setting up and operating the scheme. Any money in addition to this would be used towards discounted park and ride services and improved bus services.

This could include:

- free or discounted parking at park and ride sites
- discounted bus and park and ride fares
- improved bus services.

Any surplus income may be used for other transport schemes. By law, we can only use the income for transport – it can't be spent on anything else.

How would I pay the charge?

The charge would be payable online by midnight on the day after you drive through one of the six congestion charge locations. If you can't pay online, you'll be able to pay by phone.

How long would the scheme be in place?

We're proposing this scheme because the ongoing closure of Botley Road means we can't yet implement our traffic filters trial. After Botley Road reopens, expected to be end of August 2026, we should be able to introduce the traffic filters trial, but this may not happen immediately.

If approved, the temporary congestion charge scheme would be in place for no longer than two years.

Permits for cars

The temporary congestion charge would **only apply to cars**. All other vehicles would not need to pay a charge and would not need a permit.

Permits would be available for certain groups including community health and care workers, carers, blue badge holders, and mobile traders - exactly the same as for the planned traffic filters trial - allowing them to pass through the charge locations without incurring a charge.

For this scheme, a new [central permit area](#) would be created. Permits would be available for residents, their visitors and commuters in this central area where car drivers would have no option but to pass through a charge location. See a map of the central Oxford permit area and more information about permits at question four of the survey. **We are asking for your feedback on these additional permit types at questions five and six of this survey.**

As with the planned traffic filters trial, residents in the wider [Oxford permit area](#) would be eligible for 100 day passes, while residents in the [Oxfordshire permit area](#) would be eligible for 25 day passes, allowing free travel through the charge locations. Each day pass would allow you to drive through all six charge locations as many times as you like on that day. See area maps on the last page of this document.

All permits would be free and valid for 12 months unless stated otherwise.

Without a permit, car drivers could choose an alternative route or pay the daily charge.

Have your say

Please take the time to read the information available and complete the survey, as your views and opinions matter. Your response should be submitted by **5pm on Sunday 3 August 2025 at 11:59pm**.

If you would prefer to complete this survey online, it is available by the link below, or scan the QR code.

letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/congestion-charge

What happens next?

The county council will review the responses and prepare a report to be presented to the council's cabinet in September 2025. This will be a public meeting at which members of the public can apply to speak. The agenda and reports for meetings will be made available on the Oxfordshire County Council website about a week before the meeting.

Survey

Part 1 – About you

Q1 – I am responding to this survey as...

- ☐ Oxford resident
- ☐ Resident of Oxfordshire living outside Oxford
- ☐ Member of the public living outside Oxfordshire
- ☐ Business

Business name
- ☐ Representative of a group or organisation

Group/organisation name
- ☐ Parish, town, district or county councillor

If you are a councillor, your name

If you are a councillor, name of the parish, town, ward or division name you represent

- ☐ Other

Please specify

Q2 – How often do you travel in or around Oxford?

Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Less than ☐ Never ☐
weekly

Part 2 – Oxford temporary congestion charge

We are proposing to implement six temporary congestion charge locations for cars in Oxford. Permits would be available for certain groups. Cars with a permit won't need to pay the charge.

The temporary congestion charge is being proposed to reduce traffic around Oxford during Network Rail's extended Botley Road closure. When Botley Road reopens, we will be able to introduce the traffic filters trial as planned and the temporary congestion charge would end. See more at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/trafficfilters

The temporary congestion charge would **only apply to cars**. All other vehicles would not need to pay a charge and would not need a permit.

The scheme is designed to improve bus services and make it easier for those with permits, including community health and care workers, carers, blue badge holders and traders, to travel by car into and around the city.

Permits

We are proposing the free permits and passes for cars to drive through the Oxford temporary congestion charge locations **free of charge** would be the same as those planned for traffic filters.

Q3 - Please tick which of the following free permits and passes you think you may be eligible for:

Free resident passes

- ☐ 100 day passes for residents in the Oxford permit area
- ☐ 25 day passes for residents in the Oxfordshire permit area

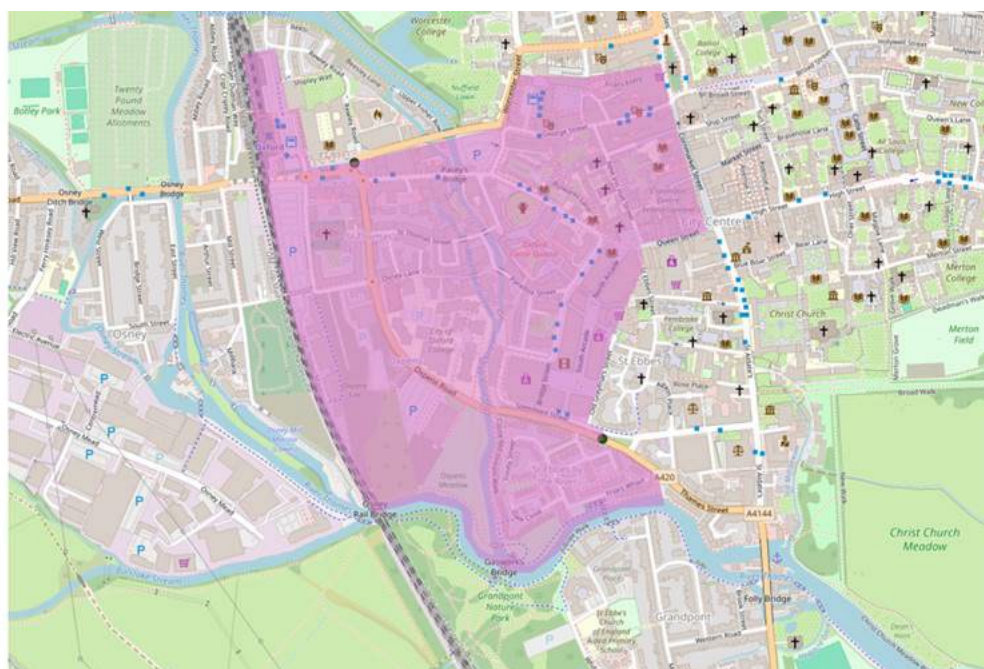
Free permits

- ☐ Blue badge holders
- ☐ Disability benefit claimants
- ☐ Disabled tax class cars
- ☐ School students with special educational needs
- ☐ Unpaid carers
- ☐ Community health or care workers who need to visit multiple locations or travel urgently
- ☐ Frequent hospital patients

- ☐ Emergency service vehicles
- ☐ Firefighters
- ☐ Taxis and private hire vehicles
- ☐ Registered car clubs
- ☐ Business cars used as goods vehicles
- ☐ Personal cars used as goods vehicles for business purposes
- ☐ Driving instructors
- ☐ Hearses and funeral cars

New permit types

We are also proposing to introduce two new permit types for the temporary congestion charge. A new central Oxford permit area would cover an area where cars would have no option but to drive through a charge location, shown below.



The two proposed new types of permit for this area are:

- central Oxford permit area residents and their visitors passes
- central Oxford permit area commuters – for people whose workplace parking is in the central Oxford permit area

The permits would allow these car users free access through all congestion charge locations for as long as the temporary scheme would be in place. This is because with Botley Road still closed this area would not be accessible by car without driving through a congestion charging location.

Q4 Do you live, visit a resident by car or commute by car to the proposed central Oxford permit area?

- I live in the central permit area, or visit a resident of the central permit area by car ☐
- I commute to the central permit area by car ☐
- I don't ☐

Q5 - Central Oxford residents' permit

It is proposed residents in the central Oxford permit area should be eligible for:

- a free permit for their own vehicle(s) which would allow them free travel through all six congestion charge locations AND
- up to 50 free day passes per year designating any vehicle being used to visit them.

What impact would the introduction of a central Oxford area residents' permit have, as part of the proposed scheme, on you or the people you represent?

- Very positive ☐
- Positive ☐
- Neutral ☐
- Negative ☐
- Very negative ☐
- No impact ☐

Q6 - Central Oxford permit area commuters' permit

It is proposed workers commuting to workplace parking in the central Oxford permit area should be able to apply for a free permit for up to three vehicles. These vehicles must be used for commuting to and from the area.

What impact would the introduction of a central permit area commuters' permit have, as part of the proposed scheme, on you or the people you represent?

- Very positive ☐
- Positive ☐
- Neutral ☐
- Negative ☐
- Very negative ☐
- No impact ☐

Charging levels and use of income generated

Q7 - We are proposing a single charge of £5 to allow cars without a day pass or permit to go through all of the temporary charge locations on one day. What do you think of the level of this charge?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Too low | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| About right | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Too high | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| There should be no charges at all | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q8 – Do you think that charges should vary, with drivers of larger cars paying more and drivers of smaller cars paying less?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

Q9 Income generated by introducing the proposed temporary congestion charge would be used to cover the set-up and operating costs of the scheme. By law, any surplus income from the proposed scheme must be invested into improving transport.

As this is expected to be a short-term scheme, we are considering improvements that can be introduced quickly. To help us to prioritise potential funded improvements, please choose your top three from the proposals below:

- ☐ Make Park & Ride parking cheaper
- ☐ Make Park & Ride buses cheaper
- ☐ Make buses cheaper for all
- ☐ Make buses cheaper for young people
- ☐ Add new bus routes
- ☐ Make bus services more frequent
- ☐ Extend hours of operation for buses
- ☐ Add public cycle parking
- ☐ Other, please state

Overall impact

Q10 – Taking into account all the information we have provided about the proposal to introduce six temporary congestion charge locations in Oxford for cars, what overall impact will this proposal have on you or people you represent?

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| Very positive | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Positive | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neutral | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Negative | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Very negative | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No impact | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please explain your answer

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Q11 – Do you have any other comments about the proposal for six temporary congestion charge locations in Oxford for cars that you have not already shared in this survey?

Your ideas

We are looking at ways to reduce overall traffic in and around Oxford so that

- buses can run more frequently, quickly and reliably
- walking and cycling is safer and more attractive
- travel by car is easier for priority groups like carers, traders and blue badge holders.

Q12 – Do you have any suggestions for other ways to reduce traffic and tackle congestion in and around Oxford?

Part 3 – More about you

We would like to know more about you so that we can understand more about our customers and residents, as it helps us to know if we are hearing the views of a wide range of people and communities.

These questions are optional.

All information given is anonymous and is governed by the [General Data Protection Regulations 2018](#).

Q13 How did you find out about this consultation? (Choose all that apply) *

- ☐ Letter from Oxfordshire County Council
- ☐ Bluesky
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ X (formerly known as Twitter)
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ NextDoor
- ☐ Oxfordshire.gov.uk website
- ☐ Email from Oxfordshire County Council
- ☐ Your Oxfordshire newsletter
- ☐ Local news item (newspaper, online, radio, tv) or radio advert
- ☐ County or district councillor
- ☐ Town or parish councillor
- ☐ Local community news item
- ☐ Poster / information in local library or in local community group / organisation
- ☐ Friend / relative
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Q14 What is your postcode?

Please provide the first four or five digits of your postcode (but not the letters at the end). e.g. OX1 1 or OX14 5.

Q15 What is your age? (Choose one option)

- ☐ Under 16

- ☐ 16 - 24
- ☐ 25 - 34
- ☐ 35 - 44
- ☐ 45 - 54
- ☐ 55 - 64
- ☐ 65 – 74
- ☐ 75 - 84
- ☐ 85 or over
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Q16 What is your sex? (Choose one option)

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ I use another term (please state here)

Q17 What is your ethnic group or background? (Choose one option)

- ☐ Asian or Asian British (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi or any other Asian background)
- ☐ Black or Black British (Caribbean, African, or any other Black background)
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Mixed or multiple ethnic groups (White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, and any other mixed background)
- ☐ White (British, Irish, or any other white background)
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other ethnic group or background (please specify)

Q18 What is your current religion, if any? (Choose one option)

- ☐ Buddhist
- ☐ Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Sikh
- ☐ No religion
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Any other religion (please state below)

Q19 Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a long-term illness, health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? (Choose one option) *

- ☐ Yes - a lot
☐ Yes - a little
☐ No
☐ Prefer not to say

Q20 Are you a carer? (Choose one option)

A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who, due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction, cannot cope without their support. Both children and adults can be carers

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Prefer not to say

Q21 Are you pregnant, on maternity leave, or returning from maternity leave? (Choose one option)

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Prefer not to say

Data protection and privacy *

Under the Data Protection Act 2018, we (Oxfordshire County Council) have a legal duty to protect any personal information we collect from you. Oxfordshire County Council is committed to open government and this may include quoting extracts from your consultation response in our report.

We will not however, disclose the names of people who have responded unless they have provided consent. For this purpose, we ask that you are careful not to disclose personal information in your comments – for example the names of service users or children. If you do not want all or part of your response to be made public, or shared with councillors, please state below which parts you wish us to keep confidential.

View Oxfordshire County Council's privacy notice online at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/privacy-notice

Q22	Please use this space to tell us if there is any specific part of your response you wish to keep confidential:

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Would you like to find out more about what's happening in Oxfordshire?

We'd like to invite you to receive email updates on news, events and developments across Oxfordshire and opportunities to have your say.

Any contact details you provide will be separated from the feedback you have shared in this survey.

Would you like to sign up to any of the following?

Please tick all that apply

- ☐ Your Oxfordshire – our residents e-newsletter
- ☐ Consultations e-newsletter - with opportunities to have your say and updates on our response to residents' feedback
- ☐ Updates specifically about this consultation.
- ☐ No thanks

If you'd like to sign up, please provide your email address below:

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Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions

If you would prefer to complete this survey online, it is available by the link below, or scan the QR code.

letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/congestion-charge

Once you have completed this survey, you can return it to us for free (no stamp is needed) by writing this address as **one line in the middle of the envelope**:

Freepost OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Please also write '**cc consultation**' on the top left corner of the envelope, so we can easily identify what is inside the envelope.

All responses must be received by **midnight on Sunday 3 August 2025** when the consultation closes.

Alternative formats:

We know that some people can't, or find it difficult to, take part in online consultations or need things in a different format such as large print, Easy Read, audio, braille or a different language, to have their say.

If you, or anyone you know needs an alternative format of the survey or consultation document, paper copies of the consultation document or help with sharing their thoughts, please email: ccharge@oxfordshire.gov.uk or call Oxfordshire County Council's customer services team on **01865 792422**. Please note the council's customer services team are unable to answer any detailed questions about the consultation, but they can take your details and ask an appropriate member of staff to get in touch.

Oxford permit area