



National Station Improvement Programme

Carmarthen Station - Final report

January 2010

Global reach, local knowledge.
Local focus. Worldwide strength. Multi-sector
experience. Multi-disciplinary expertise.
Faber Maunsell offers this all – delivering
outstanding solutions that help to create
a better world in which to work and live.

National Station Improvement Plan
Carmarthen Station Summary Report

Passenger Focus
April 2009

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	2
	1.1 Overview	2
	1.2 Report Layout	2
2	Methodology.....	4
	2.1 Questionnaire Design.....	4
	2.2 Fieldwork.....	4
	2.3 Additional Shifts	4
	2.4 Data Entry and Processing	5
	2.5 Response Rate and Respondents Profile	5
	2.6 Travel Habits.....	6
3	Analysis	8
	3.1 Journey to/from the Station	8
	3.2 Station Satisfaction	9
	3.3 Important Station Facilities.....	15
	3.4 Facilities in Need of Improvement.....	18
	Figure 1 Mode of transport to and from station	8
	Figure 2 Facilities deemed important.....	15
	Figure 3 Facilities desired	16
	Figure 4 Facilities in need of improvement	17

Introduction

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

Passenger Focus, Network Rail and the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) appointed Faber Maunsell to investigate passenger perceptions and satisfaction with the station environment and facilities at 25 stations across England and Wales. This study aims to provide evidence to establish the impact of the National Stations Improvement Programme (NSIP) by measuring and benchmarking the level of passenger satisfaction with the station environment prior to any improvement work taking place. NSIP is a government-sponsored programme providing £150 million of funding to support improvements at 150 category A-E¹ rail stations across England and Wales. A similar study will be repeated in 2009/2010 at the same stations after improvement works have been completed, to identify the elements of the improvement works that had the greatest impact on passenger satisfaction.

Twenty seven reports have been produced for this survey; one overall report, twenty five individual station reports and one summary report for the five Anglesey stations. This report summarises the data for Carmarthen station.

1.2 Report Layout

This report summarises the findings from the research undertaken at Carmarthen station prior to the implementation of NSIP. Following this introduction, **Chapter 2** discusses the methodology used in undertaking the 'before' surveys, **Chapter 3** reports on the findings of the survey and **Chapter 4** summarises the findings.

¹ National rail stations are categorised in six bands, broadly corresponding to their level of use. Major termini are found in category A, whilst unstaffed halts are found in category F.

Methodology

2 Methodology

2.1 Questionnaire Design

Faber Maunsell designed the questionnaire in conjunction with Passenger Focus, Network Rail and ATOC. The questionnaire identified which station the respondent was handed the questionnaire, whether each respondent was arriving, leaving or changing trains and the mode of travel to or from the station. Respondents were asked whether there was an alternative mode of travel they would like to use to access the station, what it was and what improvements would be needed for them to use this mode. Respondents were then asked to rate a number of station facilities and their overall satisfaction with the station, where they were handed the questionnaire. It is important to note that where respondents have expressed dissatisfaction with a facility that does not currently exist at the station, it may be because they feel such a facility should be provided. Respondents were then asked to indicate which facilities are important to them and which single new facility currently not available they would like to see at the station. They were then asked to rank existing facilities in need of improvement and whether they had noticed any improvement in the past year. General respondent profile and ticket information was also collected. A copy of the questionnaire can be seen in **Appendix A**.

2.2 Fieldwork

Self completion questionnaires were handed out to passengers at each station between 22nd November 2008 and 18th December 2008. Three six hour shifts were carried out at each station: one weekday morning shift 07:00-13:00; one weekday afternoon shift 13:00-19:00; and one Saturday shift 10:00-16:00.

Interviewers were provided with 210 questionnaires to hand out at each station over each six hour shift. This was possible at the busier stations but not at those stations with lower footfalls. On average around 160 questionnaires were handed out per shift. The questionnaires were handed out by trained interviewers, with pens and reply-paid envelopes.

Where possible, passengers were encouraged to return the completed questionnaires to interviewers, before boarding the train. If this was not practicable respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire at another time during the day and return it by post using the reply-paid envelope.

2.3 Additional Shifts

After completing three interviewer shifts at each station, the number of returned questionnaires at some stations was low. In order to boost the sample size at these stations, extra shifts, were conducted between the 15th and 19th December 2008. The additional shifts were all carried out over the morning peak. Interviewers were asked to start at 07.00 and continue until at least

10.00. Interviewers were asked to distribute 100 questionnaires at each of the stations.

Table 1 below highlights the number of shifts undertaken at Carmarthen station and the number of returned completed surveys.

Table 1 Number of shifts and returned questionnaires

Station	Initial shifts (230 surveys to be handed out per shift)	Number of completed surveys returned	Daily Patronage Figures ²	Approx. response rate
Carmarthen	3	76	447	17%

2.4

Data Entry and Processing

All questionnaires received by 7th January 2009 (2,117) were data entered by F1 Data Services. Each questionnaire was checked and allocated a unique serial number for identification purposes by Faber Maunsell before it was sent off for data entry. F1 Data Services coded questions where necessary and data entered the surveys into a fixed-column ASCII file. To ensure data quality, F1 Data Services entered the data twice (double entry) and compared the two files for verification. Questionnaires (97) received between 7th January and 16th January 2009 were data entered and coded in house and merged with the data set from F1 data services.

On receipt of the data file, Faber Maunsell created a syntax file which read the data into SPSS and checked the range, routing and logic of answers given by respondents. Checks included running frequency tables to ensure all responses were valid and all routing was correctly observed. In instances where data from linked questions was missing but could be deduced from subsequent questions syntax was written to cater for this. For example, if Q2 was blank but Q3 was answered, code 1 would be inserted at Q2. However, if it was not clear what the response should be, the data was cleared. For example if Q2 was blank but both Q3 and Q4 were answered the data for Q3 and Q4 would be cleared from the data set. For Q14 only comments accompanying a ranking have been reported. Any rankings numerically higher than three have been removed.

Once the checks on the data had been made, frequencies, cross tabulations and mean scores were run. As well as a data set for all responses, individual data sets were produced for each station. Due to the low sample size, a combined data set for the five Anglesey stations was also produced.

2.5

Response Rate and Respondents Profile

In total, 76 questionnaires were received from respondents at Carmarthen station; 48.0% of respondents were male and 52.0% female³. The highest

² Figures taken from Office of Rail Regulation website 2007 figures (data collated by Delta Rail)

³ N=50

proportion of respondents (27.9%⁴) was aged 16-25 followed by 22.1% aged 45-54. The majority of respondents (58⁵) did not have a disability. Two respondents had mobility impairments, one was a wheelchair user, five had hearing impairments, seven were visually impaired, three had a speech impediment, three had learning disabilities and one had another disability not listed on the questionnaire.

Just 35.1%⁶ of respondents used Carmarthen station at least once a week. The single most popular reason for using Carmarthen station was to visit friends and relatives and was chosen by 23.9%⁷ of respondents. This was followed in popularity by shopping and daily work commute, chosen by 19.7% and 18.3% of respondents respectively. The majority (41⁸) of respondents who responded to the questionnaire at Carmarthen were not travelling with any other adults, 17 were travelling with another adult, one with two other adults, three respondents were travelling with one child and one with two children.

2.6

Travel Habits

Table 2 Type of tickets used for journey at Carmarthen station

What type of ticket did you use for your journey?	Number of responses
Anytime single or return	21
Off-peak single or return	10
First class season ticket	2
Standard season ticket	11
Super off-peak saver return	4
Advance purchase	5
First advance purchase	2
One day travel-card	3
Freedom pass	1
Other	7

It can be seen from **Table 2** that out of the 67 respondents that answered the question 'What type of ticket did you use for your journey?' the majority used either an anytime single or returns (31.3% of respondents) or a standard season ticket (16.4% of respondents) or off-peak single or return (14.9% of respondents).

⁴ N=68

⁵ N=76

⁶ N=74

⁷ N=71

⁸ N=59

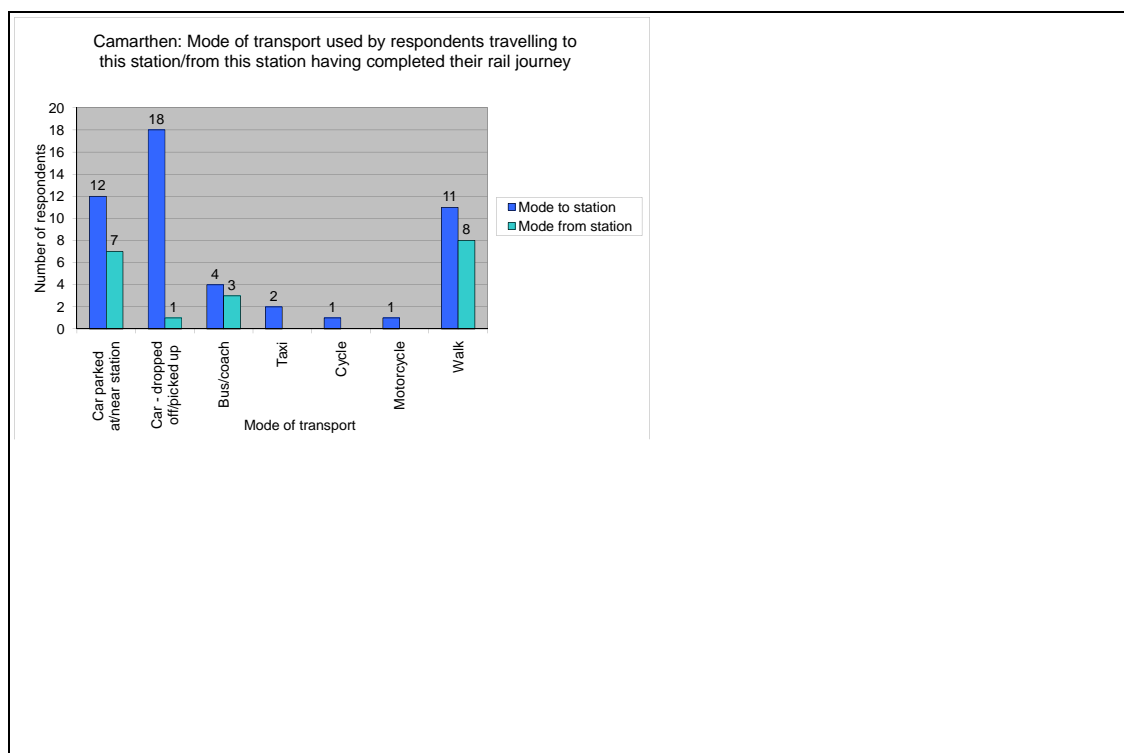
Analysis

3 Analysis

3.1 Journey to/from the Station

Most respondents (68.9%⁹) that completed the questionnaire at Carmarthen were arriving at the station whilst 27.0% were leaving and just 4.1% were changing between trains.

Figure 1 Mode of transport to and from station



It can be seen from **Figure 1** that over two thirds (36.7%¹⁰) of respondents questioned were dropped off by car at the station and a quarter of respondents (24.5%) parked their car at or near the station. Walking was also popular with 22.4% of respondents questioned accessing the station on foot. Amongst those who were leaving the station¹¹, it can be seen that 42.1% intended to walk and 36.8% had a car parked at or near the station.

Over half of the respondents did not feel that there was an alternative method of transport they would like to use to get to (56.7%) and from (54.2%) the station if circumstances were different. Amongst those that listed alternative methods of transport, the most popular method for both arriving at and leaving Carmarthen station was bus/coach, chosen by 45.8%¹² and 38.1%¹³ of

⁹ N=74

¹⁰ N=49

¹¹ N=19

¹² N=24

¹³ N=21

respondents. The most popular additional facilities/services to enable the use of alternative methods of transport were found to be more frequent bus/coach services (eight responses). Although few people cited car as an alternative to their current mode, parking spaces and cheaper parking were both chosen by seven respondents (out of a total of 72 multiple responses). Better connection timings between buses and trains (six responses), combined fares (five responses), and better location of bus stop (five responses) were all also popular.

3.2 Station Satisfaction

When asked, 'How satisfied are you with facilities at the station from a scale of 1-5, when 1 is very unsatisfied and 5 is very satisfied?' **Table 3** shows respondents at Carmarthen station were generally satisfied with:

- The ease of access on foot to the station entrance
- The availability of taxis
- The passenger information services
- Station areas

Respondents were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with:

- Car and bicycle parking
- Ease of drop off by car;
- Public transport availability
- Passenger facilities
- Safety and security at the station

Information received from the client showed there to be a car park and cycle storage at the station as well as a taxi rank; but no buses were available.

When asked, 'Thinking overall, how satisfied are you with this station from a scale of 1-10, when 1 is very unsatisfied and 10 is very satisfied? the mean level of satisfaction with Carmarthen station was found to be 6.49¹⁴ i.e. fairly satisfied.

Most (56.2%¹⁵) respondents questioned felt that over the past year Carmarthen station had stayed the same; 34.2% felt the station had got better and just 9.6% felt it had got worse. The main reasons given for these changes included:

- the installation of new ticket machines (noted by five respondents)
- a general smartening up of the station (noted by five respondents)

Most (77.6%¹⁶) respondents felt that there had not been any noticeable improvements to Carmarthen station over the past year.

¹⁴ N=70

¹⁵ N=73

¹⁶ N=67

Table 3 Station satisfaction

Facility	Very Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Very Dissatisfied (%)	Mean Score (1 to 5)
1. Car parking at the station						
The number of spaces	15.7	43.1	13.7	13.7	13.7	3.33
Car park security	11.8	41.2	31.4	11.8	3.9	3.45
2. Bicycle parking facilities						
The number of cycle parking facilities	9.1	22.7	36.4	27.3	4.5	3.05
The security of the cycle parking facilities	9.1	22.7	45.5	22.7	0.0	3.18
Cycle routes to and from the station	13.6	22.7	40.9	18.2	4.5	3.23
Protection from the weather	8.7	30.4	34.8	17.4	8.7	3.13
3. Ease of drop off by car:						
Secure and well-lit waiting area	12.3	52.6	19.3	10.5	5.3	3.56
Protection from the weather	3.4	37.9	29.3	22.4	6.9	3.09
Waiting area for cars picking up/drop off	3.4	42.4	28.8	18.6	6.8	3.17
4. Public transport availability						
Frequency of local buses serving the station	5.9	25.5	37.3	17.6	13.7	2.92
Information on the services available	7.8	31.4	31.4	19.6	9.8	3.08

Facility	Very Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Very Dissatisfied (%)	Mean Score (1 to 5)
Ease of getting to the bus stop	14.3	34.7	34.7	14.3	2.0	3.45
Overall	4.0	32.0	36.0	18.0	10.0	3.02
5. Availability of taxis						
Signage	8.8	61.4	21.1	3.5	5.3	3.65
Queuing arrangements	5.5	67.3	20.0	1.8	5.5	3.65
Overall	7.4	59.3	25.9	3.7	3.7	3.63
6. Ease of access on foot to station entrance:						
Lighting	15.2	65.2	13.6	6.1	0.0	3.89
Signage	15.4	67.7	12.3	4.6	0.0	3.94
Safe walking route	13.4	67.2	10.4	6.0	3.0	3.82
Overall	13.8	64.6	15.4	4.6	1.5	3.85
7. Passenger information services:						
Direction signs to the station	11.1	63.9	16.7	6.9	1.4	3.76
Direction signs to find your way around the station	18.1	72.2	2.8	6.9	0.0	4.01
Electronic departure boards	21.9	64.4	5.5	8.2	0.0	4.00
Visibility of electronic departure boards	17.1	67.1	10.0	5.7	0.0	3.96
Up to date timetable posters	11.8	66.2	14.7	5.9	1.5	3.81

Facility	Very Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Very Dissatisfied (%)	Mean Score (1 to 5)
Provision of real time information screen displays	17.4	58.0	15.9	7.2	1.4	3.83
Visibility of real time information screen displays	20.3	58.0	17.4	2.9	1.4	3.93
Local area information e.g. places of interest, maps, direction to buses	7.6	42.4	34.8	12.1	3.0	3.39
Audibility of public-address announcements	16.7	63.9	15.3	1.4	2.8	3.90
Information on where to buy your ticket(s)	17.1	65.7	12.9	4.3	0.0	3.96
Information on the different types of fares	10.1	42.0	24.6	15.9	7.2	3.32
Information on what to do if the ticket office is closed/ticket machines not working	6.6	29.5	37.7	11.5	14.8	3.02
8. Passenger facilities:						
Appearance of booking office	12.7	52.1	28.2	7.0	0.0	3.70
Availability of seating on platforms	9.6	35.6	19.2	28.8	6.8	3.12
Availability of shelter on platforms e.g. a canopy	11.1	61.1	13.9	12.5	1.4	3.68
Condition of shelter on platforms	9.7	58.3	16.7	13.9	1.4	3.61

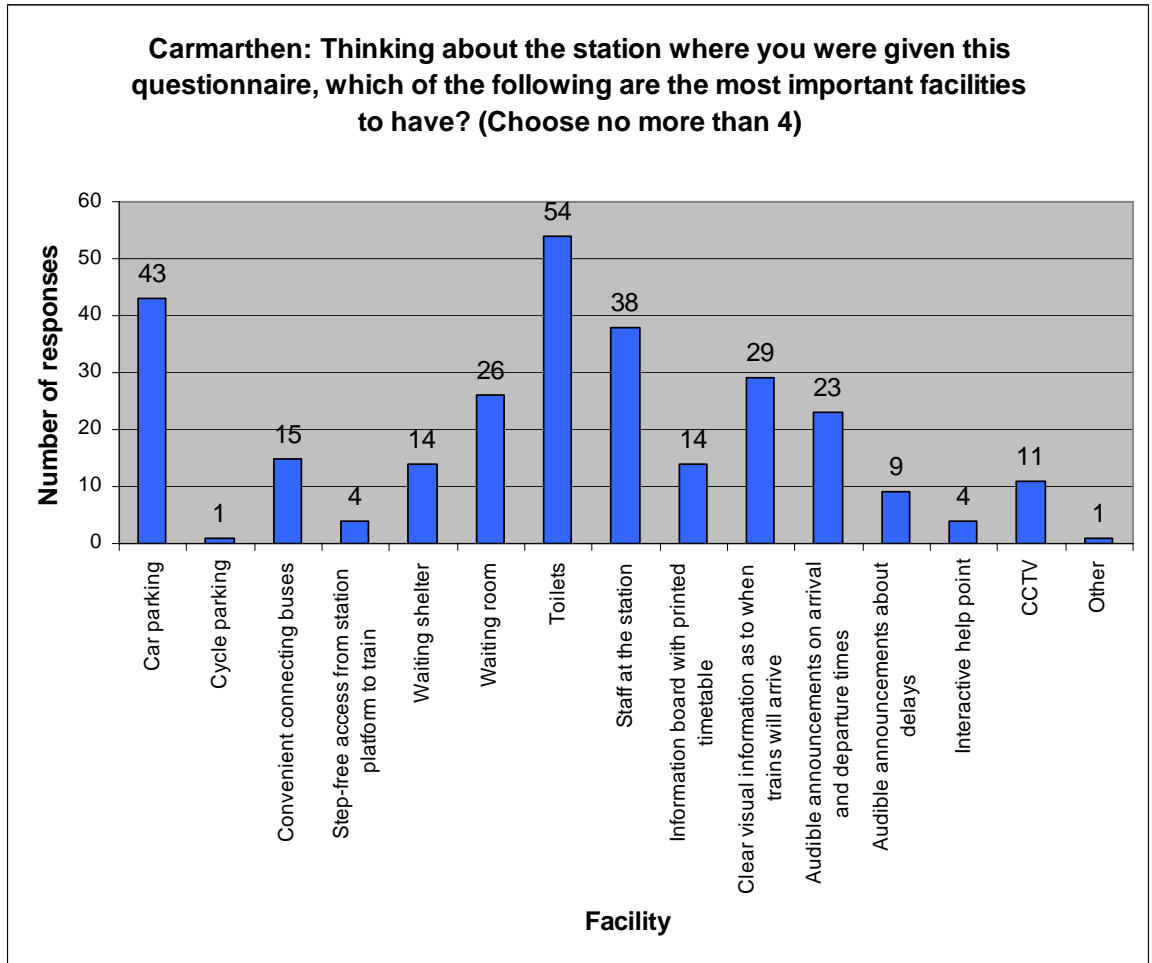
Facility	Very Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Very Dissatisfied (%)	Mean Score (1 to 5)
Availability of waiting rooms	11.4	48.6	20.0	20.0	0.0	3.51
Security of waiting rooms	6.9	47.2	29.2	15.3	1.4	3.43
Lighting in waiting rooms	10.1	59.4	21.7	7.2	1.4	3.70
Heating in waiting rooms	10.3	38.2	30.9	19.1	1.5	3.37
Availability of toilets	14.3	55.7	18.6	8.6	2.9	3.70
Condition of toilets	9.7	29.2	20.8	20.8	19.4	2.89
Availability of platform seating	12.5	34.7	19.4	26.4	6.9	3.16
Condition of platform seating	11.3	42.3	22.5	21.1	2.8	3.38
Refreshment facilities	13.9	56.9	18.1	4.2	6.9	3.67
Retail outlets (newsagents etc.)	8.5	47.9	25.4	12.7	5.6	3.41
Public telephones	11.7	41.7	31.7	10.0	5.0	3.45
Availability of rubbish bins	11.1	38.9	31.9	15.3	2.8	3.40
Clocks	9.9	47.9	26.8	14.1	1.4	3.51
9. Station areas						
Main station entrance/exits	11.1	72.2	11.1	5.6	0.0	3.89
Other entrance points/walking routes to platforms	7.6	75.8	9.1	7.6	0.0	3.83
Ticket office/sales points	15.1	67.1	15.1	1.4	1.4	3.93

Facility	Very Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Very Dissatisfied (%)	Mean Score (1 to 5)
Platforms	15.3	68.1	11.1	5.6	0.0	3.93
Subways	22.7	45.5	27.3	4.5	0.0	3.86
Footbridges	14.7	58.8	17.6	2.9	5.9	3.74
Lifts	23.5	23.5	41.2	0.0	11.8	3.47
Escalators	21.1	31.6	31.6	0.0	15.8	3.42
Track bed free from litter and vegetation	6.2	44.6	35.4	9.2	4.6	3.38
Areas around platforms free from litter/unwanted vegetation	6.1	65.2	24.2	3.0	1.5	3.71
Flower beds/vegetation	8.9	35.6	33.3	20.0	2.2	3.29
10. Safety and security						
Number of visible staff in the daytime	5.7	61.4	28.6	4.3	0.0	3.69
Number of visible staff after dark	1.8	52.7	16.4	23.6	5.5	3.22
Level of CCTV provision	3.8	41.5	45.3	3.8	5.7	3.34
Station lighting	9.2	69.2	15.4	3.1	3.1	3.78
Provision of Help Points	5.4	48.2	30.4	14.3	1.8	3.41
Location of Help Points	3.5	47.4	29.8	15.8	3.5	3.32

3.3

Important Station Facilities

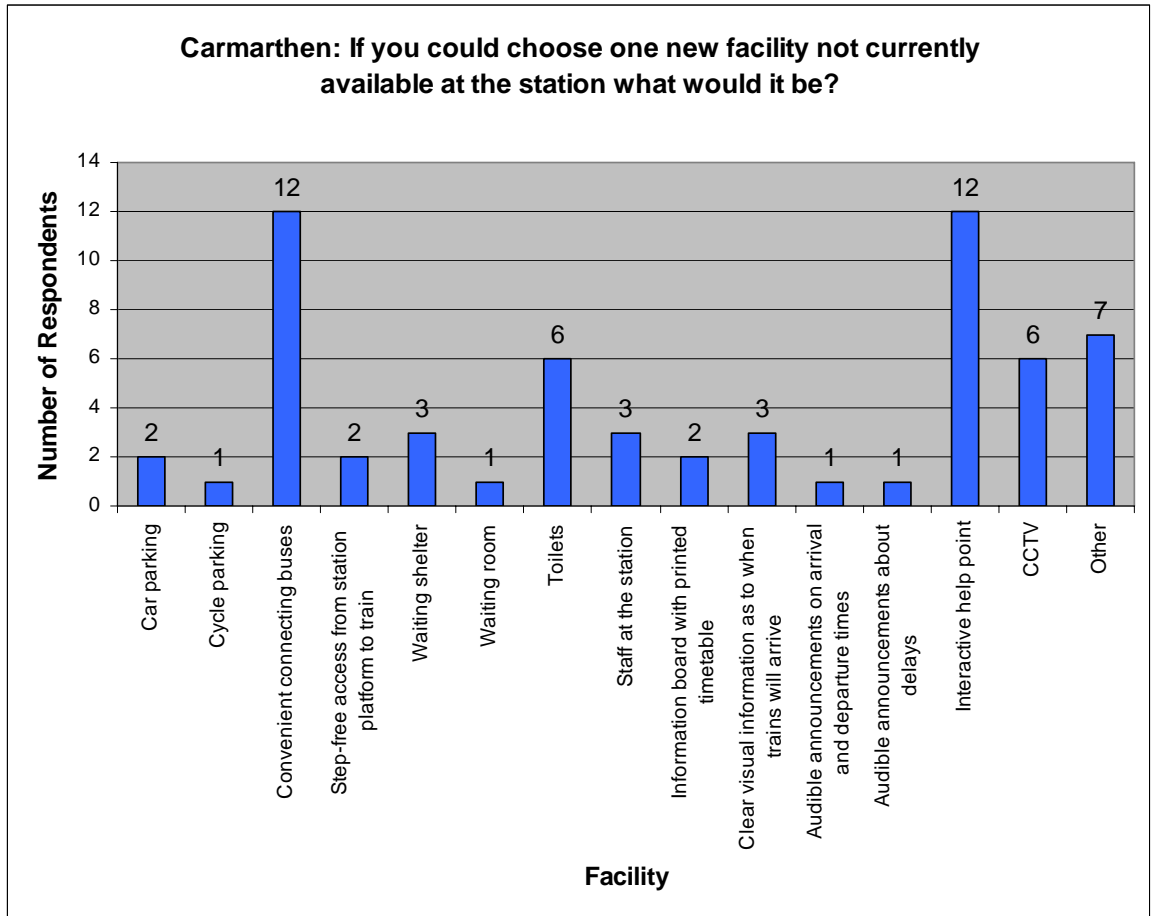
Figure 2 Facilities deemed important



Respondents were asked to select from a list up to four facilities they feel it is important to have at their station. Out of the 286 responses to the question ‘Thinking about where you were given this questionnaire, which of the following are the most important facilities to have?’ **Figure 2** shows the top three important facilities were:

- Toilets (chosen by 54 respondents)
- Car parking (chosen by 43 respondents)
- Staff at the station (chosen by 38 respondents)

Figure 3 Facilities desired

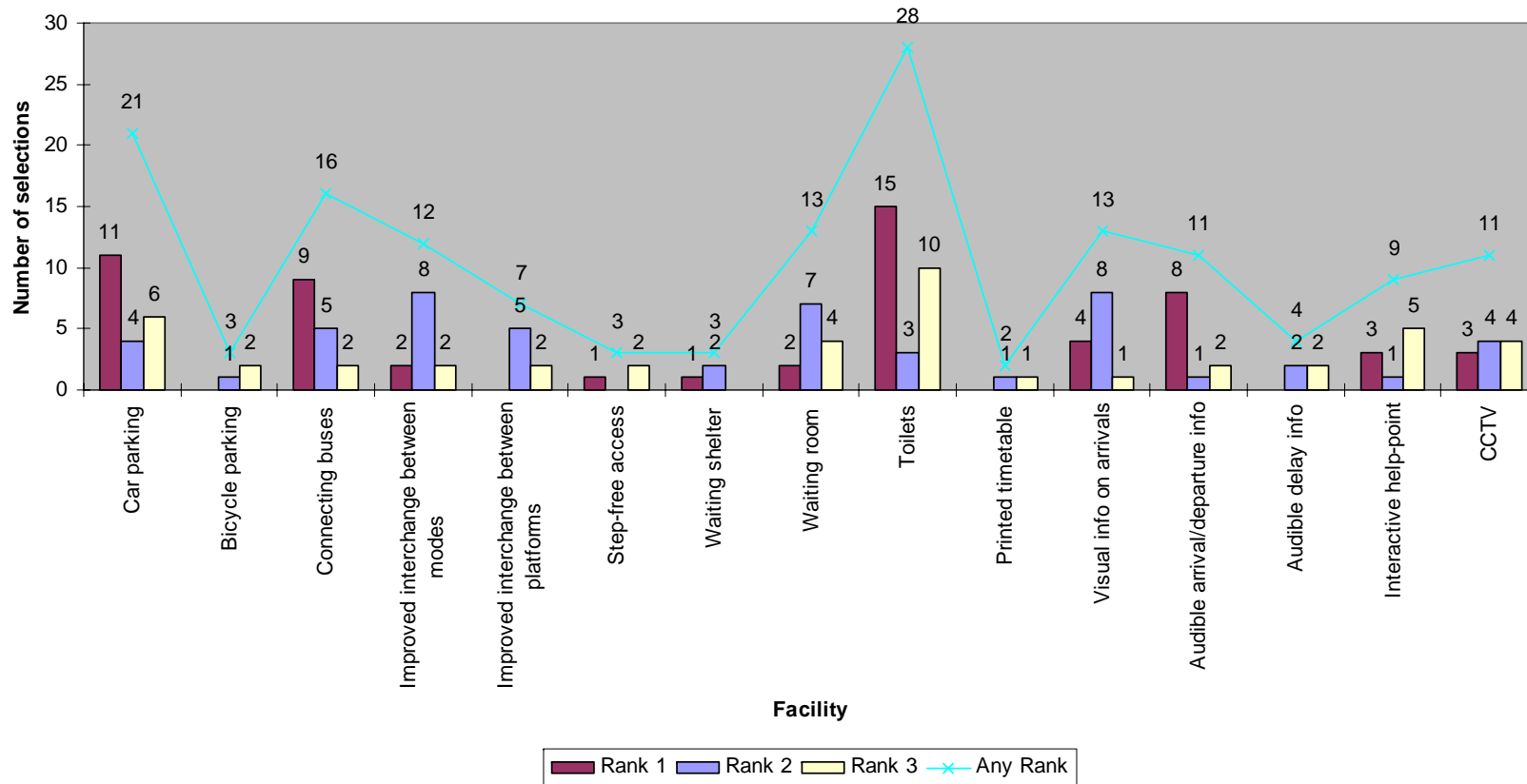


Respondents were asked to choose from a list which single facility not currently available at their station they would like to see added. It can be seen from **Figure 3** that convenient connecting buses and an interactive help point, each chosen by 19.4%¹⁷ of respondents, were the two most popular facilities wanted by respondents at Carmarthen station. These were followed in popularity by ‘other’ facilities (11.3%), toilets (9.7%) and CCTV (9.7%). ‘Other’ facilities included requests for better access for pushchairs/wheelchairs, a shop, a bigger restaurant and more seating.

¹⁷ N=62

Figure 4 Facilities in need of improvement

Carmarthen: 'Of the existing facilities at the station you were given this questionnaire, please rank your top three facilities in need of improvement (with 1 being the most important, 2 being 2nd most important and 3 being third most important)?'



3.4 Facilities in Need of Improvement

Respondents were asked to rank the top three facilities in need of improvement at the station where they were given their questionnaire and to state why. It can be seen from **Figure 4** that overall the most ranked facility in need of improvement at Carmarthen was:

- Toilets (ranked by 28 respondents)

Comments made about toilets were that they are unpleasant.

This was followed in need of improvement by:

- Car parking (ranked by 21 respondents)
- Convenient connecting buses (ranked by 16 respondents)

Car parking was felt by respondents to be insufficient, too far from the station and unsafe, whilst connecting buses were felt to be too infrequent, unreliable and not integrated with train services.

Amongst respondents questioned, facilities that were most likely to be ranked first in terms of need of improvement were:

- Toilets (ranked first by 15 respondents)
- Car parking (ranked first by 11 respondents)
- Convenient connecting buses (ranked first by nine respondents)

Amongst facilities deemed to be of second greatest importance, those that were ranked by the greatest number of respondents included:

- Improved interchange facilities for connecting modes of transport (ranked second by eight respondents)
- 'Clear visual information as to when trains will actually arrive (ranked second by eight respondents)
- The waiting room (ranked second by seven respondents).

Finally, the facilities most likely to be ranked of third greatest importance in terms of need of improvement were:

- Toilets (ranked third by ten respondents)
- Car parking (chosen by six respondents)
- An interactive help point (chosen by five respondents)



© 2010 Passenger Focus

Passenger Focus
FREEPOST (RRRE-ETTC-LEET)
PO Box 4257
Manchester
M60 3AR

0300 123 2350
www.passengerfocus.org.uk
info@passengerfocus.org.uk

Passenger Focus is the operating
name of the Rail Passengers Council