



**Road users' priorities for improvement:
car and van drivers and motorcyclists**

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Anthony Smith

Foreword

Transport Focus is the independent consumer watchdog representing the interests of passengers using trains in Great Britain; passengers using buses, coaches and trams on scheduled domestic services in England, outside London; and all users of the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in England – that is, the motorways and main 'A' roads. We are guided by three principles. First, we represent the interests of consumers of transport services, irrespective of the mode they choose to use. Second, we are evidence based; insight gathered from research informs our views and any improvements we advocate. Third, we aim to be useful to those who provide and fund services for those we represent.

Our role on behalf of road users started on 30 March 2015. On that date we published research looking at road users' needs and experiences using the SRN. This research, which is available on our website¹, involved discussions with a diverse range of motorised and non-motorised users. It explored users' views about the SRN and their experiences using it. The research also explored users' views on safety, journey planning, congestion and disruption. It showed that road users tend to focus on the negative experiences and overlook typical journeys.

One of Transport Focus's key tasks is to develop a new way to measure satisfaction among users of the SRN and we are making good progress. In due course this will replace the National Road User Satisfaction Survey (NRUSS) which Highways England currently carries out.

However, as with our passenger work, it is important that we understand users' priorities for improvement as well as their satisfaction with aspects of the current experience. Therefore we used our needs and experiences research to draw up a list of 17 potential improvements and asked nearly 5000 car/van drivers and motorcycle riders to think specifically about their last trip on the SRN. We used a trade-off methodology known as Maximum Difference Scaling ('MaxDiff') to produce



the rankings and index among those 17 potential improvements. Future publications will look at the areas freight users and non-motorised users of the SRN would like to see improved.

We took great care to ensure that those taking part in the research were answering in relation to the SRN, rather than a local road, by asking them to look at a map showing the network. Interestingly, most SRN journeys are short: around half of SRN trips are under 10 miles, and this is reflected in the research. We also looked at priorities among users of three different types of road within the Highways England network; motorways, dual carriageway A roads and single carriageway A roads.

The aspect of the SRN that car/van drivers most wish to see improved is 'quality of road surfaces'. It is clear that concerns about road surface were not confined to potholes: drivers wanted surfaces that produce less noise (concrete roads were mentioned as a particular problem), they wanted surfaces that were safe even in poor weather and they wanted surfaces giving a more comfortable ride. After that comes 'safer design and upkeep of roads' (2nd) and 'better behaved drivers' (3rd). Motorcyclists also have 'quality of road surfaces' in first place, with surface deterioration between lanes mentioned as a particular problem when overtaking. Their priorities then

¹ <http://www.transportfocus.org.uk/research/publications/road-user-needs-and-experiences-summary-report>

vary from car/van drivers, with 'better behaved drivers' (2nd) and 'safer design and upkeep of roads' (3rd). The focus for both groups then moves to factors affecting trip length with 'better management of roadworks' (4th for both car/van drivers and motorcyclists) and 'better management of unplanned delays' and 'reduced journey times' 5th and 6th for car/van drivers and vice versa for motorcyclists.

Some may be surprised that 'increased reliability of journey times' is only the 7th highest priority for improvement. While we cannot say for certain, there are two possible explanations. First, it could be because relatively few people encounter problems with journey time reliability when they use the SRN (Highways England's monitoring shows the vast majority of journeys are completed on time) and, second, it could be that some road users factor in variation in journey time based on experience and so cease to regard it as a problem.

Generally, the order of priorities varies only slightly between sub-groups. However, aspects such as reduced journey times emerge as a higher priority dependent on journey purpose and region travelled, with commuters and those driving within the M25 area and in the Midlands ranking it in greater need of improvement than drivers in other areas.

As well as understanding which aspects SRN users regard as a greater priority for improvement than others, the index score allows us to see how much more important, or less important, one factor is compared with an average priority score of 100. From the index score we can see that not only is 'improved quality of road

surfaces' the top priority for improvement to the SRN, it is almost five times as important as the average priority for car/van users and over six times as important for motorcyclists.

There is a wealth of information in this research. We hope the insight into what SRN users most want to see improved will be helpful to Highways England, government and others in focusing investment and management attention.

Visit our website www.transportfocus.org.uk to keep up to date with our plans. On there you can read about our progress in **Road User Voice**, our monthly e-newsletter. You can also sign up to receive Road User Voice by email each month.



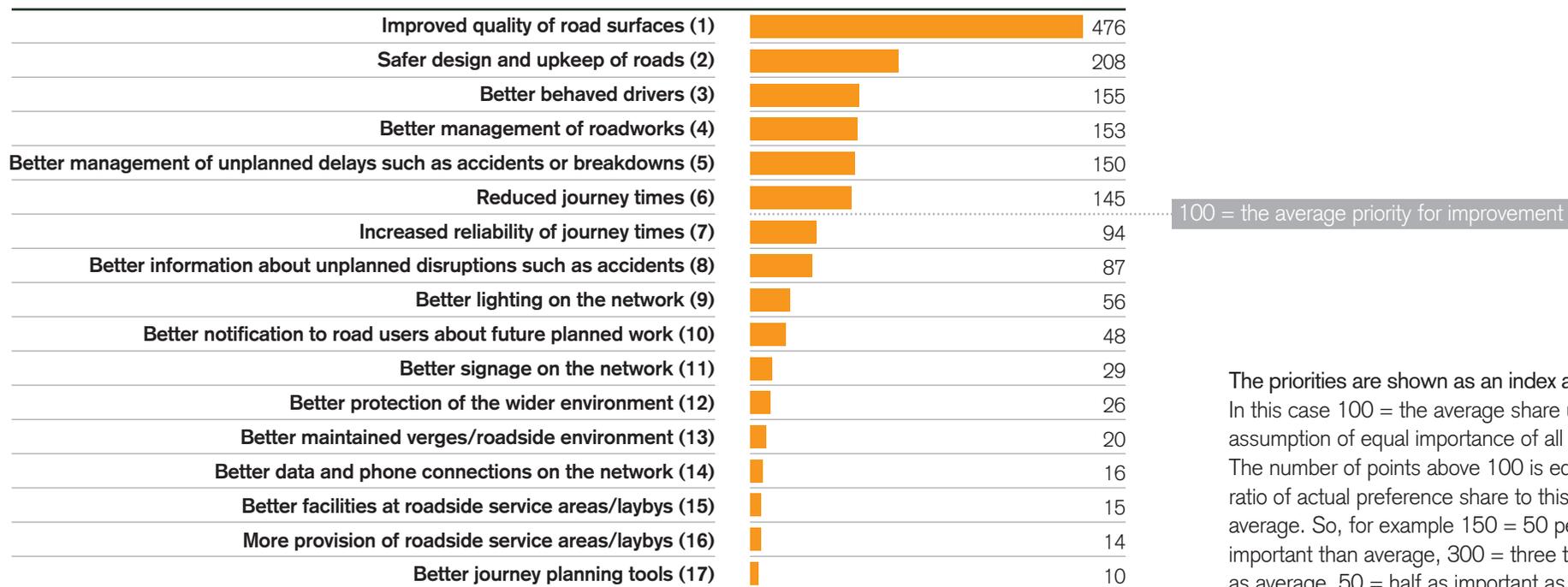
Anthony Smith
Chief Executive
Transport Focus

Technical note: Due to rounding, figures may not always add up to 100 per cent.

SRN road users' priorities for improvement

car/van

Rank order with index score to 100



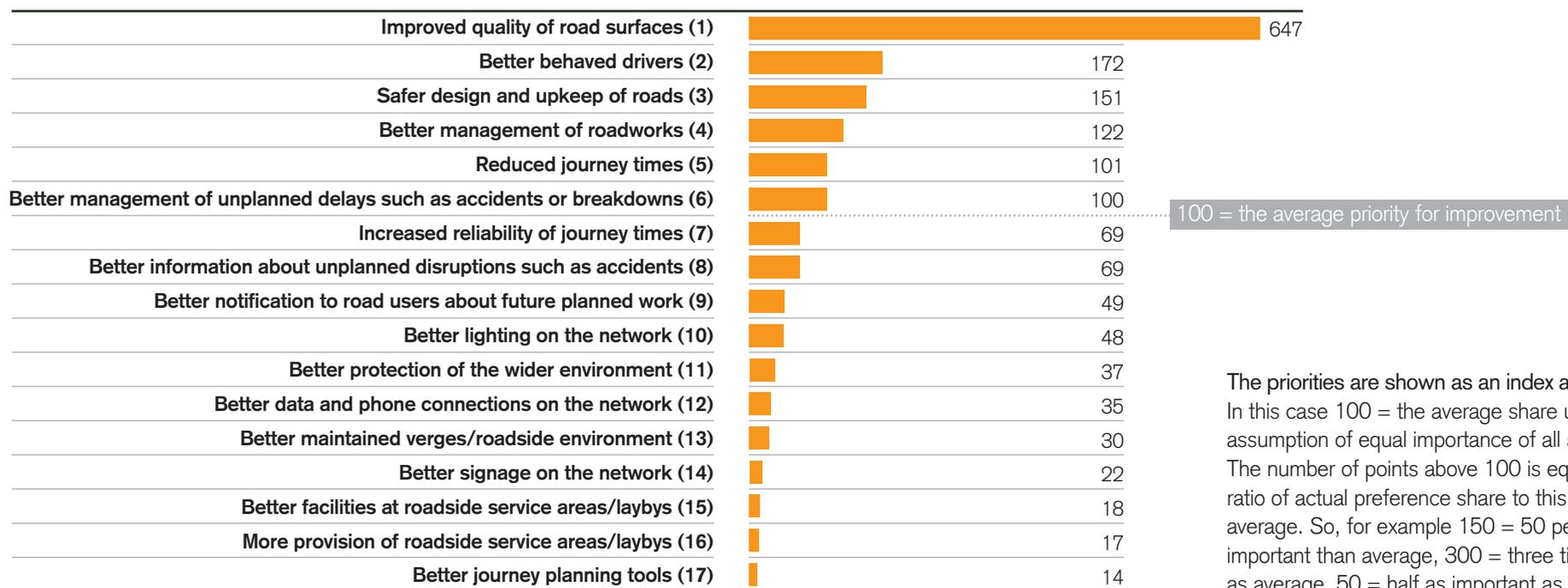
The priorities are shown as an index averaged on 100. In this case 100 = the average share under the assumption of equal importance of all attributes. The number of points above 100 is equivalent to the ratio of actual preference share to this theoretical average. So, for example 150 = 50 per cent more important than average, 300 = three times as important as average, 50 = half as important as average.

Base: All England car/van SRN users, 4578

SRN road users' priorities for improvement

motorcyclists

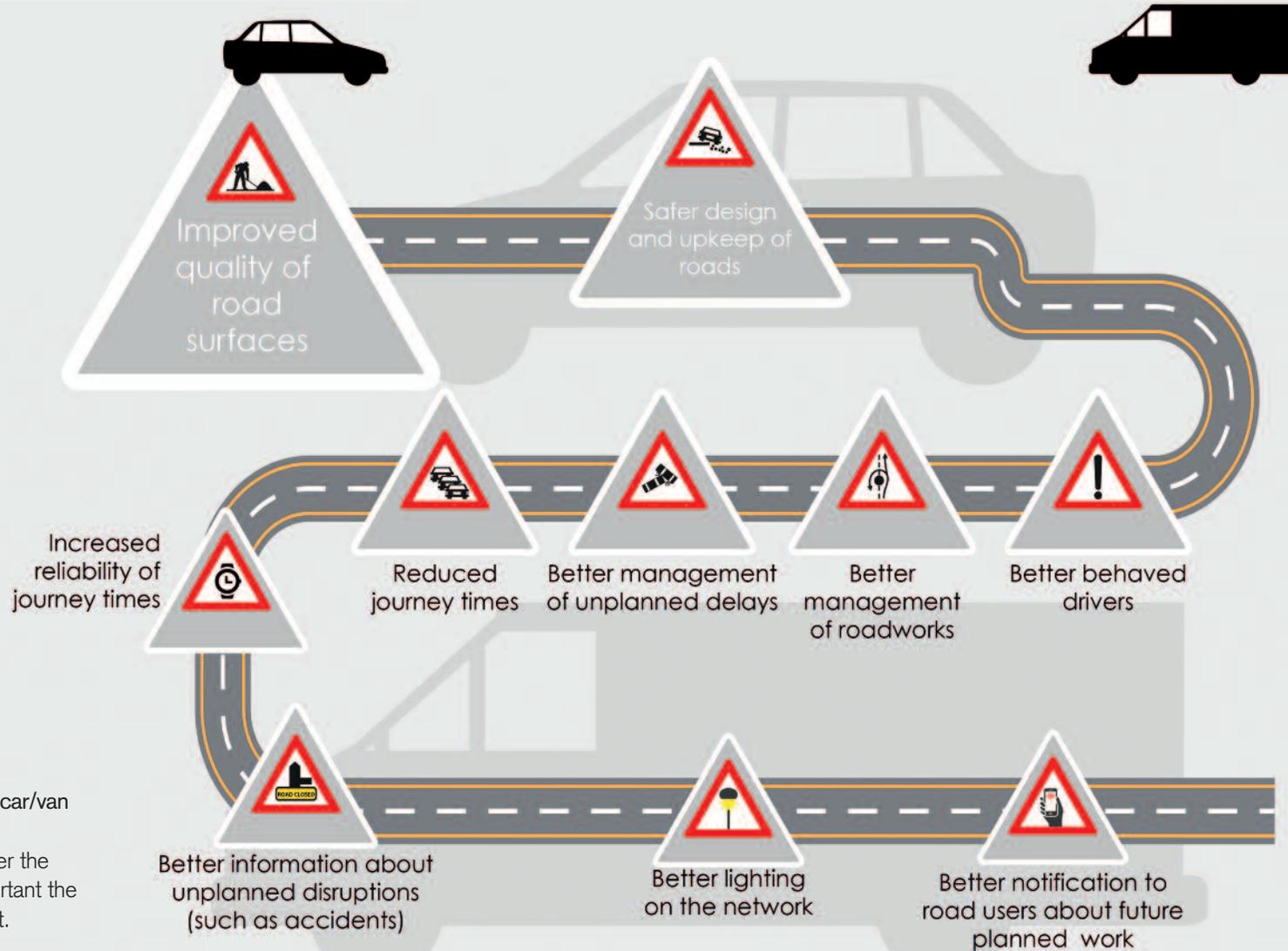
Rank order with index score to 100



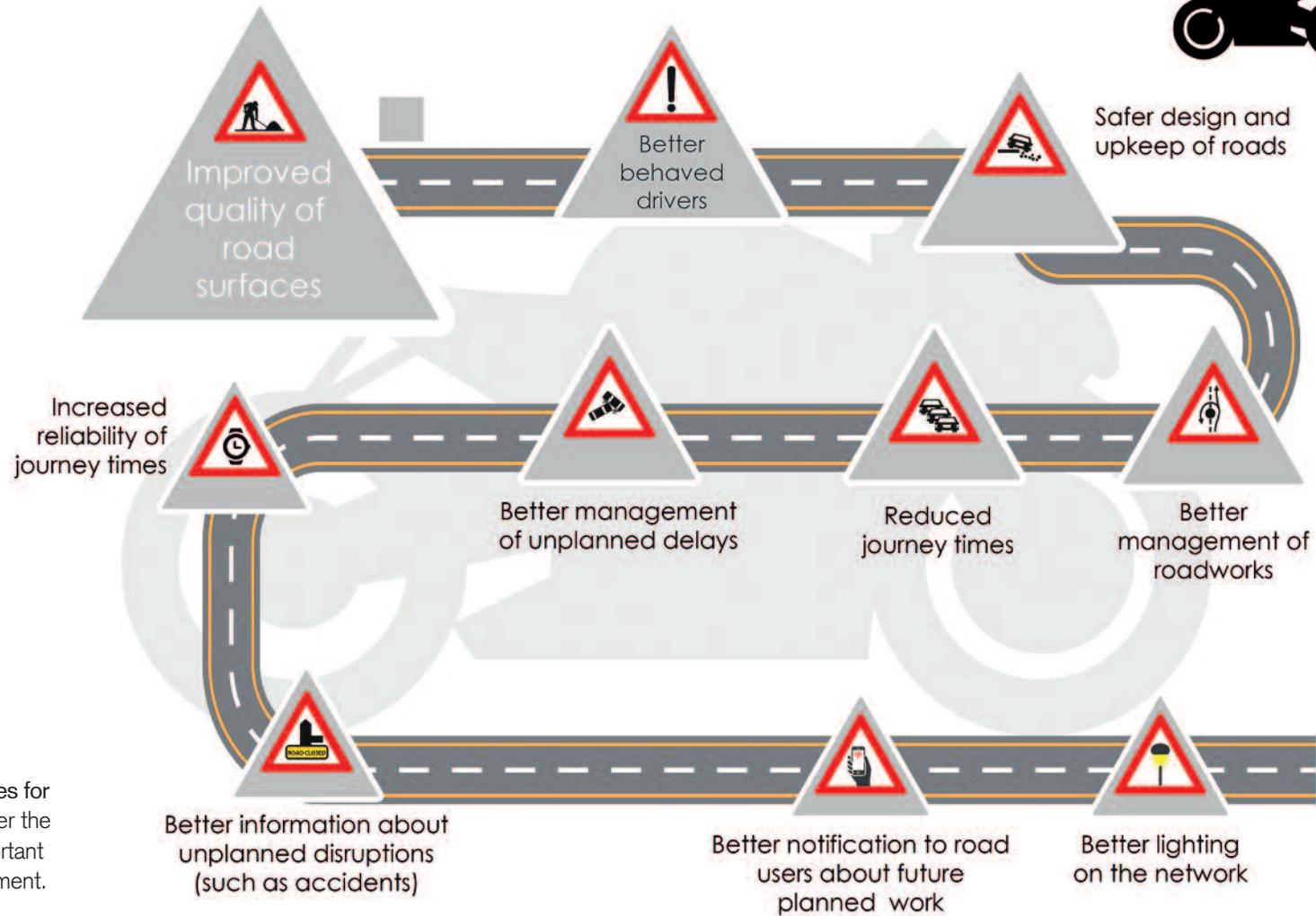
The priorities are shown as an index averaged on 100. In this case 100 = the average share under the assumption of equal importance of all attributes. The number of points above 100 is equivalent to the ratio of actual preference share to this theoretical average. So, for example 150 = 50 per cent more important than average, 300 = three times as important as average, 50 = half as important as average.

Base: All England motorcycle SRN users, 350

Car/van drivers' priorities for improvement to the Strategic Road Network in England (2015)



Motorcyclists' priorities for improvement to the Strategic Road Network in England (2015)



Triangle size relates to car/van drivers' priorities for improvement. The larger the triangle, the more important the priority for improvement.

Top improvements for the Strategic Road Network



CAR/VAN DRIVERS Priority 1

Improved quality of road surfaces

"Some road surfaces are very noisy due to 'old-style' tarmac. French motorways, on which I travel regularly are far, far, ahead of UK motorways."

Female 65-74 South East

"Take out those bumps on the floor on the motorway."

Male 35-44 Midlands

"Fix drainage issues as there are lots of accidents on the M62 when it rains."

Female 35-44 North West

"Resurface the concreted areas of the M27 to decrease the noise both inside and outside the car."

Male 55-59 South East

"Improve quality of roads... very rough surfaces make driving and travelling a misery and very painful for older people, pregnant ladies and people with bad backs!"

Female 60-64 South East

MOTORCYCLISTS Priority 1

Improved quality of road surfaces

"By effectively repairing worn surfaces which pose a very serious hazard to motorcyclists in particular."

Male 55-59 South West

"The motorways seem to be getting worse especially on a motorcycle. The erosion is particularly bad between lanes. Changing lanes on a motorbike now needs careful planning and is really dangerous in the dark."

Male 45-54 South West

"As a motorcyclist the condition of some parts of the road network are quite honestly dangerous."

Male 45-54 Midlands

"Change the road surface. On a motorcycle, there is lots of noise and plenty of drift because of the surface."

Male 60-64 Midlands

CAR/VAN DRIVERS Priority 2

Safer design and upkeep of roads

“Ensure that motorway slip roads feed traffic to flow as efficiently as possible with minimum delay and accidents. Provide sufficient lanes for traffic load.”

Male 45-54 South East

“Make sure line painting and cats eye repairs are maintained, as some stretches of road at night are hard to see clearly as lane demarcation, cats eyes/centre lines and kerb edge lines, are in a very poor state of repair.”

Male 45-54 North West

“Introduce more controlled speed limits.”

Female 65-74 South East

“The hedges on the single carriage should be trimmed to give better access.”

Male 65-74 Midlands

MOTORCYCLISTS Priority 2

Better behaved drivers

“No overtaking for HGVs on A roads.”

Male 45-54 North East

“Explain undertaking in the same lane to people.”

Male 35-44 M25

“What spoils the journey are inconsiderate car drivers.”

Female 45-54 M25

“Stop people who don't drive properly and fine them. More and more people have started to ignore speed limits and that they have indicators.”

Male 25-34 South East



Photo courtesy of Highways England



CAR/VAN DRIVERS Priority 3

Better behaved drivers

“Ensure the trailers and lorries adhere to speed limits and do not put pressure on other drivers.”

Male 25-34 South East

“Ensure that they promote the ruling about lane hogging so that people move back to the slower lanes after overtaking.”

Female 45-54 East

“Take more serious action against drivers who throw litter from their vehicles.”

Male 35-44 South East

“Better enforcement of speed limits.”

Male 35-44 Midlands

“Reduce speed of HGVs, make them leave a gap between themselves and other large vehicles. Take more interest in bad driving as opposed to speeding.”

Male 55-59 North East

MOTORCYCLISTS Priority 3

Safer design and upkeep of roads

“Larger roads, more lanes and remove the roundabout on the A404.”

Male 35-44 South East

“Better lane marking so that other drivers don't cut in causing drivers to brake suddenly.”

Male 25-34 M25

“ ‘Think Bike’ warning signs.”

Male 45-54 North East

“Use non-skid material for overbanding.”

Male 45-54 South East

Car/van users' priorities for improvement to the SRN by journey purpose

	TOTAL CAR/VAN		Commuter		Business		Leisure	
	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index
Improved quality of road surfaces	1	476	1	432	1	414	1	510
Safer design and upkeep of roads	2	208	3	174	2	182	2	228
Better behaved drivers	3	155	6	135	5	151	3	166
Better management of roadworks	4	153	5	141	4	166	4	160
Better management of unplanned delays such as accidents or breakdowns	5	150	4	143	6	145	5	156
Reduced journey times	6	145	2	199	3	177	6	109
Increased reliability of journey time	7	94	7	117	7	111	8	76
Better information about unplanned disruptions such as accidents	8	87	8	86	8	100	7	87
Better lighting on the network	9	56	9	61	10	54	9	54
Better notification to road users about future planned work	10	48	10	56	9	57	10	42
Better signage on the network	11	29	11	29	11	32	11	27
Better protection of the wider environment	12	26	12	29	12	32	12	24
Better maintained verges/roadside environment	13	20	13	21	13	22	13	18
Better data and phone connections on the network	14	16	14	20	14	18	14	13
Better facilities at roadside service areas/laybys	15	15	15	20	15	16	15	13
More provision of roadside service areas/laybys	16	14	16	19	16	14	16	11
Better journey planning tools	17	10	17	15	17	10	17	7

Differences in priorities are apparent when we analyse by journey purpose. Reduced journey times are a higher priority for commuters (ranked 2nd) and car/van drivers travelling for business (ranked 3rd) in comparison with leisure drivers. Understandably, non-leisure drivers are likely to be on a tighter driving schedule. Commuters also rank better management of unplanned delays as a higher priority (4th) than other drivers.

Base: All England car/van Strategic Road Network users, 4578

Motorcyclists' priorities for improvement to the SRN by journey purpose

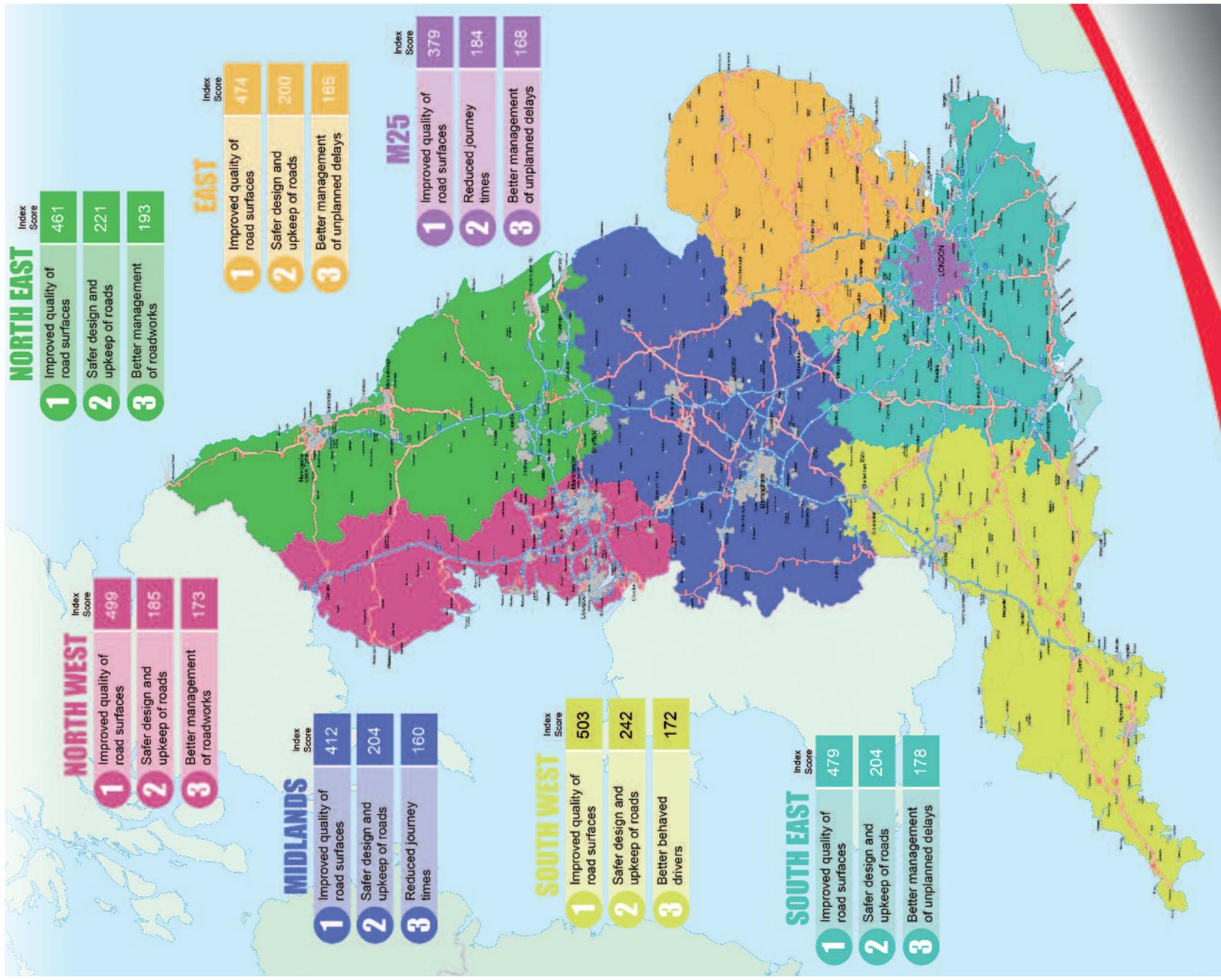
	TOTAL MOTORCYCLISTS		Commuter		Business*		Leisure	
	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index
Improved quality of road surfaces	1	647	1	570	1	506	1	729
Better behaved drivers	2	172	2	168	4	131	3	170
Safer design and upkeep of roads	3	151	5	116	7	96	2	188
Better management of roadworks	4	122	4	121	2	175	4	112
Reduced journey times	5	101	3	138	6	111	6	74
Better management of unplanned delays such as accidents or breakdowns	6	100	6	82	3	134	5	107
Increased reliability of journey times	7	69	7	81	8	96	8	56
Better information about unplanned disruptions such as accidents	8	69	10	56	5	117	7	67
Better notification to road users about future planned work	9	49	8	66	9	74	10	32
Better lighting on the network	10	48	9	62	10	59	9	37
Better protection of the wider environment	11	37	12	47	11	46	11	30
Better data and phone connections on the network	12	35	11	53	12	39	13	22
Better maintained verges/roadside environment	13	30	13	39	14	25	12	26
Better signage on the network	14	22	14	28	13	27	14	16
Better facilities at roadside service areas/laybys	15	18	15	27	15	25	16	11
More provision of roadside service areas/laybys	16	17	17	22	16	23	15	12
Better journey planning tools	17	14	16	24	17	14	17	8

Better behaved drivers was ranked more highly by motorcyclists than car/van drivers. Reduced journey times was also a higher priority for motorcyclists commuting on their most recent journey (ranked 3rd) whereas those travelling for business identify better management of unplanned delays as a higher priority (ranked 3rd). Given the nature of riding a motorcycle, improved quality of road surface is consistently ranked as the highest priority regardless of journey purpose and is over seven times as important as the average priority for leisure motorcyclists.

Base: All England motorcycle Strategic Road Network users, 350. *Note: there were only a small number of business users on motorcycles (33)

Top three car/van drivers' priorities for improvement by Highways England Region

Highways England has seven regions. This map shows the top three improvements for car/van drivers in each region. The smaller numbers of motorcyclists mean there are too few riders to produce a similar map.



Car/van drivers' priorities for improvement to the SRN by region

	TOTAL CAR/VAN		North East		North West		Midlands	
	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index
Improved quality of road surfaces	1	476	1	461	1	499	1	412
Safer design and upkeep of roads	2	208	2	221	2	185	2	204
Better behaved drivers	3	155	4	163	4	159	5	156
Better management of roadworks	4	153	3	193	3	173	4	157
Better management of unplanned delays such as accidents or breakdowns	5	150	6	117	5	155	6	153
Reduced journey times	6	145	5	151	6	147	3	160
Increased reliability of journey time	7	94	8	83	7	86	7	110
Better information about unplanned disruptions such as accidents	8	87	7	85	8	83	8	98
Better lighting on the network	9	56	10	50	9	54	10	55
Better notification to road users about future planned work	10	48	9	55	10	44	9	57
Better signage on the network	11	29	13	24	11	31	11	32
Better protection of the wider environment	12	26	11	29	12	22	12	24
Better maintained verges/roadside environment	13	20	12	25	14	14	14	20
Better data and phone connections on the network	14	16	16	10	13	15	13	21
Better facilities at roadside service areas/laybys	15	15	14	13	15	13	15	17
More provision of roadside service areas/laybys	16	14	15	13	16	11	16	14
Better journey planning tools	17	10	17	9	17	10	17	10

Base: All England car/van Strategic Road Network users, 4578

	East		M25		South East		South West	
	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index
Improved quality of road surfaces	1	474	1	379	1	479	1	503
Safer design and upkeep of roads	2	200	4	159	2	204	2	242
Better behaved drivers	6	130	5	159	4	156	3	172
Better management of roadworks	5	132	6	143	6	136	4	146
Better management of unplanned delays such as accidents or breakdowns	3	165	3	168	3	178	5	139
Reduced journey times	4	151	2	184	5	138	6	118
Increased reliability of journey time	7	102	7	108	7	100	8	82
Better information about unplanned disruptions such as accidents	8	91	8	98	8	92	7	88
Better lighting on the network	9	63	9	79	9	56	9	43
Better notification to road users about future planned work	10	42	10	44	10	42	10	40
Better signage on the network	11	31	11	39	11	25	11	30
Better protection of the wider environment	12	31	12	37	12	24	12	28
Better maintained verges/roadside environment	13	24	14	23	13	18	13	21
Better data and phone connections on the network	15	17	13	24	16	13	14	16
Better facilities at roadside service areas/laybys	14	19	15	21	14	17	15	13
More provision of roadside service areas/laybys	16	17	16	19	15	14	16	12
Better journey planning tools	17	11	17	16	17	7	17	8

The highest priorities for SRN improvement vary by the Highways England region(s) in which the most recent journey was undertaken. This is particularly apparent for regions which are more densely populated. For those driving within the M25 and in the Midlands region, reduced journey times ranks as a higher priority (2nd and 3rd respectively).

Although having better behaved drivers is ranked as the 3rd highest priority overall, it is in 5th and 6th places for those driving through the Midlands, the East and the M25, while better management of unplanned delays is ranked 3rd for three of the regions, East, South East and the M25; again a likely consequence of more densely populated areas where volume of traffic, as a result of an accident or breakdown, can build up quickly.

Base: All England car/van Strategic Road Network users, 4578

Car/van drivers' priorities for improvement to the SRN by age and gender

	TOTAL CAR/VAN		GENDER: MALE – AGE						GENDER: FEMALE – AGE					
	Rank	Index	16-34		35-54		55+		16-34		35-54		55+	
	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index
Improved quality of road surfaces	1	476	1	364	1	488	1	547	1	356	1	463	1	537
Safer design and upkeep of roads	2	208	4	140	3	168	2	216	2	204	2	228	2	290
Better behaved drivers	3	155	3	183	5	147	4	172	4	149	4	143	5	139
Better management of roadworks	4	153	5	128	4	164	3	175	6	126	5	141	4	148
Better management of unplanned delays such as accidents or breakdowns	5	150	6	117	6	128	5	159	3	151	3	171	3	155
Reduced journey times	6	145	2	207	2	192	6	115	5	144	6	141	7	79
Increased reliability of journey time	7	94	7	109	7	128	7	90	8	76	8	89	9	52
Better information about unplanned disruptions such as accidents	8	87	8	73	8	72	8	79	7	108	7	104	6	92
Better lighting on the network	9	56	9	71	10	44	9	43	9	73	9	60	8	74
Better notification to road users about future planned work	10	48	10	52	9	45	10	37	10	63	10	52	10	52
Better signage on the network	11	29	12	42	12	24	11	16	11	49	11	30	11	30
Better protection of the wider environment	12	26	11	52	11	27	12	13	12	49	12	23	13	16
Better maintained verges/roadside environment	13	20	14	35	13	19	13	12	13	37	13	15	12	17
Better data and phone connections on the network	14	16	13	41	14	17	16	7	14	34	16	10	16	4
Better facilities at roadside service areas/laybys	15	15	15	33	15	15	14	9	15	30	14	12	14	6
More provision of roadside service areas/laybys	16	14	16	30	16	12	15	8	16	29	15	11	15	5
Better journey planning tools	17	10	17	24	17	11	17	3	17	20	17	7	17	3

There is some difference in priorities by demographics, most notably among younger male drivers. Whereas reduced journey times is ranked sixth overall, for male car/van drivers aged under 55 it is ranked 2nd. In contrast, female SRN drivers demonstrate greater concern regarding management of unplanned delays which is ranked 3rd by females across all age groups.

Base: All England car/van Strategic Road Network users, 4578

Motorcyclists' priorities for improvement to the SRN by gender and age

	TOTAL MOTORCYCLISTS		GENDER				AGE			
	Rank	Index	Male		*Female		16-44		35-54	
	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index
Improved quality of road surfaces	1	647	1	684	1	474	1	431	1	768
Better behaved drivers	2	172	2	179	3	139	2	188	3	163
Safer design and upkeep of roads	3	151	3	138	2	210	4	126	2	164
Better management of roadworks	4	122	4	128	6	95	3	128	4	119
Reduced journey times	5	101	5	110	10	55	5	117	6	92
Better management of unplanned delays such as accidents or breakdowns	6	100	6	95	4	125	6	106	5	97
Increased reliability of journey times	7	69	7	75	13	43	10	71	7	68
Better information about unplanned disruptions such as accidents	8	69	8	61	5	106	7	79	8	63
Better notification to road users about future planned work	9	49	9	47	11	54	12	52	9	47
Better lighting on the network	10	48	10	43	8	69	8	77	10	31
Better protection of the wider environment	11	37	11	31	9	69	11	71	12	19
Better data and phone connections on the network	12	35	12	25	7	82	9	77	14	11
Better maintained verges/roadside environment	13	30	13	25	12	54	13	48	11	20
Better signage on the network	14	22	14	20	16	31	14	36	13	14
Better facilities at roadside service areas/laybys	15	18	15	16	17	29	15	36	15	8
More provision of roadside service areas/laybys	16	17	16	13	15	32	16	33	17	7
Better journey planning tools	17	14	17	10	14	33	17	25	16	8

Priorities for motorcyclists vary considerably by demographics, however caution should be used in analysing by gender as female motorcyclists were only a minority within the sample (20 per cent). Most significantly, aspects such as better information about unplanned disruptions and better data and phone connections are higher priorities for women (ranked fifth and seventh respectively) and reduced journey times and increased reliability of journey times are much lower priorities compared with male motorcyclists.

Differences are also apparent by age, with younger motorcyclists placing greater emphasis on improving data and phone connections (ranked 9th).

Base: All England motorcycle SRN users, 350. *Note: there were only a small number of female motorcyclists (70)

Car/van drivers' priorities for improvement to the SRN by road type

	TOTAL CAR/VAN		Motorway		Single carriageway A road		Dual carriageway A road	
	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index
Improved quality of road surfaces	1	476	1	401	1	556	1	463
Safer design and upkeep of roads	2	208	4	172	2	232	2	216
Better behaved drivers	3	155	5	162	3	155	5	148
Better management of roadworks	4	153	6	158	4	145	4	155
Better management of unplanned delays such as accidents or breakdowns	5	150	3	173	6	116	3	162
Reduced journey times	6	145	2	174	5	135	6	128
Increased reliability of journey time	7	94	8	105	7	81	7	97
Better information about unplanned disruptions such as accidents	8	87	7	108	8	66	8	90
Better lighting on the network	9	56	9	63	9	48	9	58
Better notification to road users about future planned work	10	48	10	49	10	48	10	48
Better signage on the network	11	29	11	32	11	27	12	27
Better protection of the wider environment	12	26	12	24	12	25	11	30
Better maintained verges/roadside environment	13	20	14	19	13	20	13	21
Better data and phone connections on the network	14	16	13	20	14	13	16	15
Better facilities at roadside service areas/laybys	15	15	15	16	15	13	14	17
More provision of roadside service areas/laybys	16	14	16	14	16	12	15	16
Better journey planning tools	17	10	17	11	17	8	17	9

The type of SRN road being considered when prioritising improvements is important. For those responding in relation to a motorway section, reduced journey times and better management of unplanned delays are ranked more highly, 2nd and 3rd respectively. While management of unplanned delays is also ranked 3rd by those on an A road dual carriageway section of their journey, having a safer design and upkeep of roads remains their 2nd priority.

Base: All England car/van SRN users, 4578

Motorcyclists' priorities for improvement to the SRN

by road type

	TOTAL MOTORCYCLISTS		Motorway		Single carriageway A road		Dual carriageway A road	
	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index
Improved quality of road surfaces	1	647	1	551	1	712	1	681
Better behaved drivers	2	172	3	146	2	229	3	141
Safer design and upkeep of roads	3	151	5	123	3	162	2	167
Better management of roadworks	4	122	4	145	4	110	4	111
Reduced journey times	5	101	6	123	5	104	7	74
Better management of unplanned delays such as accidents or breakdowns	6	100	2	147	6	61	5	91
Increased reliability of journey times	7	69	8	86	7	46	6	75
Better information about unplanned disruptions such as accidents	8	69	7	100	9	43	9	62
Better notification to road users about future planned work	9	49	10	50	11	32	8	63
Better lighting on the network	10	48	9	60	8	45	11	39
Better protection of the wider environment	11	37	11	37	10	37	12	38
Better data and phone connections on the network	12	35	12	32	12	29	10	43
Better maintained verges/roadside environment	13	30	13	28	13	28	13	34
Better signage on the network	14	22	14	18	14	25	15	22
Better facilities at roadside service areas/laybys	15	18	15	18	15	13	14	23
More provision of roadside service areas/laybys	16	17	16	17	16	13	16	19
Better journey planning tools	17	14	17	16	17	11	17	16

Motorcyclists referring to a motorway section of their trip identify better management of unplanned delays as a higher priority than users of other road types (2nd highest priority). Lighting on the network is ranked as a more important priority for motorcyclists responding in relation to a single carriageway A road section of their journey (ranked 8th).

Base: All England motorcycle SRN users, 350

Car/van drivers' priorities for improvement to the SRN by trip length

	TOTAL CAR/VAN		Short journeys <10 miles		Long journeys >10 miles	
	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index
Improved quality of road surfaces	1	476	1	505	1	434
Safer design and upkeep of roads	2	208	2	215	2	198
Better behaved drivers	3	155	3	161	6	146
Better management of roadworks	4	153	4	145	4	162
Better management of unplanned delays such as accidents or breakdowns	5	150	6	131	3	175
Reduced journey times	6	145	5	135	5	159
Increased reliability of journey time	7	94	7	87	7	104
Better information about unplanned disruptions such as accidents	8	87	8	76	8	103
Better lighting on the network	9	56	9	56	9	56
Better notification to road users about future planned work	10	48	10	48	10	48
Better signage on the network	11	29	11	30	11	27
Better protection of the wider environment	12	26	12	30	12	22
Better maintained verges/roadside environment	13	20	13	24	14	15
Better data and phone connections on the network	14	16	14	16	13	16
Better facilities at roadside service areas/laybys	15	15	15	15	15	15
More provision of roadside service areas/laybys	16	14	16	15	16	13
Better journey planning tools	17	10	17	11	17	7

While priorities are broadly consistent regardless of the length of trip taken, those on a longer journey (of 10 miles or more) rank better behaved drivers as a lower priority for improvement and better management of unplanned delays as a higher priority (6th and 3rd respectively).

Base: All England car/van SRN users, 4578

Motorcyclists' priorities for improvement to the SRN by trip length

	TOTAL MOTORCYCLISTS		Short journeys <10 miles		Long journeys >10 miles	
	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index
Improved quality of road surfaces	1	647	1	627	1	675
Better behaved drivers	2	172	2	195	3	142
Safer design and upkeep of roads	3	151	3	148	2	154
Better management of roadworks	4	122	4	118	4	127
Reduced journey times	5	101	6	87	5	118
Better management of unplanned delays such as accidents or breakdowns	6	100	5	95	6	108
Increased reliability of journey times	7	69	7	70	8	68
Better information about unplanned disruptions such as accidents	8	69	8	63	7	77
Better notification to road users about future planned work	9	49	11	41	9	58
Better lighting on the network	10	48	9	62	11	29
Better protection of the wider environment	11	37	10	42	10	31
Better data and phone connections on the network	12	35	12	39	12	29
Better maintained verges/roadside environment	13	30	13	31	13	28
Better signage on the network	14	22	14	24	14	18
Better facilities at roadside service areas/laybys	15	18	15	21	15	14
More provision of roadside service areas/laybys	16	17	16	19	16	14
Better journey planning tools	17	14	17	17	17	11

The ranking of the priorities differs only marginally by trip length for motorcyclists.

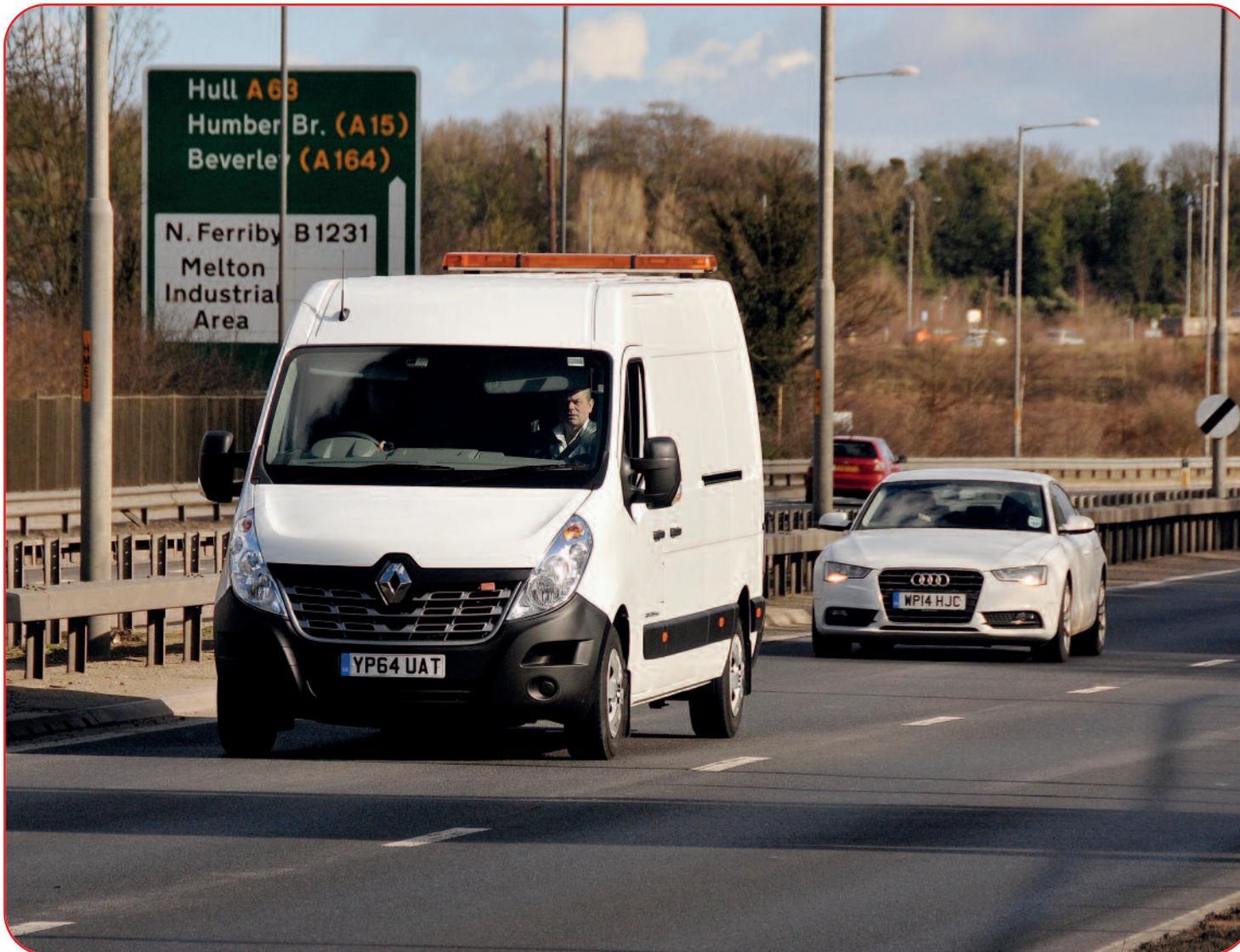
Base: All England motorcycle SRN users, 350

Car/van drivers' priorities for improvement to the SRN by disability

	TOTAL CAR/VAN		No long-term illness/health problem/disability		Long-term illness/health problem/disability	
	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index
Improved quality of road surfaces	1	476	1	463	1	551
Safer design and upkeep of roads	2	208	2	203	2	235
Better behaved drivers	3	155	3	154	3	160
Better management of roadworks	4	153	5	152	4	153
Better management of unplanned delays such as accidents or breakdowns	5	150	6	151	5	141
Reduced journey times	6	145	4	154	6	93
Increased reliability of journey time	7	94	7	98	8	71
Better information about unplanned disruptions such as accidents	8	87	8	88	7	82
Better lighting on the network	9	56	9	56	9	57
Better notification to road users about future planned work	10	48	10	50	10	38
Better signage on the network	11	29	11	28	11	31
Better protection of the wider environment	12	26	12	27	12	25
Better maintained verges/roadside environment	13	20	13	20	13	20
Better data and phone connections on the network	14	16	14	16	14	14
Better facilities at roadside service areas/laybys	15	15	15	16	15	13
More provision of roadside service areas/laybys	16	14	16	14	16	12
Better journey planning tools	17	10	17	10	17	5

Whether a driver has a long-term illness, health problem or disability has generally little impact on their views about priorities for improvement to the SRN. While the ranking on improved quality of road surfaces is the same for those with a long-term illness/health problem/disability than those without these difficulties, they rate it higher indicating it is more important to this group. They also show less concern with reducing journey times, sharing the overall 6th ranking for this aspect in comparison with drivers with no health issues who rank this 4th.

Base: All England car/van SRN users, 4578



The aspect of the SRN that car and van drivers most wish to see improved is "quality of road surfaces".

Overall top-of-mind improvements for car/van drivers

How the SRN could be improved for car and van users

	CAR/VAN SRN USERS TOTAL	Commuter	Business	Leisure
Better roads/road surfaces/less potholes/better quality roads	16%	17%	15%	15%
Less roadworks	10%	9%	15%	10%
More road capacity	9%	11%	7%	9%
Reduced/less traffic/reduce congestion/improve traffic flow	7%	9%	6%	6%
More information	6%	4%	7%	6%

Before road users answered questions on their priorities for improvement, we asked them how the experience of travelling on the SRN could be improved. This gave us their 'top-of-mind' responses. The top improvement highlighted is 'better roads and road surfaces'.

Q15 Overall, how do you think that the Highways Agency could improve the experience of travelling on the Strategic Road Network for you?

"I find some roads are very bumpy or get very icy at times and could have more time spent on sorting that out."

Female 25-34 Midlands

"Regular repairs to surfaces to avoid small holes becoming larger."

Male 45-54 North West

"Unfortunately the M25 is just a congested motorway due to the sheer volume of traffic using it."

Female 35-44 South East

"Listening to the service users and fixing the problems accordingly, to the convenience of the service users."

Female 25-44 M25

Base: All car/van drivers, 4578

Overall top-of-mind improvements for motorcyclists

How the SRN could be improved for motorcycle users

MOTORCYCLIST SRN USERS TOTAL	Commuter	Business	Leisure	
Better roads/road surfaces/less potholes/better quality roads	25%	17%	29%	30%
Reduced/less traffic/reduce congestion/improve traffic flow	7%	6%	7%	8%
Less roadworks	6%	8%	4%	5%
More road capacity	6%	5%	12%	5%
More information	4%	4%	0%	4%

Motorcycle motorway users also mention 'better roads and road surfaces' as their priority improvement; the sentiment around this change is much greater for this group than car/van drivers.

Q15 Overall, how do you think that the Highways Agency could improve the experience of travelling on the Strategic Road Network for you?

“Making the roads smoother and getting rid of all the potholes.”

Male 35-44 South East

“Better road maintenance – a motorcyclist feels far more poor surfaces than a car driver.”

Male 65-74 Midlands

“Employ someone who can monitor the overhead and roadside signs, and keep them up to date quickly.”

Male 55-59 M25

“Better traffic control measures at busy times using the hard shoulder to ease congestion.”

Male 25-34 North East

Improvements to local roads for car/van drivers

How local roads could be improved for car and van road users

	CAR/VAN SRN USERS TOTAL	Commuter	Business	Leisure
Better roads/road surfaces/less potholes/better quality roads	60%	56%	57%	64%
Reduced/less traffic/reduce congestion/improve traffic flow	6%	7%	5%	5%
More road capacity	5%	6%	4%	4%
More information	5%	4%	4%	5%
Less roadworks	3%	3%	6%	2%

Once respondents had completed their focus on the SRN, they were asked to identify how local roads could be improved. The most common area for improvement on local roads was identified as 'better roads and road surfaces'. The perceived importance of the improvement of roads and road surfaces is much higher on local roads than it is on the SRN.

Q17 Overall, how do you think that local roads (for example roads which are not part of the Strategic Road Network motorways and main A roads) could be improved?

"They need the potholes fixed and the height of the speed bumps needs to be checked in certain areas as there seems to be a lot of inconsistency."

Female 25-34 North West

"Potholes must be repaired. Road surfaces must be repaired properly, not just cosmetic work."

Female 65-74 M25

"Better managed roadworks. Try to avoid multiple location roadworks in the same town."

Male 65-74 South West

"All agencies should work together. Do not allow one to dig up there then 3 weeks later someone else digs up the same road."

Female 55-59 South East

Base: All car/van drivers, 4578

Improvements to local roads for motorcyclists

How local roads could be improved for motorcycle road users

MOTORCYCLIST SRN USERS TOTAL	Commuter	Business	Leisure
Better roads/road surfaces/less potholes/better quality roads	62%	59%	69%
Reduced/less traffic/reduce congestion/improve traffic flow	6%	5%	4%
More information	3%	2%	4%
More road capacity	2%	2%	3%
Less roadworks	1%	0%	1%

Again, 'better roads and road surfaces' was identified as the priority improvement, with 62 per cent of motorcyclists indicating this as the top improvement for local roads.

Q17 Overall, how do you think that local roads (for example roads which are not part of the Strategic Road Network motorways and main A roads) could be improved?

“Roads need to be constructed with better materials and methods that allow for a longer life.”

Female 25-34 Midlands

“Better maintenance – some road surfaces are shocking bordering on dangerous.”

Male 45-54 North West

“Many main roads need foundation upward rebuilding, not the top coat dressing currently being used and showing signs of failure within 6 months.”

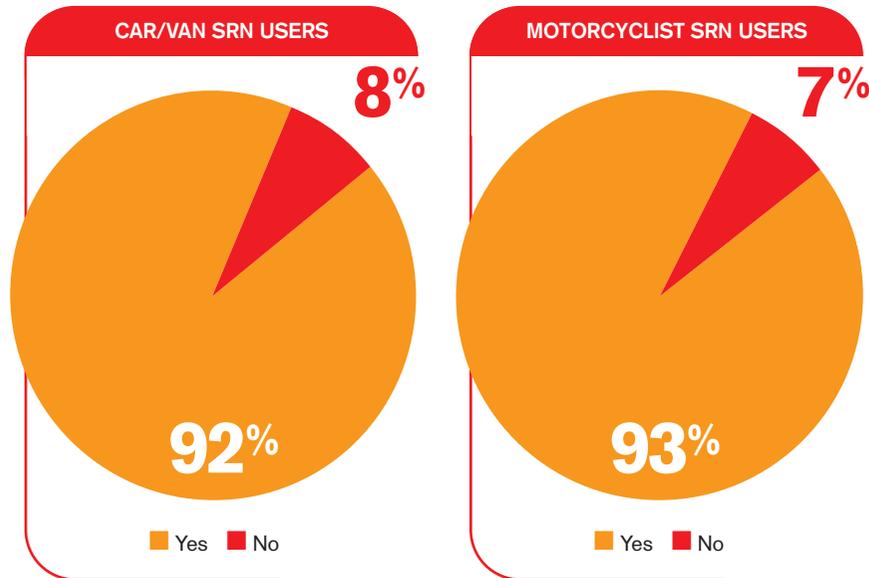
Male 55-59 South West

“Minimise disruption from roadworks by completing them more quickly.”

Female 25-34 South East

Awareness of Highways Agency

At the time of the research, the launch of Highways England had not taken place and therefore respondents were asked about awareness of the Highways Agency. Over nine in ten had heard of the Highways Agency.



Q18 Had you heard of the Highways Agency before this survey?

Q18 Base: All car/van drivers, 4578 / All motorcyclists, 350.

Q19 Base: All car/van drivers aware of Highways Agency, 4206 / All motorcyclists aware of Highways Agency, 320

Awareness of Highways Agency investment plans

	CAR/VAN	MOTORCYCLISTS
Have heard/seen a lot of information about the investment plans	4%	8%
Have heard/seen some information about the investment plans	18%	20%
Have heard/seen a little information about the investment plans	32%	35%
Have heard/seen nothing about the investment plans	46%	37%
All heard/seen at least a little information	54%	63%

Knowledge of future investment plans is fairly evenly split for car/van drivers, with 54 per cent aware of at least a little information and 46 per cent aware of nothing. More motorcyclists are aware of future investment plans (63 per cent). Among those aware, most claim to have heard/seen relatively little information.

Q19 And what, if anything, do you know about Highways Agency's investment plans for the future?

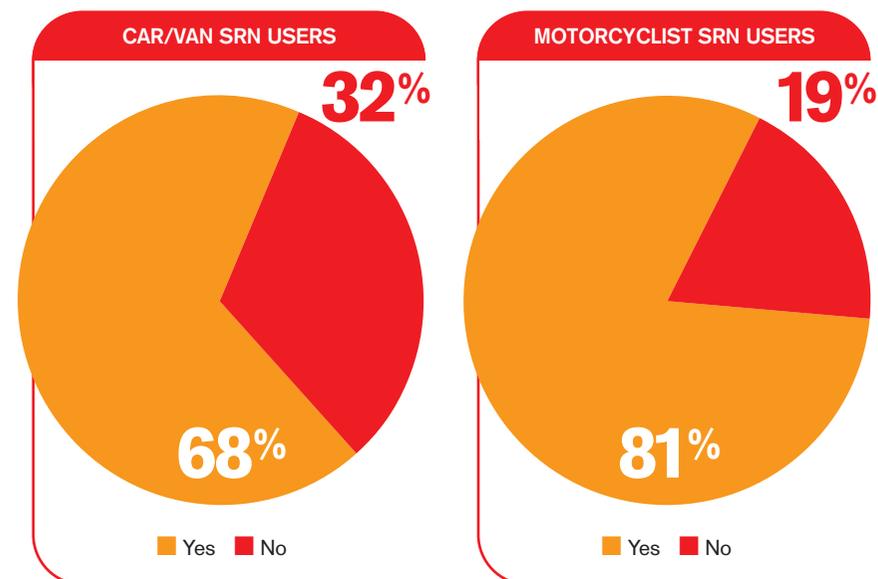
Expectations of Highways England

	CAR/VAN	MOTORCYCLISTS
Very important	16%	16%
Fairly important	57%	51%
Not very important	24%	29%
Not at all important	3%	3%
All important	72%	68%
All not important	28%	32%

SRN users believe it is important to know what Highways England is responsible for, with most saying it is fairly rather than very important to know. Similar proportions state it is important to know how to contact the organisation.

Q20a How important is greater awareness of what the Highways Agency is responsible for?

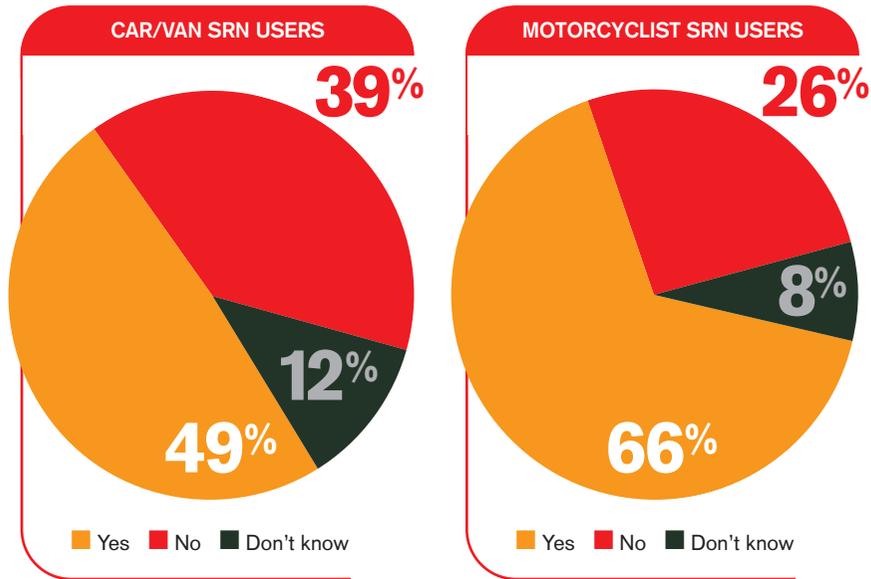
Awareness of smart motorways



The majority of SRN users are aware of smart motorways and this is significantly higher among motorcyclists.

Q21 Were you aware of smart motorways before taking part in this survey?

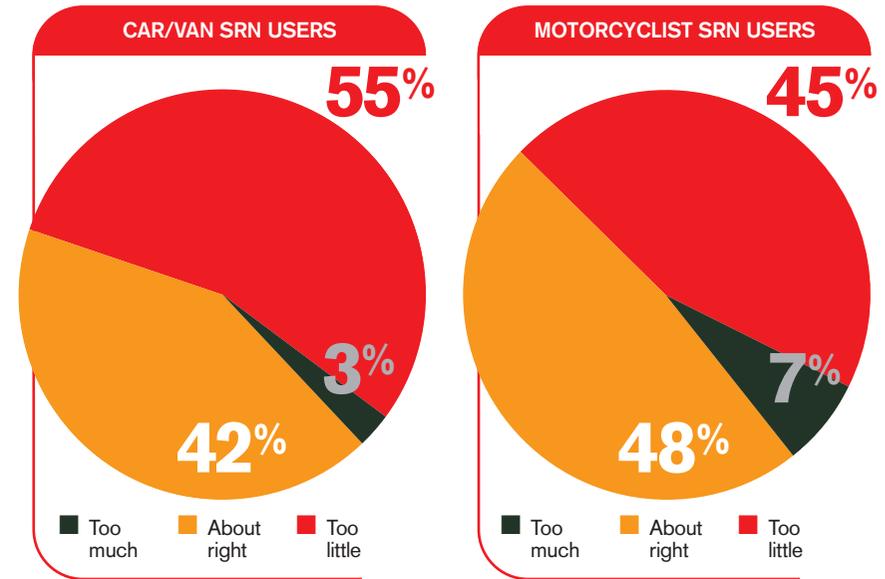
Smart motorway use



Around half of car and van drivers believed they had used a smart motorway rising to 66 per cent of motorcyclists.

Q22 And have you ever used a smart motorway?

Smart motorway information



Despite relatively high awareness of smart motorways, over half of car and van drivers and 45 per cent of motorcyclists believe there is too little information about smart motorways.

Q23 Do you think there is too much, too little or about the right amount of information about smart motorways?

Q22 and Q23 Base: All car/van drivers, 4578 / All motorcyclists, 350

User confidence and experience

Confidence on motorways	CAR/VAN	MOTORCYCLISTS
Very confident	56%	66%
Fairly confident	37%	30%
Not very confident	5%	4%
Not at all confident	1%	0%
All confident	94%	96%
All not confident	6%	4%

Confidence on main A roads	CAR/VAN	MOTORCYCLISTS
Very confident	66%	69%
Fairly confident	31%	27%
Not very confident	3%	3%
Not at all confident	0%	1%
All confident	97%	96%
All not confident	3%	4%

Most respondents were confident driving on motorways and A roads, more saying very, rather than fairly confident.

Q24a/b How confident are you as a driver on motorways/main A roads?

Q24a/b and Q25a/b Base: All car/van drivers, 4578 / All motorcyclists, 350

Experience on motorways	CAR/VAN	MOTORCYCLISTS
Very experienced	55%	65%
Fairly experienced	37%	30%
Not very experienced	7%	4%
Not at all experienced	1%	0%
All experienced	92%	96%
All not experienced	8%	4%

Experience on main A roads	CAR/VAN	MOTORCYCLISTS
Very experienced	69%	73%
Fairly experienced	28%	25%
Not very experienced	3%	2%
Not at all experienced	0%	0%
All experienced	97%	98%
All not experienced	3%	2%

Similarly, respondents felt they were experienced at driving on roads included within the SRN.

Q25a/b And how experienced would you say you are at driving on motorways/main A roads?

Appendix A

Other information

Mileage	CAR/VAN	MOTORCYCLISTS
Less than 2,500	12%	13%
2,500 – 4,999	10%	9%
5,000 – 7,499	22%	12%
7,500 – 9,999	13%	11%
10,000 – 19,999	32%	39%
20,000 – 29,999	6%	10%
30,000 – 49,999	2%	4%
50,000 or more	1%	2%
Don't know	2%	1%

Q26/7 Approximately how many miles would you say you drove (on any roads) in the last 12 months?

Vehicle used on any road	CAR/VAN	MOTORCYCLISTS
Bicycle	20%	43%
Car	100%	92%
Van	7%	15%
Motorcycle	4%	100%
Bus or coach	10%	11%
Taxi	8%	11%
Large or heavy goods vehicle	0%	1%
Other	1%	1%
More than one vehicle used	34%	91%

Q28a/b Which of the following do you ride/drive on any roads?

Long-term illness, health problem or disability	CAR/VAN	MOTORCYCLISTS
No long-term illness, health problems or disability	86%	88%
Limiting long-term illness, health problems or disability which does not affect ability to drive or travel	13%	11%
Long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits daily activities and can affect ability to drive or travel	2%	1%

Q32 Long-term illness, health problem or disability

Q26/27/Q28a/b and Q32 Base: All car/van drivers, 4578/ All motorcyclists, 350

Appendix B Methodology

An online panel was used to identify car, van and motorcycle road users who had driven on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in the last month. Fieldwork was carried out in March and April 2015 and we received a total of 4928 completed surveys (4578 completed with car or van road users and 350 with motorcycle road users).

We asked participants about their most recent journey on the SRN within the last month, and to identify the journey using a map of the SRN. Those that had not travelled on the SRN in the last month were not included in the survey. 17 improvement areas were presented in randomised batches of five and participants were asked to identify their highest and lowest priorities. Participants were asked to think specifically about their most recent SRN journey when making their selection.

To determine the rankings we used a statistical approach called Maximum Difference Scaling or 'MaxDiff'. This asked respondents to indicate their highest and lowest priority for improvement from lists of four statements. The results for road users were combined and analysed to produce ranking and index values. MaxDiff was used to make it easier for respondents to compare possible improvements against each other.

The data has been weighted to ensure that the results are representative of SRN road users in England (see Appendix C for more information).

Appendix C Weighting procedure

We weighted the data by four factors to correct any skews in the sample caused by varying response rates between road users. The four weighting factors were:

Journey purpose

Data from the Public Attitudes to Roads in England Wave 3 September 2013 was used to weight respondents into commuter (32 per cent), business (12 per cent), leisure (50 per cent) and other (6 per cent) by journey purpose.

Age

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) Opinions and Lifestyle Survey 2013 was used to weight respondents by the profile of those using the SRN in the last month: 16-24 (6.5 per cent), 25-44 (33.6 per cent), 45-64 (36.2 per cent), and 65+ (23.6 per cent)

Trip length

The Department for Transport in-vehicle GPS data was used to weight SRN journey length: under 10 miles (58 per cent) and 10 miles and above (42 per cent).

Region

The Office of National Statistics Opinions and Lifestyle Survey 2013 was used to weight respondents by region of residence for those using the SRN in the last month. North East (14 per cent), North West (16 per cent), Midlands (20 per cent), East (13 per cent), London/M25 (7 per cent), South East (18 per cent), South West (12 per cent).

In addition a telephone poll with a sample of 1000 was used to compare whether there were any differences in views between those with and without access to the internet. Differences were minimal.



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