

APPENDIX 3: City Centre Transport Improvements: Castle Street

Context

In January 2018, a transport improvement scheme for Castle Street called the “Castle Street Clean Air Scheme” (Option 1) was considered and consulted on by Cardiff Council. A period of engagement with stakeholders followed in Summer 2019. Based upon this consultation and engagement, a Castle Street scheme was designed considering how the City Centre was used at the time.

In July 2020, the City’s Covid-19 recovery plan necessitated a full closure of Castle Street and the implementation of a temporary bus gate to prioritise public transport and active travel. This allowed a café area to be introduced.

With the experience of the Covid-19 closure, the council has reconsulted on this scheme and an additional scheme to gauge public opinion.

Engagement Activities

The consultation opened to the public on 12 March 2021 and stayed live for 8 weeks.

1480 businesses and residents received a letter, advising of information pack available for viewing online at Keeping Cardiff Moving, and a scheme plan. This included businesses and residents directly on the route and all properties within 100m of the project.

The information pack included scheme plans for both options and supplemental information to contextualise the proposals.

This was supplemented by social media promotion and a press release.

Respondents were given the option of responding via Snap Survey or via dedicated email inbox [citycentrenorth@cardiff.gov.uk]

Consultation Results

Via the email inbox for the scheme [citycentrenorth@cardiff.gov.uk], we received **29** emails.

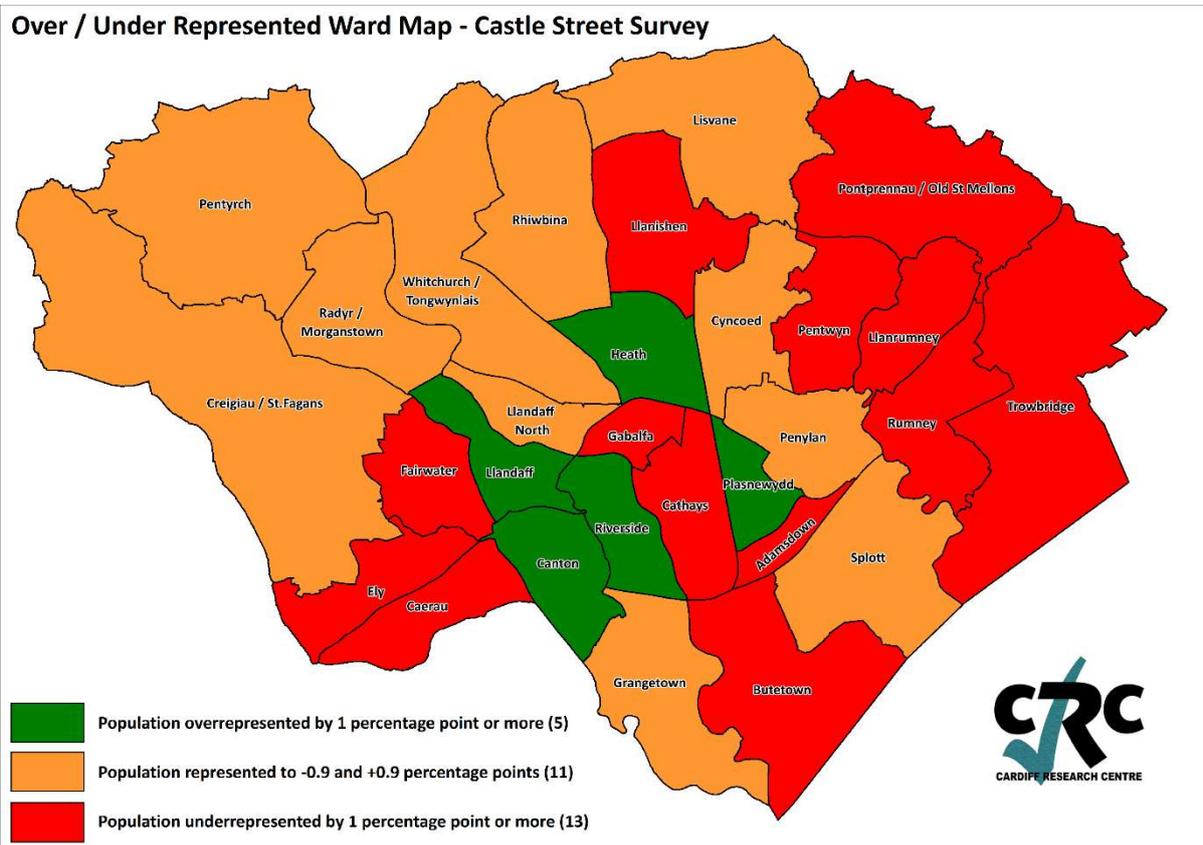
Of these 29 emails:

- **48%** expressed no preference but required further clarity or response on issues.
- **28%** were in support of Option 1
- **24%** were in support of Option 2

The online survey received 6066 responses.

The map below shows population representation at ward level for Cardiff residents.

- Five wards were over-represented (*Canton, Heath, Llandaff, Plasnewydd and Riverside*)
- 11 were representative (*Creigiau/St Fagans, Cyncoed, Grangetown, Lisvane, Llandaff North, Pentyrch, Penylan, Radyr/Morganstown, Rhiwbina, Splott, Whitchurch/Tongwynlais*)
- 13 were under-represented (*Adamsdown, Butetown, Caerau, Cathays, Ely, Fairwater, Gabalfa, Llanishen, Llanrumney, Pentwyn, Pontprennau/Old St Mellons Rumney, Trowbridge*)



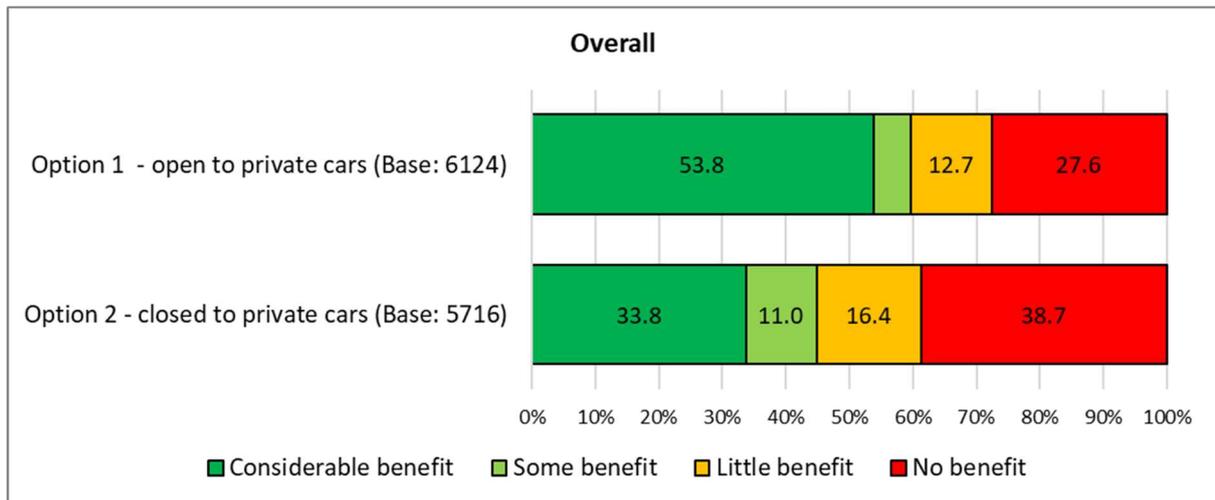
Please rate the scheme on the benefits the scheme will bring to the city of Cardiff:

For option 1: All traffic - 3 lanes - private cars permitted

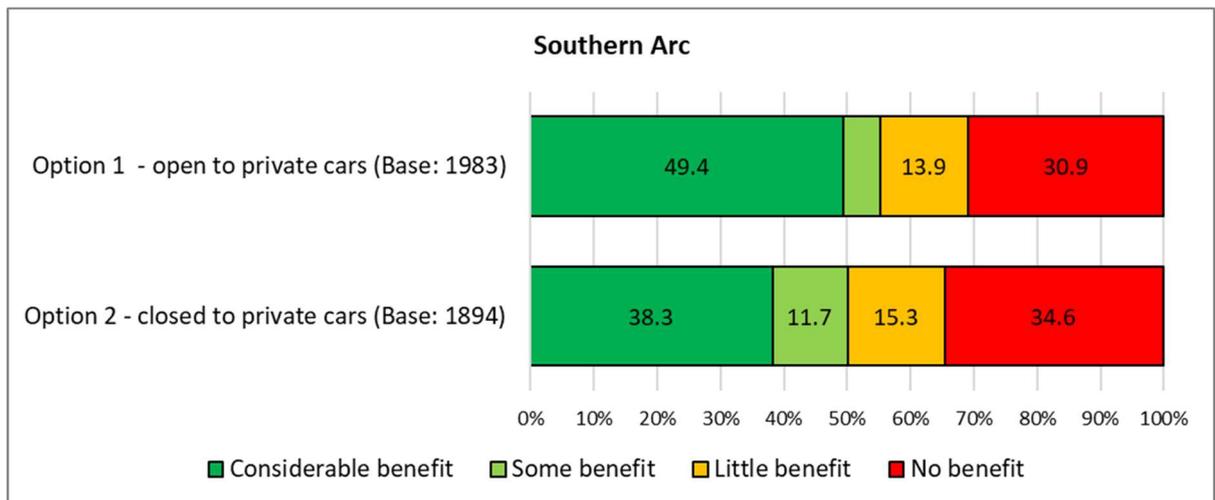
For option 2: Bus & Taxi Only - 2 lanes - no private cars permitted

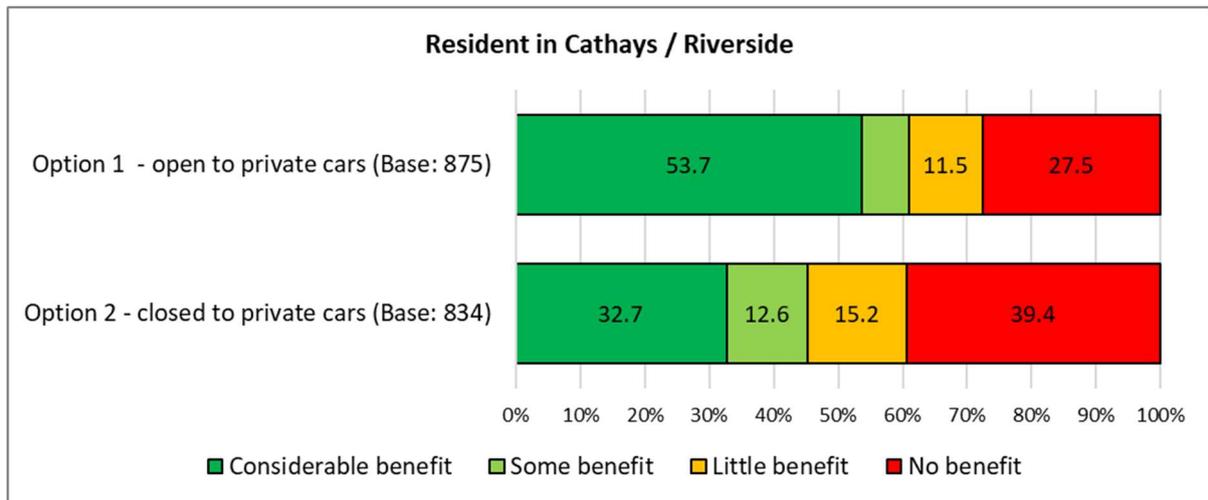
Respondents were invited to rate the benefits of permitting or prohibiting private cars from using Castle Street.

Overall, 53.8% of respondents saw a considerable benefit to opening Castle Street to private cars, compared with 33.8% to closing the street to cars.



Residents in both the Southern Arc, and in Cathays and Riverside (the two closest wards to Castle Street) saw more benefits in keeping the street open to cars.



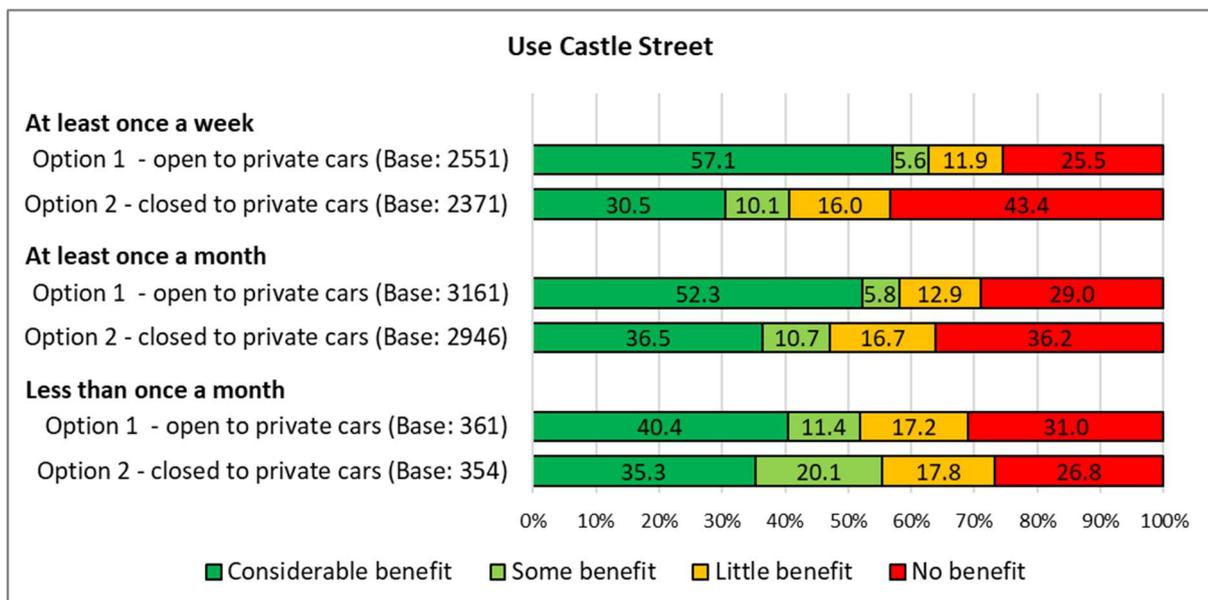


How often do you use Castle Street?

Two-fifths of respondents (41.9%) use Castle Street at least once a week, just over half use it less than once a week, but more than once a month (51.9%), whilst 6.1% use it less than once a month.

	No	%
At least once a day	1004	16.3
At least once a week	1571	25.6
Several times a week	2257	36.7
At least once a month	937	15.2
Less often	350	5.7
Never	26	0.4
Total	6145	100.0

The more frequently a respondent used Castle Street, the more likely they were to see considerable benefits in keeping it open to private cars.

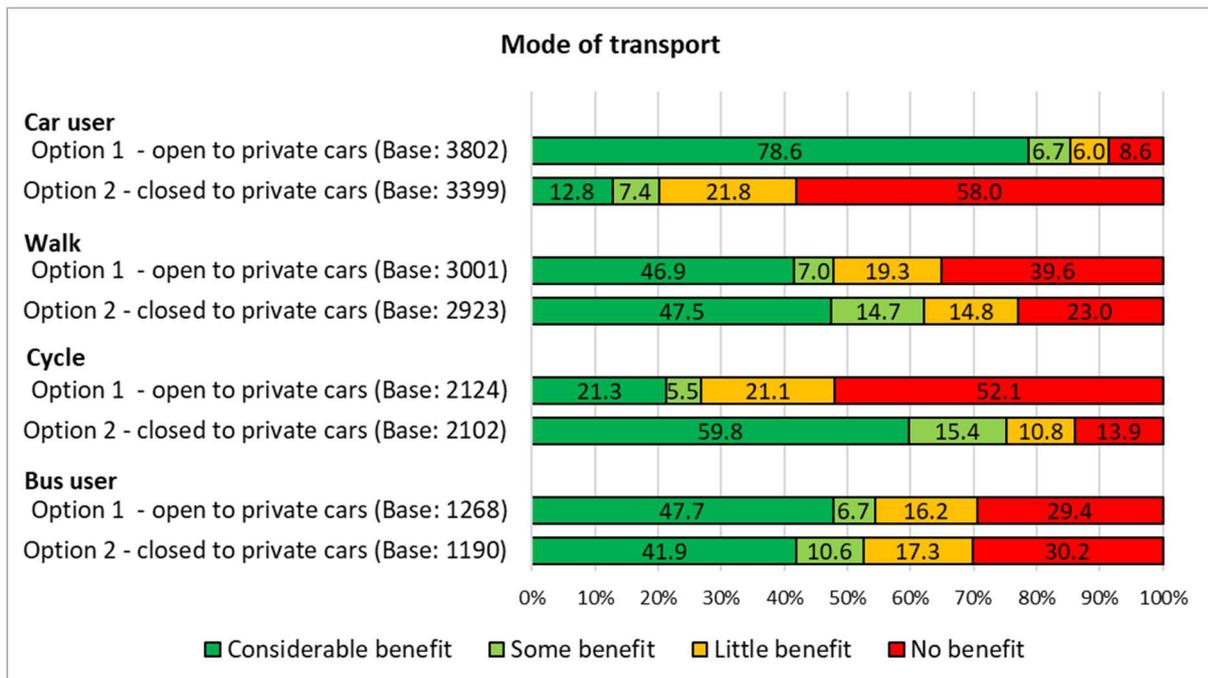


How do you normally travel on this route?

Almost two-thirds (62.3%) of respondents typically used their car to travel on Castle Street, followed by half (49.5%) who walked, 35.0% who cycled, and a fifth (21.0%) travelling by bus.

	No	%
Car	3827	62.3
Walk	3044	49.5
Cycle	2152	35.0
Bus	1291	21.0
Motorcycle	110	1.8
Other	144	2.3
Total	6147	100.0

Car users were notably more likely to see considerable benefits in keeping Castle Street open to cars; cyclists were more likely to see the benefits of closing the street to cars. Bus users and pedestrians were more evenly split in their opinion.



Why do you normally travel on this route?

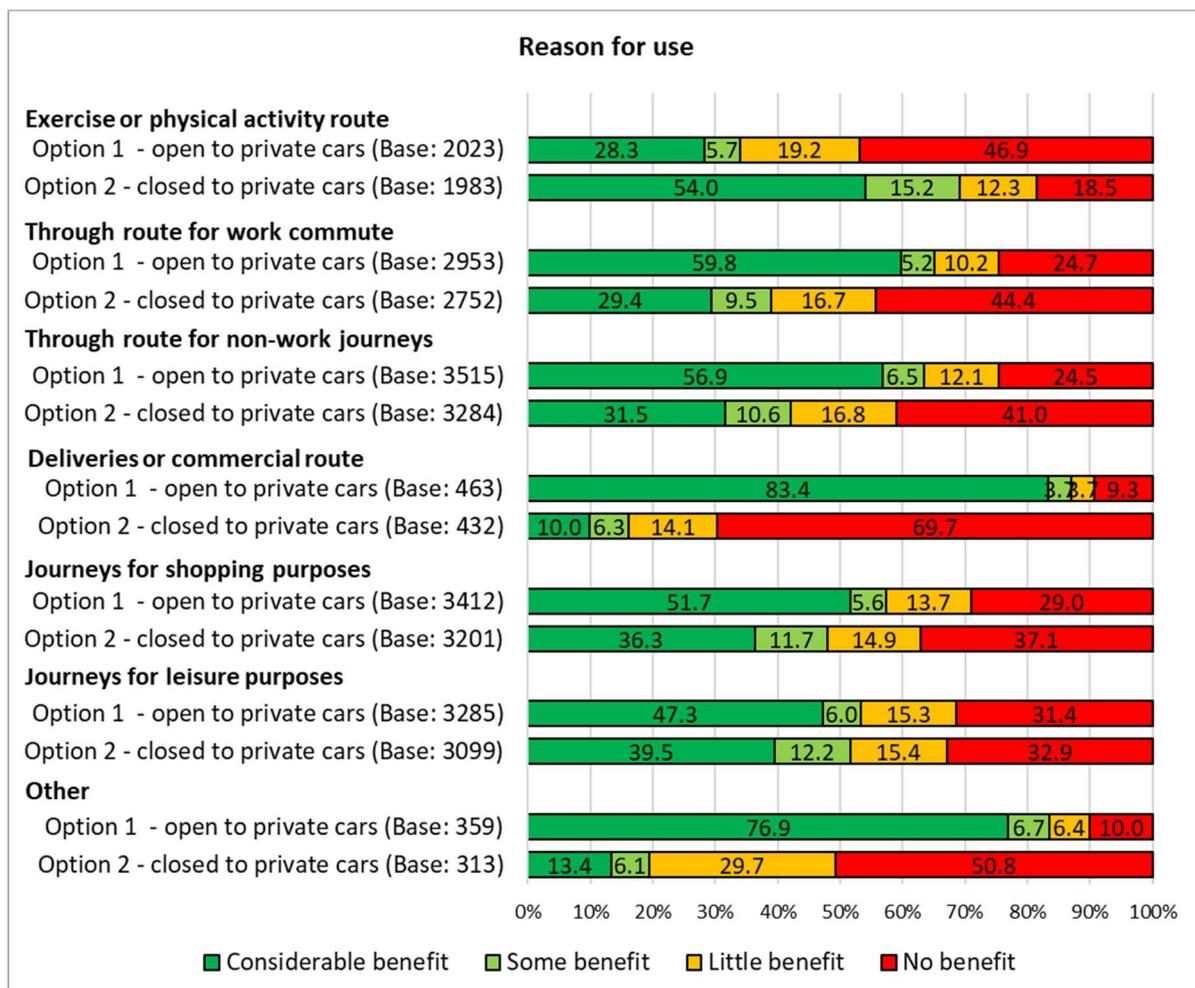
The most common reasons for using Castle Street were:

- As a through route for non-work journeys (58.1%)
- For shopping purposes (56.5%)
- For leisure purposes (54.3%)

	No	%
Exercise or physical activity route	2055	33.6
Through route for work commute	2973	48.6
Through route for non-work journeys	3554	58.1
Deliveries or commercial route	465	7.6
Journeys for shopping purposes	3456	56.5
Journeys for leisure purposes e.g. pub, restaurant, cinema	3325	54.3
Other	362	5.9
Total	6122	100.0

Those using Castle Street for deliveries or a commercial route (83.4%) were most likely to see a considerable benefit in keeping the street open to private cars, followed by those using the route for other purposes (76.9%), for a work commute (59.8%) or for non-work journeys (56.9%).

Those using the route for exercise were least likely to see the benefit in keeping to open to private cars (28.3%).



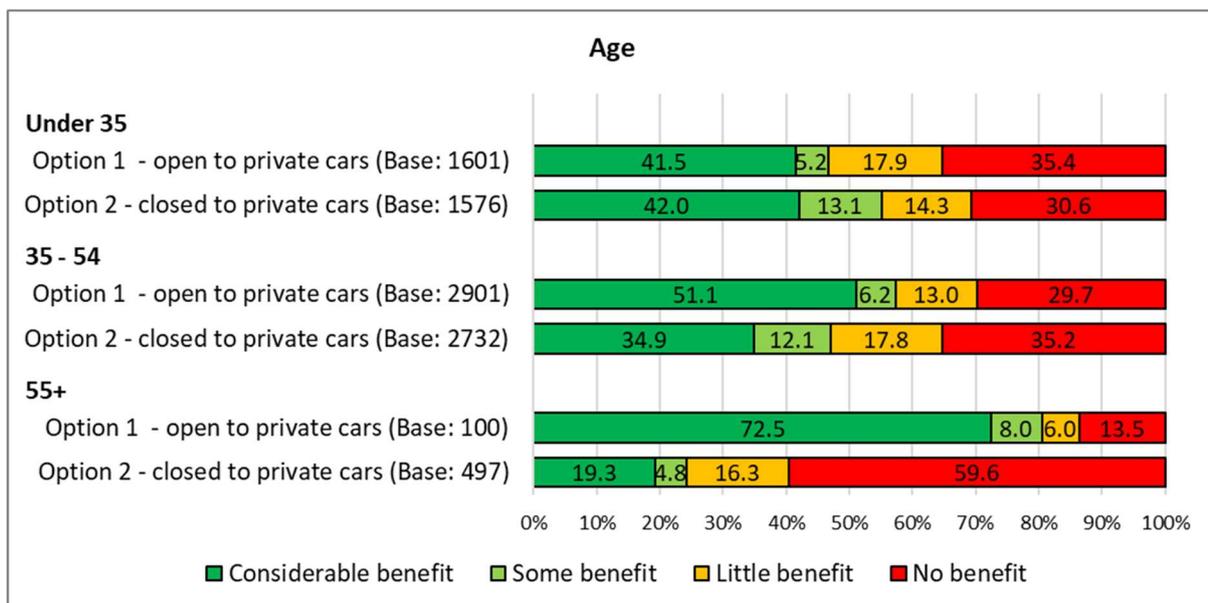
What was your age on your last birthday?

	No	%
Under 16	6	0.1
16-24	305	5.0
25-34	1298	21.2
35-44	1429	23.3
45-54	1501	24.5
55-64	890	14.5
65-74	381	6.2
75+	234	3.8
Prefer not to say	88	1.4
Total	6132	100.0

The proportion of 16-34 year olds and those aged 55 or over were under-represented amongst respondents to the survey compared to the proportion of residents of the city as a whole.

% Adult population	Castle St. Survey	2109 Mid-Year Estimate
16-34	26.1	39.8
35-54	47.8	28.4
55+	24.5	31.8

The older the respondent, the more likely they were to state there was a considerable benefit to keeping Castle Street open to private cars.



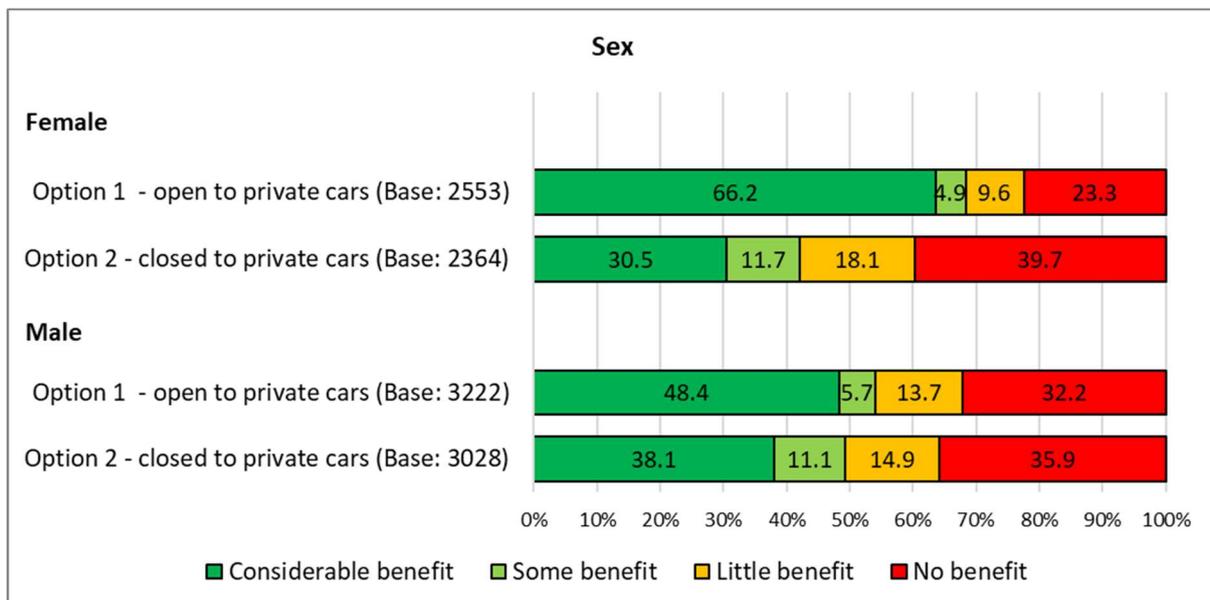
Are you...?

More than half of those responding to the survey were male (53.1), compared with 42.3% of females. This shows a slight over-representation of males compared with the population of the city overall (49.2% males, 50.8% females).

	No	%
Female	2595	42.3
Male	3253	53.1
Prefer not to say	262	4.3
Other	19	0.3
Total	6129	100.0

Women were more likely than men to see a considerable benefit in keeping Castle Street open to private cars (66.2% compared with 48.4% respectively).

Men were more evenly split between the level of benefit for each option.



Do you identify as Trans?

	No	%
Yes	42	0.7
No	5473	91.7
Prefer to self-describe	18	0.3
Prefer not to say	436	7.3
Total	5969	100.0

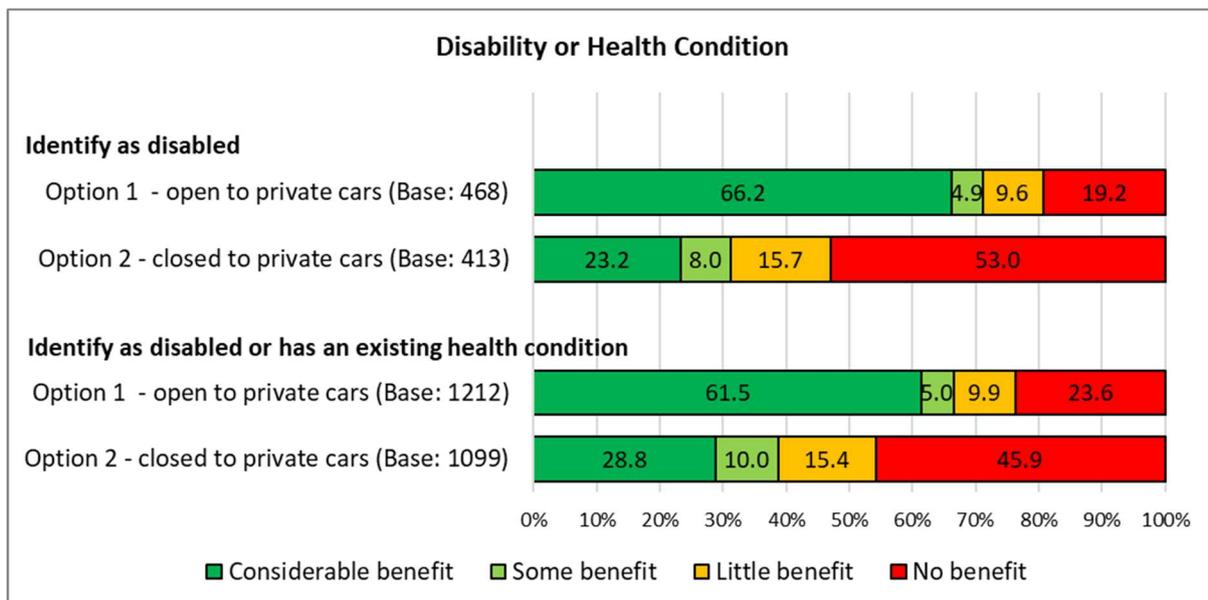
Do you identify as a disabled person?

	No	%
Yes	474	7.8
No	5215	86.2
Prefer not to say	358	5.9
Total	6047	100.0

Please tick any of these following that apply to you

	No	%
Deaf/ Deafened/ Hard of hearing	191	3.2
Mental health difficulties	273	4.5
Learning impairment/ difficulties	45	0.7
Visual impairment	46	0.8
Wheelchair user	26	0.4
Mobility impairment	328	5.4
Long-standing illness or health condition (e.g. cancer, diabetes, or asthma)	612	10.1
Prefer not to say	752	12.4
Other	83	1.4
Total	6047	

Respondents identifying as disabled, or with a health condition were more likely than average to report considerable benefits in keeping Castle Street open to private cars.

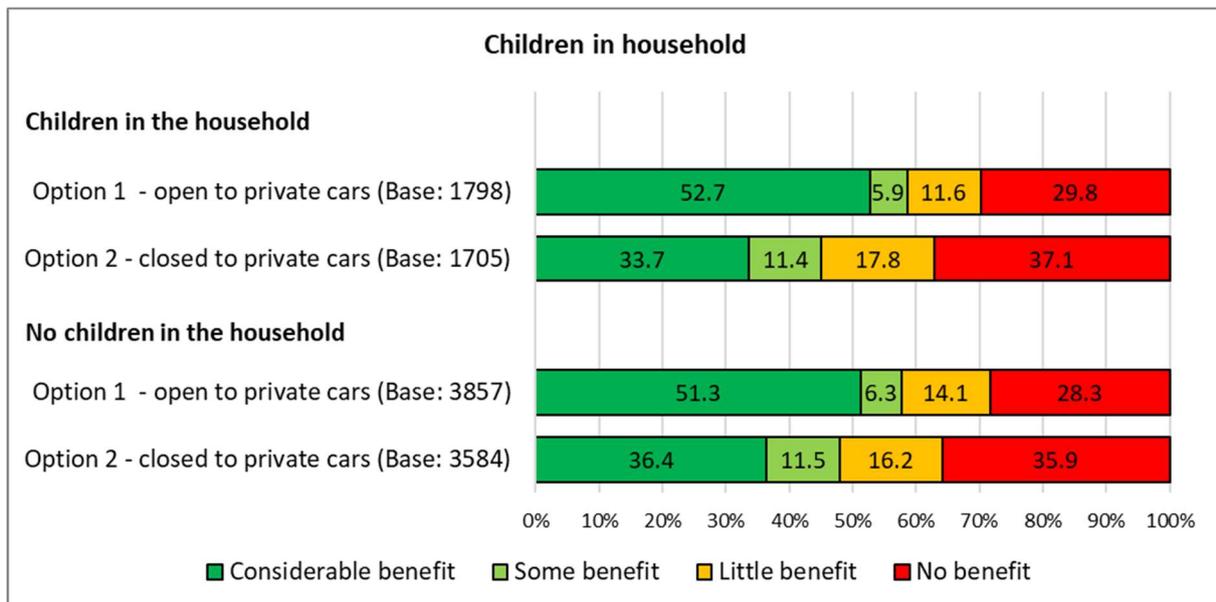


How many under 16 year olds are in your household?

Around two-thirds of those responding to the survey did not have children in their household, compared with 30.0% with at least one child under the age of 16.

	No	%
None	3917	64.9
1	805	13.3
2	779	12.9
3	174	2.9
More than 3	54	0.9
Prefer not to say	311	5.1
Total	6040	100.0

There was little difference in the patten of responses for these two groups of respondents, with both seeing more benefit in keeping the street open to private cars.



General Comments

In the Snap Survey, respondents were able to comment on their choices. From the 6066 responses, some key points were raised. These are outlined below:

Issues raised by respondents in support of Option 1:

Businesses will lose trade if private cars aren't allowed
Summary of Issue
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This route is used heavily for delivery vehicles• People would like to park near to the retail and businesses they intend to visit• Employees at businesses on the route may experience difficulty accessing their premises
Sample comments:
"The route needs to exist for business, deliveries and commuting between east and west of the city."
"East / west routes across the city are essential for all types of business to deliver goods and commuting people in a timely manner."

Blue badge and vulnerable users should be able to access city centre in their cars
Key points raised
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blue badge users need routes that serve all areas of the city• The city centre has many medical businesses or businesses serving vulnerable users
Sample comments:
"Cutting through traffic will really help to keep the city traffic reduced, but what about allowing drivers with blue badges through?"
"Private car access needed for residents to the east of Castle Street to have accessible access St David's hospital"

Closing the road to private traffic creates pockets of congestion in surrounding areas
Key points raised
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Longer diversion routes places traffic into residential areas• Displaced traffic could create pockets of poor air quality elsewhere in the city
Sample comments:
"The air pollution would just worsen along north road and other alternative route. You would just be moving the issue."
"Travel through Castle Street offers an exceptional benefit for my family for a number. It will also help reduce traffic in the residential areas around Cathedral Road."

Castle Street is the simplest and quickest way of crossing from East to West of the City

Key points raised

- Castle Street is a main thoroughfare through the city
- Longer journeys caused by closing Castle Street creates more pollution

Sample comments:

"It will benefit car drivers, avoiding longer routes to travel east-west across the city and vice versa."

"This is a main thoroughfare through the city and should be opened to the public to allow movement across town."

*Issues raised by respondents in support of Option 2:***Improved air quality****Key points raised**

- Removing the traffic in Castle Street improves air quality
- Noise and congestion is unpleasant
- More pleasant environment to walk, cycle and visit

Sample comments:

"Considerably reducing pollution in the city centre, encouraging active travel. Whole area improved and becomes attractive tourism area."

"Emphasis is shifted to public transport and active travel; greater improvements in air quality."

Allowing private cars back through Castle Street would be a backward step**Key points raised**

- The Covid-19 arrangement has been enjoyable
- Noise and congestion is unpleasant
- More pleasant environment to walk, cycle and visit

Sample comments:

"Castle street with all the previous traffic was awful - the change has been so much for the better. Putting it back and allowing the traffic back is bad for everybody."

"The decision to ban cars from Castle Street was progressive, brave and absolutely the right one. The City Centre will have to change post-Covid, Bringing cars back to one of the finest Castle fronted streets in Europe would be a hugely retrograde step."

Safe access to the city for pedestrians, bus users and cyclists is compromised by private cars

Key points raised

- The area has been dominated by cars
- The pavements are not wide enough
- Pre Covid, there was heavy congestion on the route
- Safer environment would encourage modal shift

Sample comments:

“Improved bus network. Wider pavements and cycle lanes facilitate active travel. These in combination provide good alternatives to driving into the city centre for many people.”

“This route has long been congested, and encouraged reckless and aggressive driving towards other road users (particularly vulnerable road users such as cyclists). Since this route has no longer been open to public traffic, it has become a safer, calmer route for cyclists and has really opened up for pedestrians too. It has made the city feel more welcoming and accessible.”

Option 2 supports the City’s Active and Sustainable travel ambitions and Clean Air mandate

Key points raised

- The council has committed to improving bus facilities, cycling infrastructure and pedestrian safety to encourage modal shift
- Clean Air in Castle Street is a legal requirement
- Option 2 is better for facilitating active or sustainable travel

Sample comments:

“As per the pack, this would result in a greatly improved bus service and would support Cardiff's clean air commitments.”

“Improved bus network. Wider pavements and cycle lanes facilitate active travel. These in combination provide good alternatives to driving into the city centre for many people.”

Tourism and city centre visitorship benefits from a traffic free environment

Key points raised

- The area has been more quiet and pleasant since closure
- A modern city should have traffic free tourist area
- Removing traffic would make the Castle more appealing to visit

Sample comments:

“Removing this route as an option will make the city safer, cleaner and a better place to visit for locals and tourists alike.”

“I have cycled along the new cycle lane many times including with my children which we would not have felt safe to do. It is a much more welcoming experience outside the castle as one of the major tourist attractions not to be full of traffic jams.”

Specific issues/queries

In addition to the general comments, the email inbox received more specific enquiries about the logistics of the plan. These are listed below:

Query

Option 2: I assume this would allow buses to enter Westgate Street for access to the new Bus Station. What would be the proposed route for the return journey?

Option 2: Do you have documentation showing this cross-city design:

- a) is safe and
- b) has passed an Equality Impact assessment in relation to protected groups of disabled and elderly persons?

Option 2: From the pack, it looks like the central reservation is being removed and access would be possible by turning right into Green Street, if you were coming from Cathedral road/Riverside. Is this the plan?

Next Steps

- Continue Engagement with Key Stakeholders
- The final decision on which option to proceed with will be put to the Council’s Cabinet.