

Walnut Tree Close

Public consultation analysis report (13 June – 24 July 2016)

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report describes the process and high level analysis of the Walnut Tree Close public consultation undertaken during June and July 2016. The responses collected during the consultation period will help to inform the scheme's development and aid decision-making regarding proposed measures to restrict vehicular traffic along Walnut Tree Close.
- 1.2 An advisory six-week public consultation was held from 13 June 2016 until 24 July 2016.
- 1.3 The consultation presented two design options to alter the layout of Walnut Tree Close with the aim of restricting through-traffic. The public were asked to express their preferred option as part of their consultation response. The two presented options were:
 - Option 1 – Closure to all through traffic
 - Option 2 – One-way traffic restriction upon southbound vehicles
- 1.4 Summary statistics:
 - 630 questionnaires
 - 17 email responses
 - 1,732 total visits to the consultation web page
 - 9 comment book entries from visitors to the exhibition
- 1.5 Of all responses to the questionnaire a roughly equal proportion expressed a preference for Option 1, Option 2 and neither Option 1 nor 2.

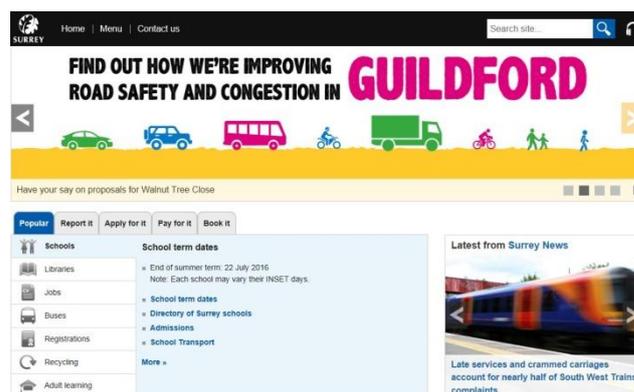
2. Wider engagement

A series of activities were carried out to ensure that as many affected local residents and organisations as possible were notified of the consultation, so that the responses received reflect a representative sample.

2.1 Webpage: A webpage was created as a centralised source of information regarding the consultation and exhibition, whilst also linking visitors to a questionnaire collecting feedback on the scheme. Information panels displaying detailed information on the scheme were provided on the website. Guildford Borough Council published a web link to direct members of the public to the Surrey County Council page where they could find out more information and take part. The web page received **1,732** visits during the six-week period, including 1,517 unique visitors.

2.2 Email: Notification of the consultation was communicated to various interest groups including local businesses, resident associations, elected Councillors of the wards within the project area, environmental bodies and cycle groups.

These bodies were identified through: Surrey County Council's Local Transport Plan consultee list; the Guildford Town Centre Transport Package public consultation in Autumn 2015 and further channels of



research. Individuals and organisations were also able to respond to the consultation via email to the majorschemes@surreycc.gov.uk inbox.

- 2.3 SCC engagement officers: Notification of the consultation was relayed throughout contact networks via engagement officers to specific groups including schools, students, adult social care and disability networks. For example, schools in and around Guildford town centre were notified of the consultation by schools commissioning officers and asked to advertise the consultation to parents via ParentMail communications.
- 2.4 Social media: The consultation was promoted frequently on social media channels including the council's Surrey Matters and TravelSmart Facebook and Twitter platforms.
- 2.5 Online banners: Advertising banners on the Surrey County Council homepage and intranet were posted at regular intervals throughout the consultation and directed interested users to the web page.



2.6 Circulars: Posters were displayed at key locations around Guildford including Guildford rail station, the University of Surrey, Guildford Library, Guildford Borough Council offices and the YMCA on Bridge Street. Over the course of the consultation, over 500 flyers were distributed to members of the public.

2.7 Local media outlets: The consultation was publicised to and received coverage from local media sources including through [Get Surrey](#) and [Guildford Dragon](#). The public was notified of the consultation by through the publishing of dedicated articles and links posted via social media.

- 2.8 Questionnaires: The majority of feedback was provided through a specifically designed questionnaire. Web page users were directed to 'Survey Monkey' where they could complete the questionnaire online. Paper forms were also available so that respondents could return these either via post or at one of the exhibitions. All responses received will be considered further as part of the detailed design.

3. Direct engagement activities

A series of activities were carried out to engage interested parties that were either based on Walnut Tree Close or might have difficulty accessing the consultation without a dedicated effort.

- 3.1 Exhibition: A public exhibition was held at Guildford rail station (sited on Walnut Tree Close) on three different dates at varying times to enable a wide a cross-section of the local demographic to visit the event:

- Thursday 30 June: 2pm – 7pm
- Friday 1 July: 8am – 1pm
- Saturday 2 July: 11am – 4pm



Over the course of the three days, approximately 221 people visited the exhibition. A comment book was provided during the exhibition where visitors could provide brief feedback if they were unwilling to complete a questionnaire.

- 3.2 Letter drop: Letters were delivered to the residential homes along Walnut Tree Close (including adjoining cul-de-sacs) notifying them of the open consultation, providing information on the proposals and a questionnaire to enable postal reply.
- 3.3 Officer visits: Surrey County Council officers from the Highways & Transport team carried out door-to-door visits of the businesses along Walnut Tree Close and Woodbridge Meadows to notify them of the consultation provide information on the proposed scheme and advise them on how they could respond.
- 3.4 Disability Alliance Network (DAN): Surrey County Council officers attended the DAN group meeting for southwest Surrey on 13 July to notify attendees of the consultation, present the proposed measures within the scheme and field questions during a Q&A session.

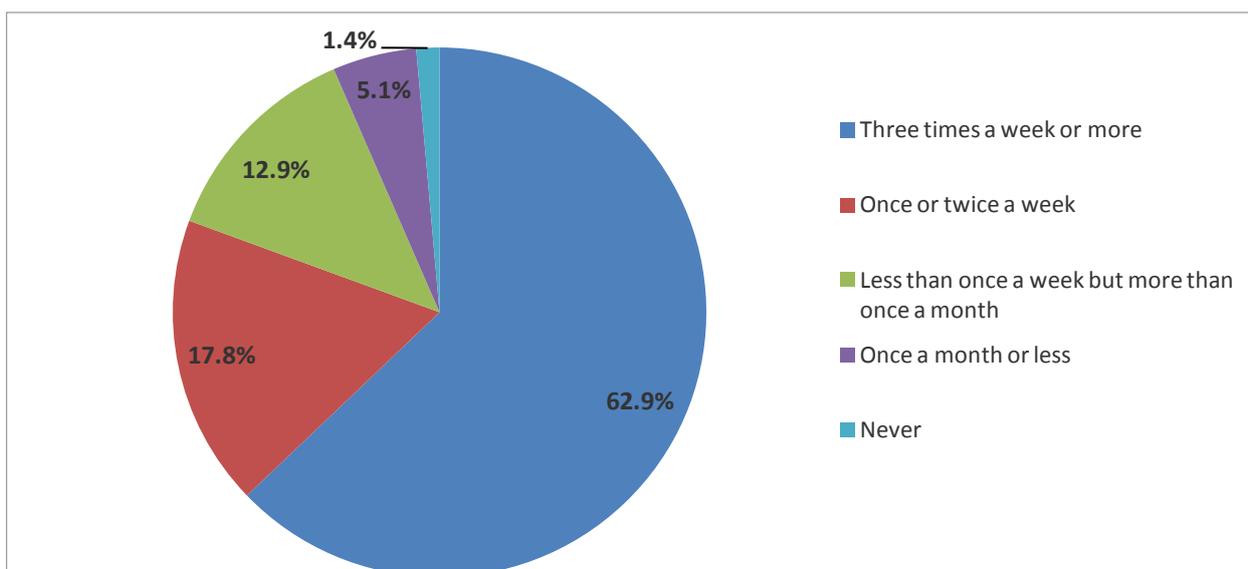
4. Consultation response analysis

Further to the engagement methods described above, members of the public, businesses and other organisations were invited to respond and provide feedback on which of the two traffic restriction measures that were proposed for Walnut Tree Close were supported (if any) and why.

Questionnaires

- 4.1 A total of 630 responses were received via questionnaire. The majority of these responses (77%) were received online, whilst the remainder were returned by post or at the exhibition. The following section describes the responses that were received to each of the questions asked:

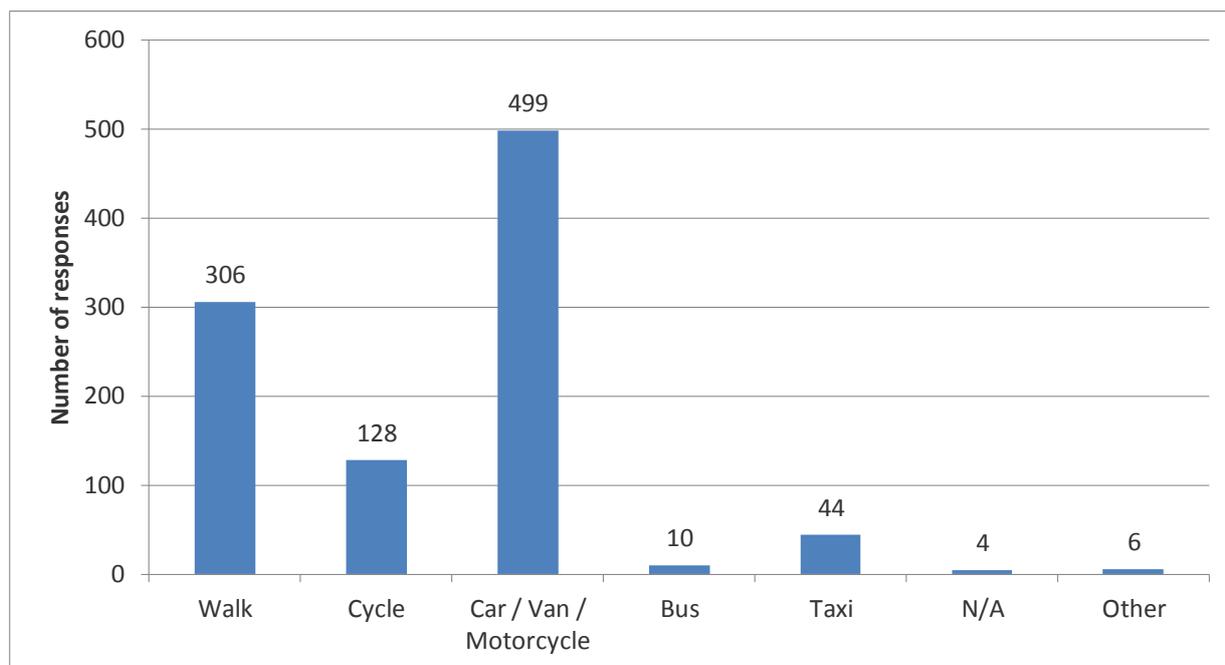
Question 1: How often do you travel on Walnut Tree Close?



Graph 1.1 – Frequency of travel on Walnut Tree Close

- 4.2 A total of 630 (100%) respondents answered this question. Graph 1.1 shows that over 80% of respondents use Walnut Tree Close at least once per week. This indicates that the questionnaire sample includes a strong core of ‘regular’ users of Walnut Tree Close.

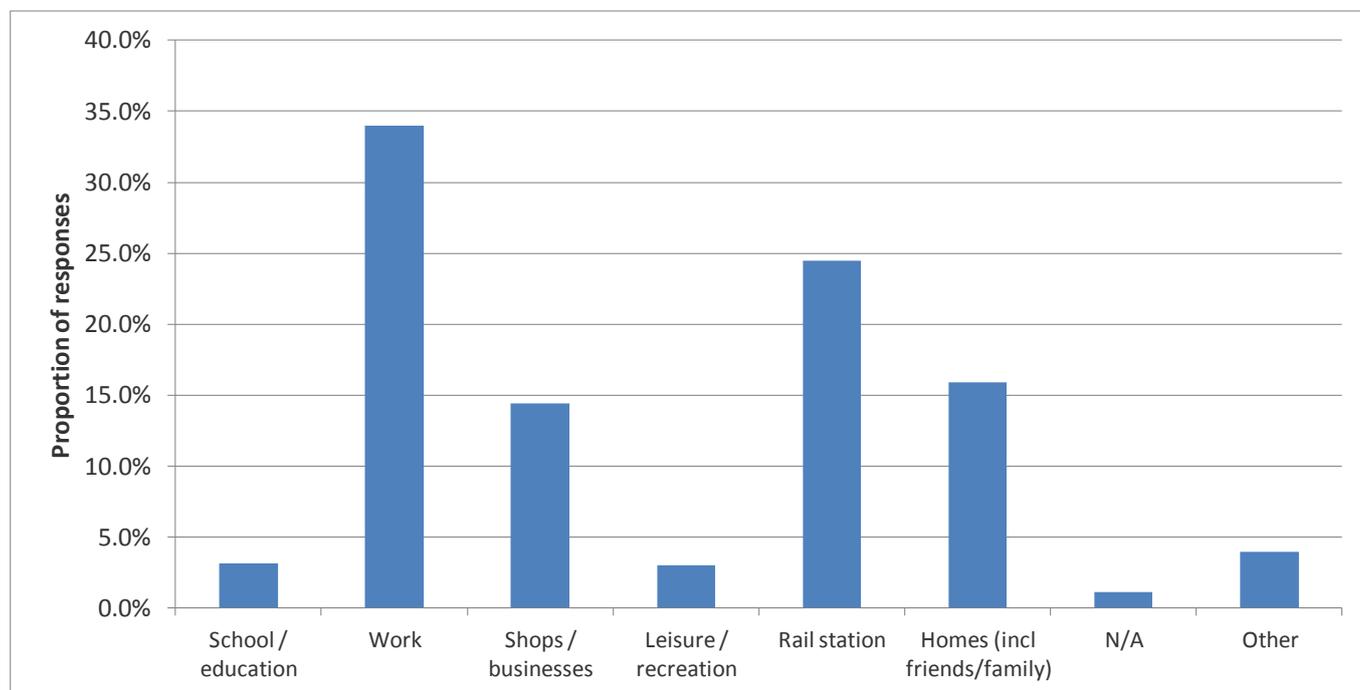
Question 2: What mode(s) of transport do you use to travel on Walnut Tree Close?



Graph 2.1 – Methods of travel on Walnut Tree Close

4.3 Q2 asked respondents to indicate all the modes of transport that they use to travel on Walnut Tree Close. Graph 2.1 shows that private motor vehicle as the prevailing mode of transport whilst walking, cycling and taxis also account for a significant proportion of journeys on Walnut Tree Close. Minibus (3) was the most commonly cited ‘Other’ mode.

Question 3: Which destination do you use to get to Walnut Tree Close most often?



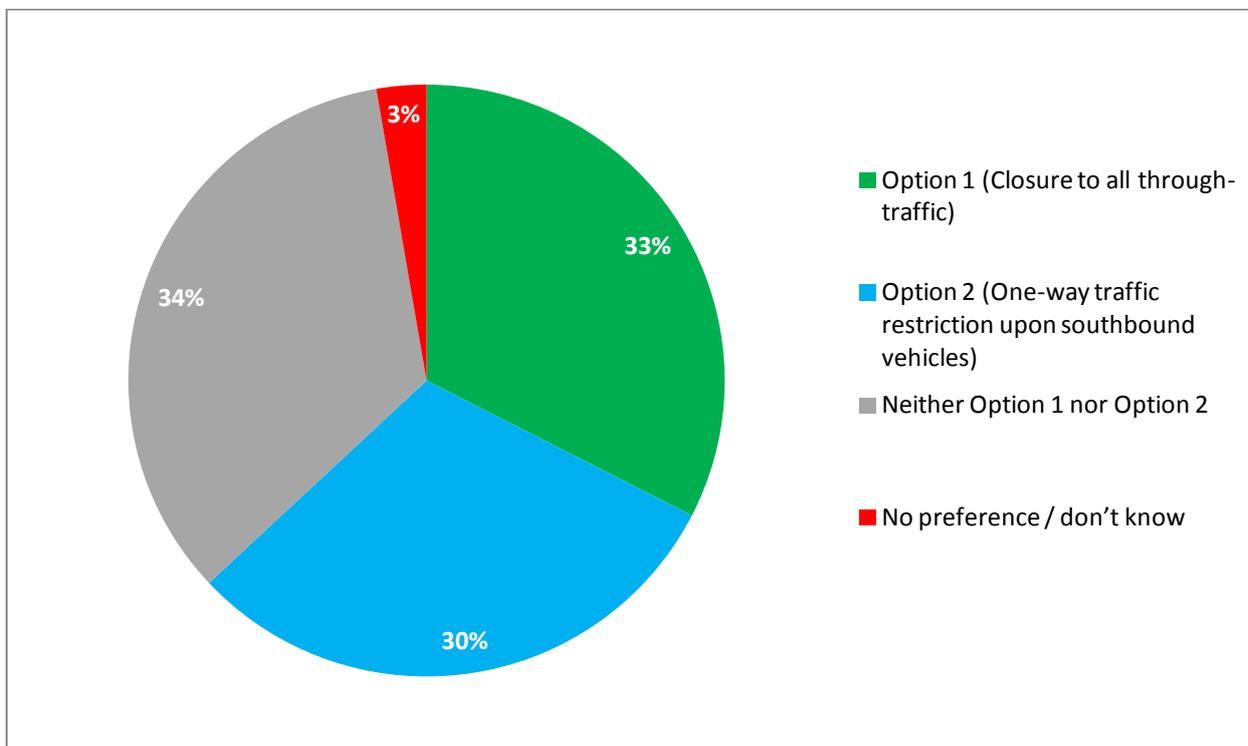
Graph 3.1 – Destinations travelled to using Walnut Tree Close

4.4 Journeys to work (34%) were the most commonly cited reason for using Walnut Tree Close. The rail station (24%), homes (16%) and shops/businesses (14%) accounted for the subsequent most common destinations. The postal depot, business trips and Guildford Sea Cadets made up the majority of ‘Other’ destinations that were most regularly visited using Walnut Tree Close.

Question 4: Using the information provided on Options 1 and 2, which of the proposed trial options would you prefer to see delivered on Walnut Tree Close?

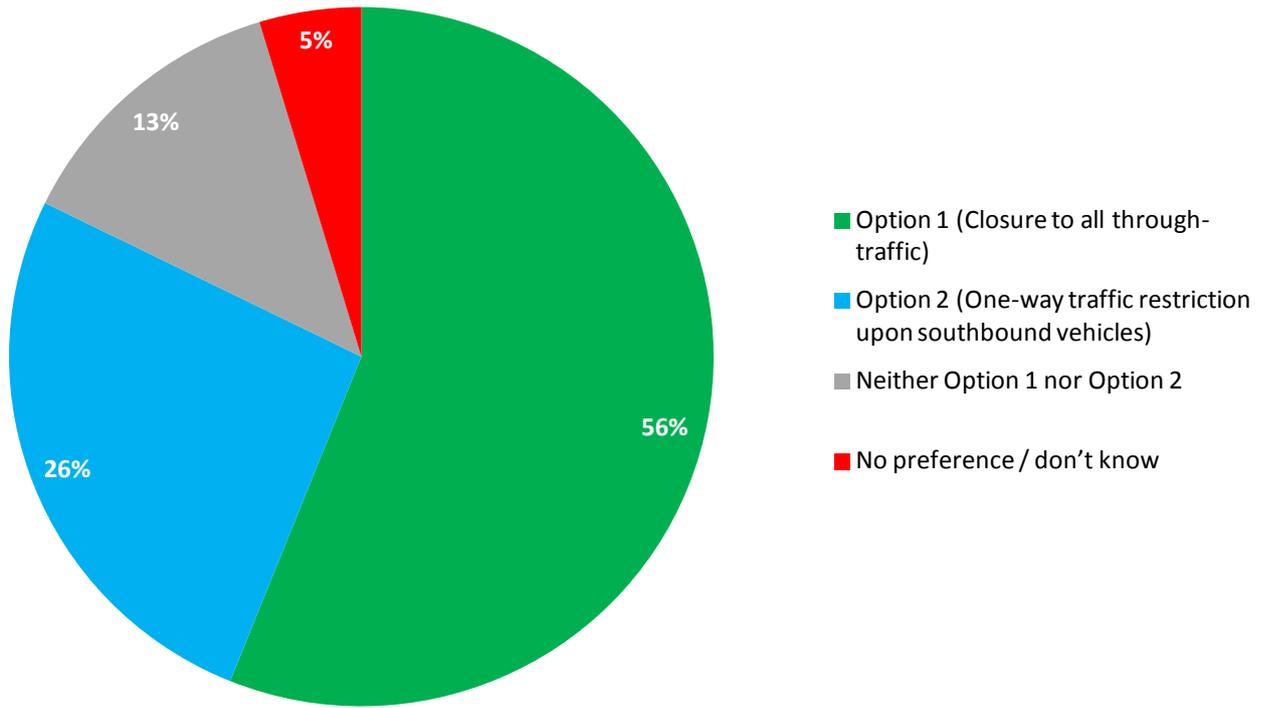
630 respondents selected one of the following four answers to this:

- Option 1 (Closure to all through-traffic)
- Option 2 (One-way traffic restriction upon southbound vehicles)
- Neither Option 1 nor Option 2
- No preference / don't know

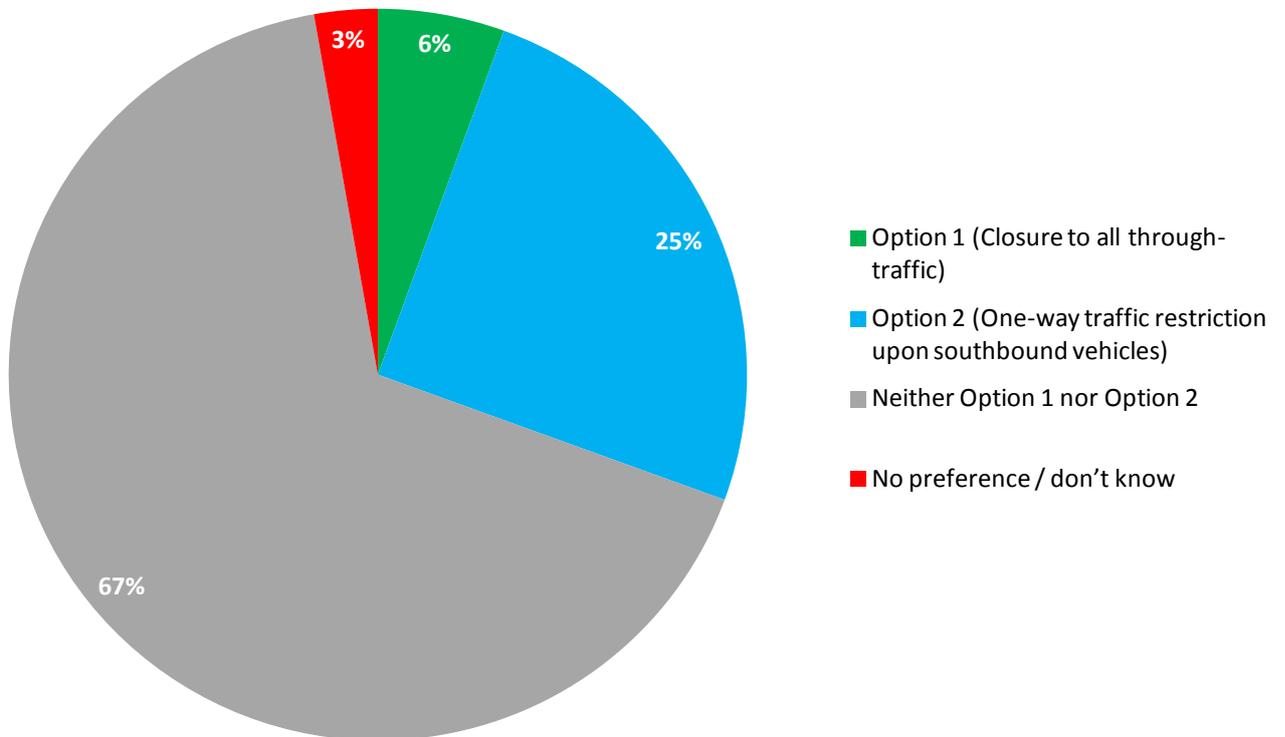


Graph 4.1 – Share of all responses to Q4

- 4.5 Graph 4.1 indicates that there was a broadly even split amongst all questionnaire respondents over which Option they would like to see delivered, with roughly one third supporting 'Option 1', 'Option 2' and 'Neither Option 1 nor Option 2'. 3% of respondents had no preference over which Option was delivered or were unsure.
- 4.6 From Graph 4.1 it can be inferred that the majority of respondents (63%) expressed a preference for either Option 1 or Option 2, indicating that there is a significant degree of support for some level of restriction to through-traffic along Walnut Tree Close. However, it should be noted that this does not guarantee a majority of support for a single measure as it cannot be assumed that a respondent who supported Option 1 would also necessarily be supportive of Option 2.
- 4.7 Respondents were given the opportunity to provide comments to explain the reasons for their answer to Q4. From these comments it was possible to identify 36 respondents who were either employers or employees that operate along Walnut Tree Close. Graphs 4.2 and 4.3 illustrate how the preference for each Option varied between residents and businesses of Walnut Tree Close. The majority of residents (56%) expressed a preference for Option 1, whilst just over a quarter preferred Option 2 (26%). In contrast, 67% of employers and employees preferred neither Option 1 nor Option 2, whilst 25% preferred Option 2.

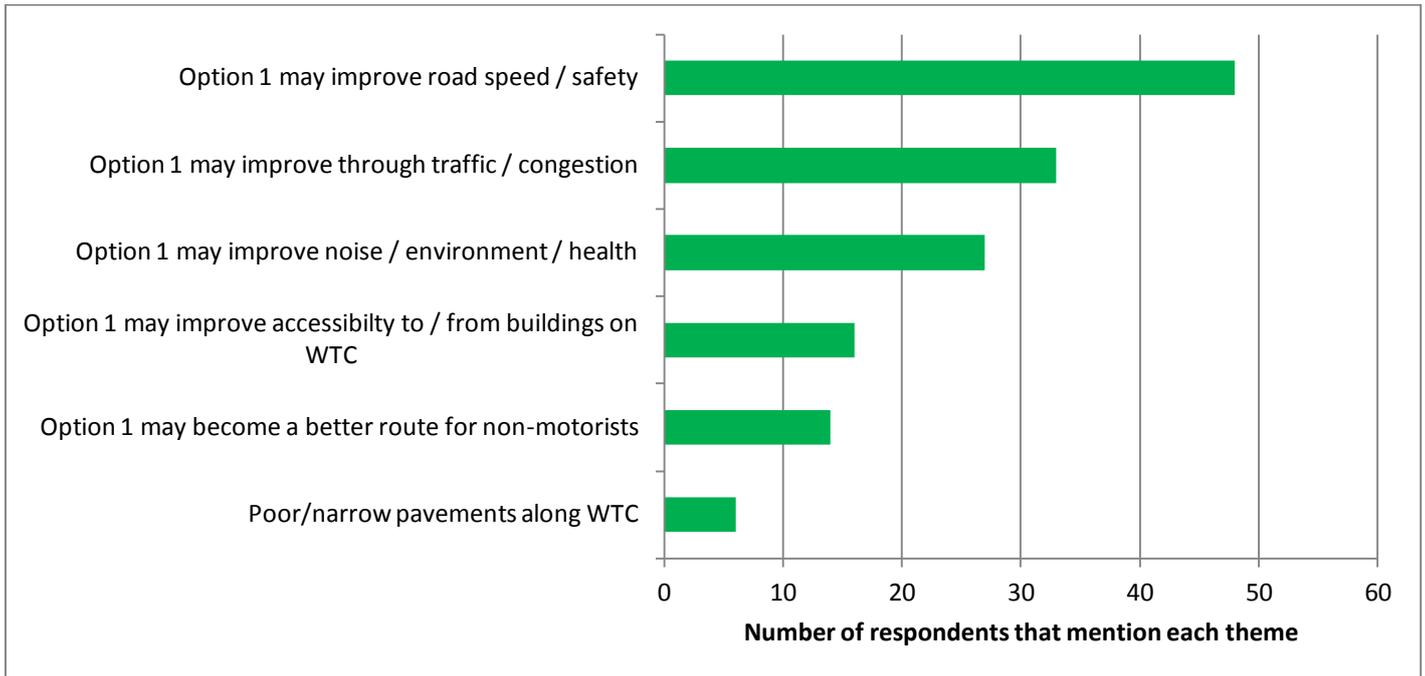


Graph 4.2 – Share of resident responses to Q4

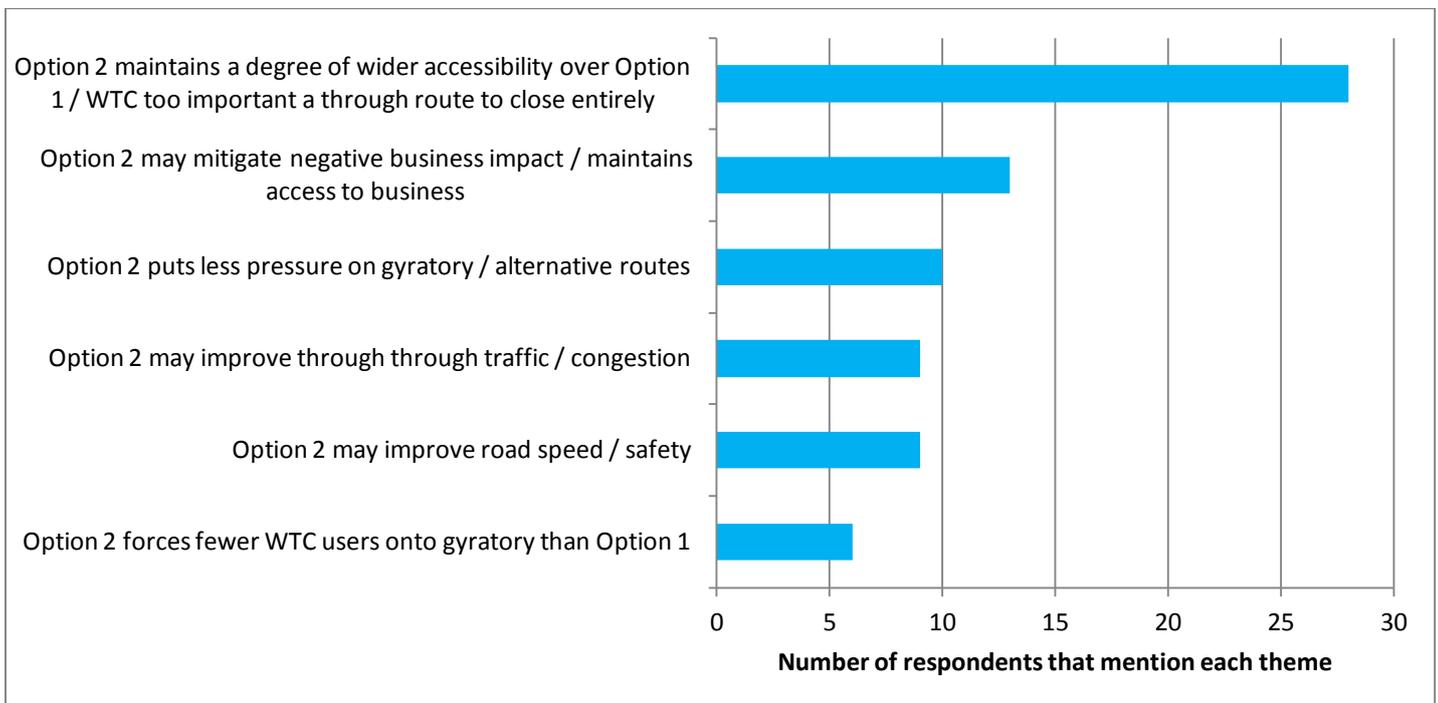


Graph 4.3 – Share of employer and employee responses to Q4

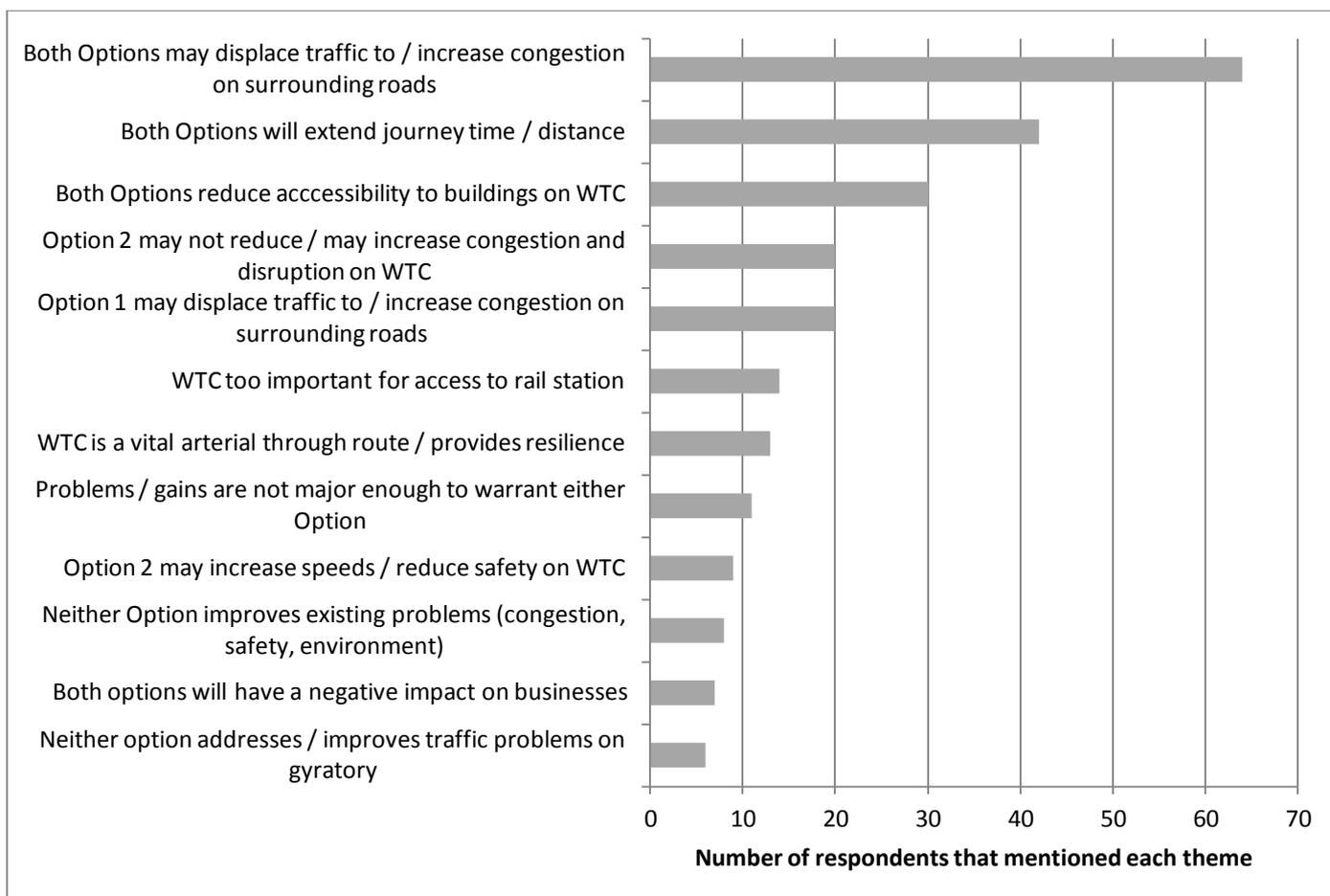
4.8 A large number of comments were provided covering a wide variety of issues. Content analysis was carried out on these free text responses to extrapolate key themes that were mentioned by multiple respondents. These themes and the frequency with which they were mentioned are presented within the three graphs below (only themes were mentioned by over 1% of respondents are shown, multiple themes could be extrapolated from an individual respondent's comment).



Graph 4.4 Positive comments / reasons for selecting Option 1



Graph 4.5 Positive comments / reasons for selecting Option 2



Graph 4.6 Negative comments / reasons for not selecting Option 1 or 2

As illustrated within Graphs 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6, a significant number of comments were received which covered the following themes:

- There were a significant number of respondents felt that Walnut Tree Close was unsafe to walk and cycle along as well as a raising concerns over general road safety along the road.
- The issue of congestion along Walnut Tree Close during peak hours was generally recognised as a problem by respondents, even amongst those who did not agree with options that have been proposed.
- A significant number of respondents raised concerns that either Option would divert traffic onto alternative routes that are already congested, for example Woodbridge Road.
- Residents in particular were concerned about the noise and air pollution along the road.
- Many respondents were concerned about issues on the town centre gyratory. Some respondents felt that the measures along Walnut Tree Close would improve the situation on the gyratory, whilst others felt it may have no impact at all or could exacerbate the situation.
- Many respondents felt that either Option would create inconvenience by extending routes and increasing journey times. This was particularly noticeable amongst employees and businesses based on Walnut Tree Close.
- There was conflicting opinion regarding accessibility to buildings along Walnut Tree Close. Some respondents suggested that the Options would improve accessibility to their building, whilst others felt it would make access more difficult. This may be attributable to the location of the building in relation to the proposed measure.
- Many respondents felt that Walnut Tree Close is a vital through route to the town centre and railway station, particularly for those based to the north of the town.

4.9 A selection of comments can be found below:

I am a resident and believe the one way system would cause disruption to my daily journey to and from home and would cause more traffic in surrounding roads, Option 1 I believe would be better for the road noise and traffic on the road itself.

I believe that closing Walnut Tree Close to traffic will improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists and make it easier for emergency services to access the road and Guildford. It would also ease congestion around the train station and improve the flow of traffic around the gyratory.

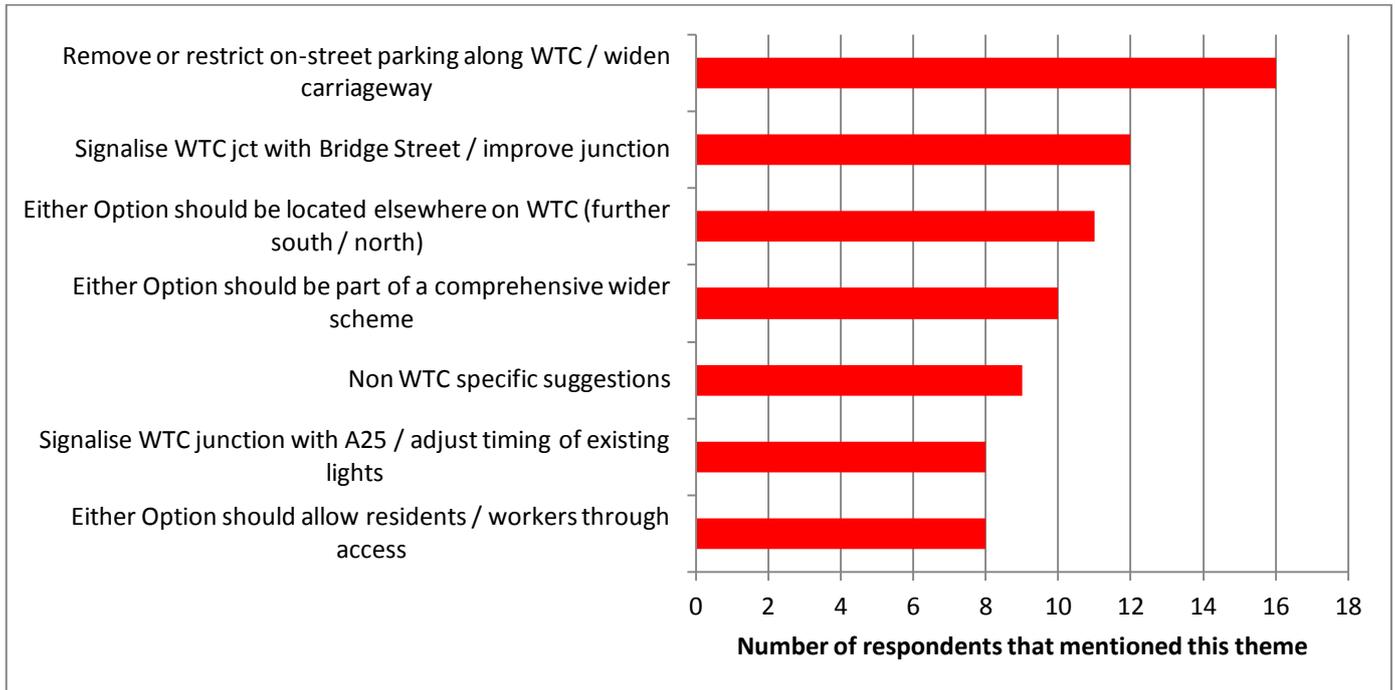
I live on WTC and would welcome to see a reduction in noise and pollution, plus a safe environment.

Neither Option 1 or 2 is particularly beneficial for staff travelling to our offices from south of Guildford. Option 2 at least allows staff travelling to our office from the south minimal disruption to their journeys

As this is a temporary trial closure I think it should be fully closed such that the impact on business, local people and the traffic in the rest of Guildford can be tested. I also support the use of WTC as a cycleway and possible sustainable movement corridor.

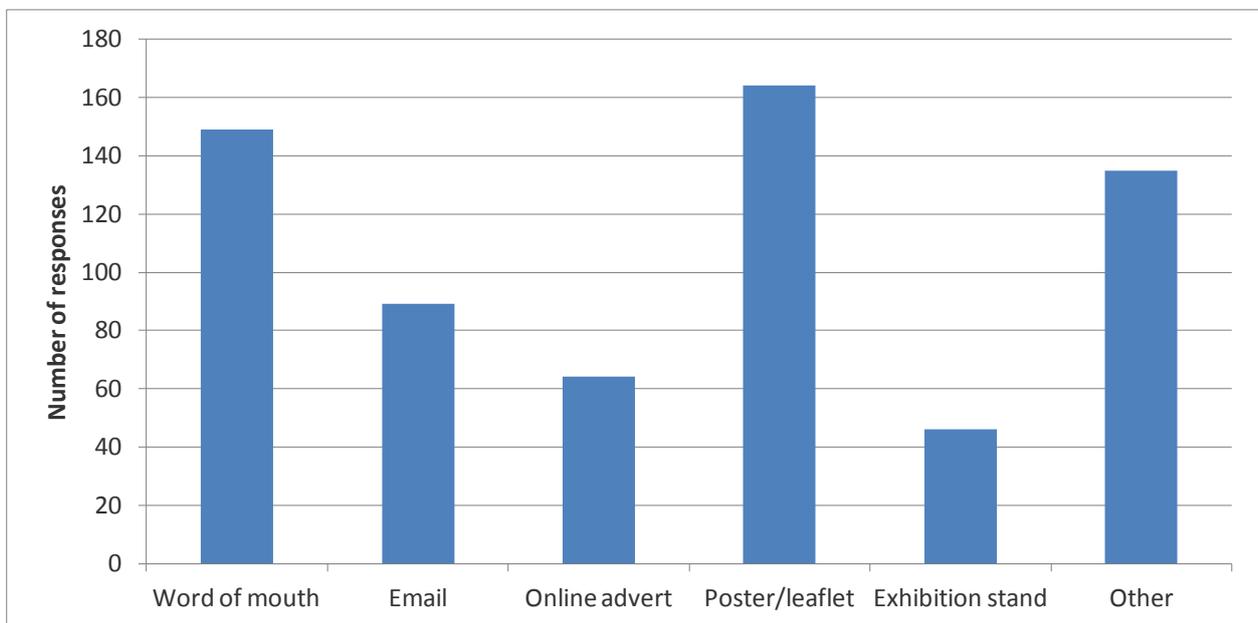
I disagree that closing the road off is a good idea. This will simply further block Woodbridge Road. Additionally all journeys will need to go past the station, as a junction which is horribly difficult to get off.

4.10 A number of respondents also used the comments section within Q4 to provide feedback on how they would like to see Option 1 or Option 2 modified (Graph 4.7). Many respondents also suggested alternative measures that they would prefer to see implemented on Walnut Tree Close. These comments will be considered as the scheme progresses to contribute towards the detailed design stage. They will also be used to inform future decision making in the area.



Graph 4.7 Suggested changes to Option 1 & 2 or alternative measures

Question 5. How did you hear about this consultation?



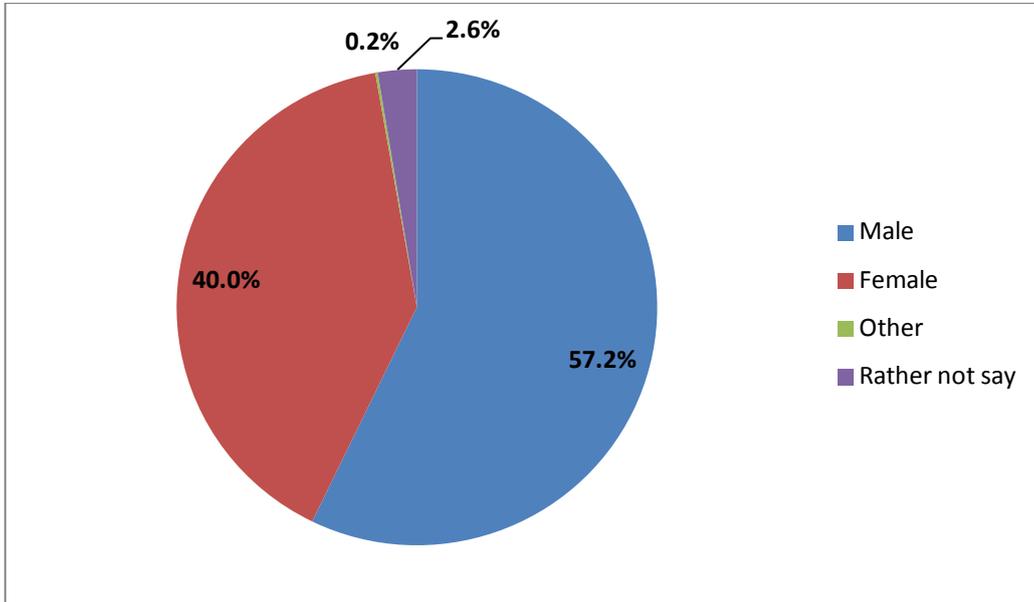
Graph 5.1 Sources of information on the public consultation

4.11 Posters and leaflets (164) were the most common method by which respondents heard about the consultation, followed by 'Word of mouth' (149) and 'Other' sources (135). Table 5.1 shows 'Other' sources that were mentioned by over 10 respondents. Q5 was answered by 612 (97%) of respondents.

Other sources	Frequency
Letter	31
News media	35
Officer visit	13
Word of mouth	17
SCC web site	13
Social media	37

Table 5.1 'Other' information sources

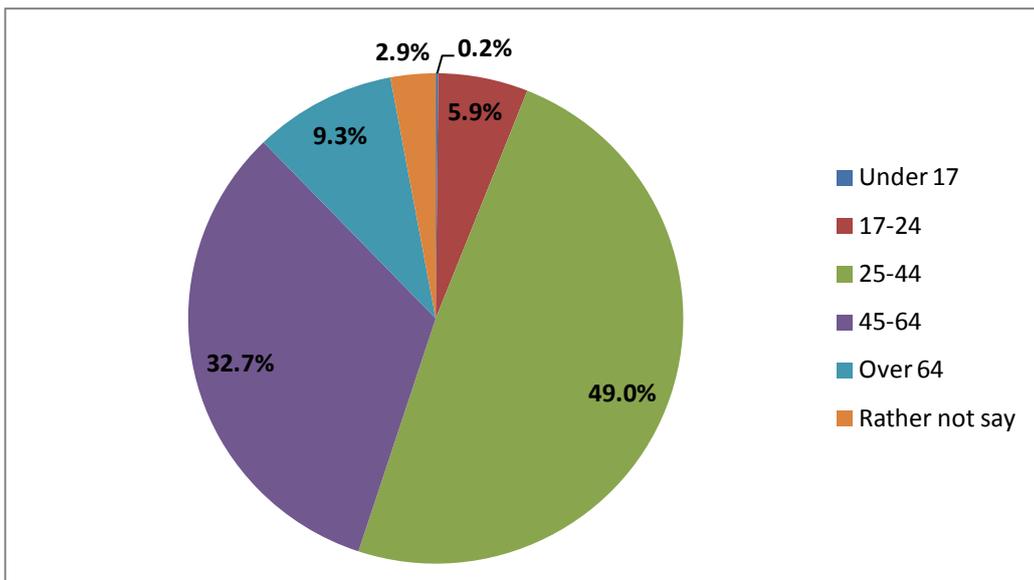
Question 6. What is your gender identity?



Graph 6.1 Gender distribution of respondents

4.12 612 responses were received to Q6. Of these, 57.2% stated male, 40% stated female, 0.2% stated other and 2.6% preferred not to say.

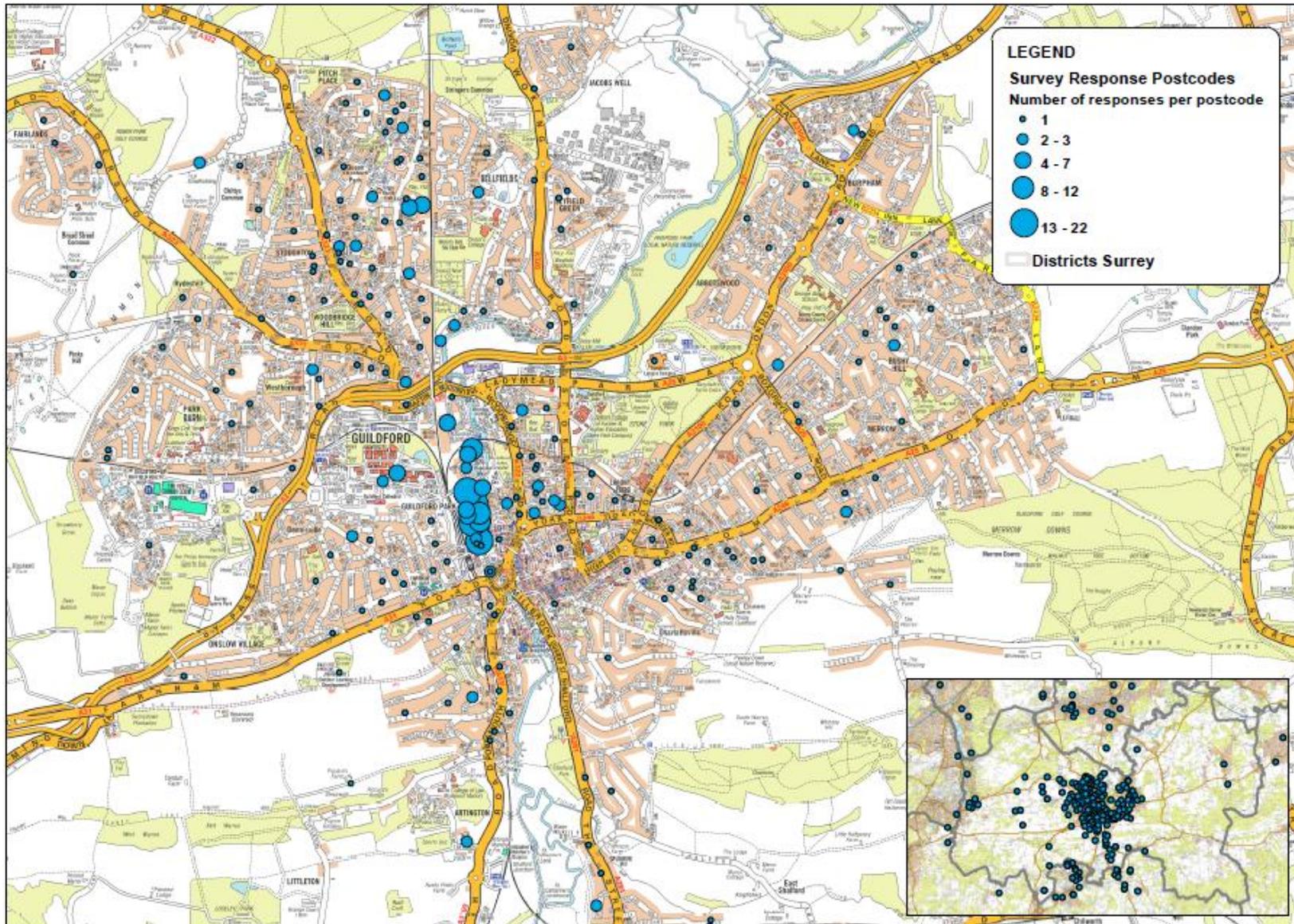
Question 7. What is your age group?



Graph 7.1 Age distribution of respondents

4.13 Of the 612 responses to Q7, nearly half of respondents stated they were aged 25-44 (49%), whilst the next most represented age group was 45-64 (32.7%). Under 17's were the least represented category with only 0.2%. 2.9% of respondents preferred not to state their age group.

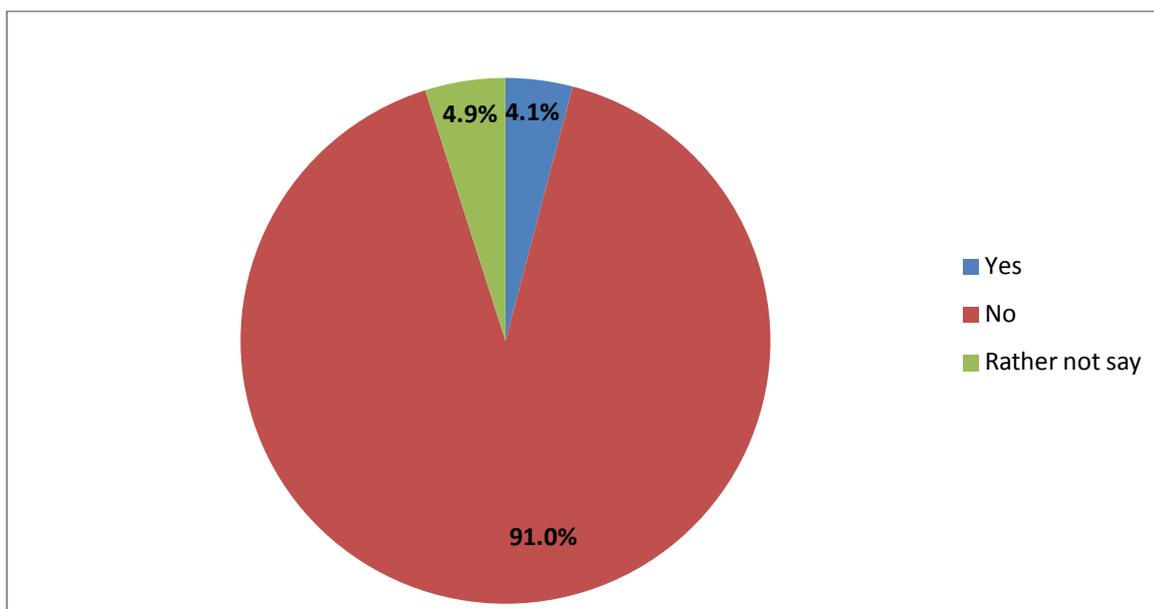
Question 8: Please provide your postcode



Graph 8.1 Distribution of Respondents' Postcodes

4.14 Graph 8.1 indicates a broad wide spread of response across Guildford, with concentrated clusters around Walnut Tree Close and in Stoughton.

Question 9. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



Question 10. Do you have any comments on what we could improve in future consultations and public exhibitions?

4.15 138 respondents (22%) provided feedback on the consultation or suggestion on how to improve future consultations. The most frequently provided feedback included:

- Widening the postal distribution area.
- Offering a greater number / range of public exhibition dates.
- Provide a greater range of options for selection.
- Provision of more information and facts within the rationale behind the measures.
- Widen advertisement through greater use of social media and posters.
- General comments on the scheme itself and other issues around Guildford.
- Ensure the consultation report is easily available to the public.
- A number of respondents expressed gratitude for the opportunity to take part in the consultation.

The feedback will be used to inform the organisation of future consultations.

Email/letter responses

4.16 17 email responses to the consultation were received from both individuals and organisations. A summary of the organisational responses can be found in the table below:

Response Date	Organisation	Expressed preference
15/06/16	The Edge Software Consultancy	Neither Option 1 nor Option 2
01/07/16	Safeguard Coaches	Option 2
01/07/16	Surrey Police	Option 1
12/07/16	University of Surrey	No expressed preference
16/07/16	Holy Trinity Amenity Group	Option 1
20/07/16	Highways England	No expressed preference
22/07/16	Saint-Gobain Building Distribution (on behalf of Jewson)	Neither Option 1 nor Option 2
22/07/16	G-Bug	Option 1
24/07/16	Worplesdon Parish Council	Option 2 (on the basis of a significantly shorter trial period)

- 4.17 In addition to their expressed preference a number of these organisations also provided feedback on their selection. The detail of these responses will be considered as part of the detailed scheme design, however these are too detailed to include within this report in their entirety. Key quotes from a number of the organisations are included below:

Edge Software Consultancy

1. *"The proposed changes to Walnut Tree Close would negatively impact most of the staff in our office"*
2. *"If you could place the blockage just short of the station car park to allow people to access public transport that would be a much better solution in the opinion of the company"*
3. *"I think the one way solution is probably even worse if the goal is to limit traffic flow due to people using the road as a cut through. As you will still have people cutting through at one time of day just not at the other."*

Safeguard Coaches

1. *"Safeguard Coaches prefers Option 2"... "with the important proviso that northbound traffic is subject to an 'Access Only' restriction beyond Station View with an appropriate sign displayed"*
2. *"We prefer Option 2 over Option 1 because we think that it will be most effective at reducing the amount of traffic trying to enter the Guildford Gyratory from Walnut Tree Close"*
3. *"We note that removal of through traffic may enable buses and coaches to access the front entrance of Guildford Railway Station more easily (currently the time penalty of having to exit via WTC is substantial at peak times) thus improving public transport (bus/coach to train) connectivity"*

University of Surrey

1. *"The University is encouraged to see options that will reduce the existing conflict between staff / students and vehicles on this key route to campus"*
2. *"we [have] no real preference between the two options you have identified as long as cycle routes are clearly defined, give sufficient width to users and are regularly maintained throughout the trial period"*
3. *"While we welcome the proposal to reduce vehicular traffic on the heavily congested Walnut Tree Close, the University is concerned at the potential for traffic to be re-routed elsewhere in Guildford"*

Saint-Gobain Building Distribution (on behalf of Jewson)

1. *"Customer and delivery routes to and from the branch would be adversely affected by the proposed road closure and one-way traffic restriction"*
2. *"This will add unacceptable extra time to the journey and in all probability lead to large amount of customers being lost to other competing businesses"*
3. *"The extra journey time will also add cost to the business in terms of extra fuel consumption and wasted man hours"*
4. *"The business and its future existence will undoubtedly be under threat by these proposals. Even if following the proposed 18 month trial period they are not implemented on a permanent basis we believe irreparable damage to Jewson's business will have already been incurred."*

G-Bug

1. *"Our conclusion was to vote for Option 1 the total closure of WTC. Our main reason for this decision is that it makes a safe cycle route from the Gyratory to the A25 and links through to the University via Yorkies Bridge"*

2. *“We are confident that the 18 month trial will prove that Woodbridge Road can cope with the diverted traffic and that WTC will remain closed for good”*
3. *“The suggested Sustainable Movement Corridor in the Local Plan could also work well on this route in the future”*

Comment book responses

- 4.18 Nine shorthand responses were received within the comment book at the exhibition. Many suggestions included the provision of signals at the junction where Walnut Tree Close meets Bridge Street. These comments will be used to further develop the schemes and target specific locations for works.
- 4.19 A number of responses related to highway and transport issues outside of the specific measures in the Walnut Tree Close consultation. This information will be logged for future consideration.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 This report describes the consultation process for Walnut Tree Close, which was undertaken in June and July 2016. All responses received during the consultation period will be considered and will help inform the detailed design stage of scheme development.
- 5.2 The aim of the consultation was to provide greater detail on how Walnut Tree Close may be closed to through-traffic and gauge levels of support for the proposed measures by which the restriction might be achieved.
- 5.3 The consultation indicated that there is no clear preference between the proposed measures, although there remains significant desire for some restriction on through-traffic to be delivered.
- 5.4 Further analysis of questionnaire respondents indicated a divide in opinion between Walnut Tree Close residents and businesses with the majority of residents favouring Option 1 and the majority of employers and employees favouring neither Option 1 nor Option 2.
- 5.5 Key drivers for Options 1 and 2 raised within the consultation responses included:
- Improvements to road safety, particularly pedestrians and cyclists
 - Improvements to traffic conditions and the public realm along Walnut Tree Close
 - The immediate and wider accessibility that is maintained specifically by Option 2
- 5.6 Key concerns raised within the consultation included:
- The effect of the measures on traffic displacement
 - The additional distance and time incurred by re-routing.
 - The accessibility of buildings along Walnut Tree Close
- 5.7 The results of the consultation will inform the decision-making process alongside engineering and feasibility investigations.