



# Cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians:

measuring satisfaction with journeys on  
Highways England's network in the  
West Midlands, Berkshire and Hampshire  
September 2019

**Cyclist, pedestrians and equestrians:** measuring satisfaction with journeys on Highways England's network in the West Midlands, Berkshire and Hampshire



# Foreword

*The research presented here is a continuation of work to understand the experiences of cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians who make journeys which interact with Highways England's roads.*

**T**ransport Focus represents the interests of all users of the motorways and major 'A' roads managed by Highways England. The research presented here is a continuation of work to understand the experiences of cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians who make journeys which interact with Highways England's roads. It looks specifically at these two areas: the West Midlands, and Berkshire and Hampshire. Transport Focus has previously undertaken similar research in the North West and the East Midlands.

The research reiterates much of what had been found previously. For example:

- while cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians would rather not have to use motorways and major 'A' roads they sometimes have no option

- high levels of satisfaction to some extent mask relatively low expectations
- safety and personal security is of paramount importance.

Transport Focus will use the findings in its continuing discussions with Highways England about improving the service provided to these road users. In addition, Transport Focus continues to discuss with the Department for Transport how satisfaction with journeys made by cyclists and pedestrians will be measured from 2020 to 2025.

**Anthony Smith**

Chief Executive

## Key findings

Cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians want more done to develop routes that are segregated from traffic, saying that in an ideal world they would not need to interact with the Highways England network. Therefore, journeys on these routes are often made only when there is no alternative.

Although cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians each have specific needs when using Highways England's roads, they share common areas of concern. Primarily these road users are concerned about their safety while

making a journey, in terms of both protection from injury and personal security. Whether routes feel safe to cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians, including bridges, underpasses and crossings, is a key determining factor in how satisfied they are with their journeys. Other factors are also important, specifically those relating to the general environment (such as litter, traffic volume, signage and lighting), the space afforded to them and the quality of surfaces. The general experience of using Highways England's network, as it concerns each of the audiences involved in this research, is as follows:



### Cyclists

Those who cycle do so to commute or for leisure and fitness. Cyclists who use Highways England's network are concerned about surface quality and being able to access paths intended for them. They would like to see more (and continuous) segregated cycle lanes, although they generally feel that changing the network to meet cyclists' needs doesn't seem to be a priority for Highways England. Cyclists think that efforts should be made to control the speed of traffic on the roads which they use, and that a more 'cycle-friendly' culture should be encouraged.



### Pedestrians

People tend to choose to walk either for leisure or when a journey would be made more efficiently on foot than by car. Pedestrians who make journeys which interact with Highways England's network are concerned about infrastructure as it relates to their personal safety and security. For example, they would like crossing points, underpasses and bridges to feel safe to use, and for there to be greater awareness of isolated locations where crime is a problem.



### Equestrians

Equestrians will make journeys on or across Highways England's network for very specific reasons. Firstly, to train horses and to exercise the animals on a harder surface (vital for muscle strength), and secondly to get to open fields or bridleways. The sensitivity of the horse and the vulnerability of the rider means that safety is of key importance to these road users.

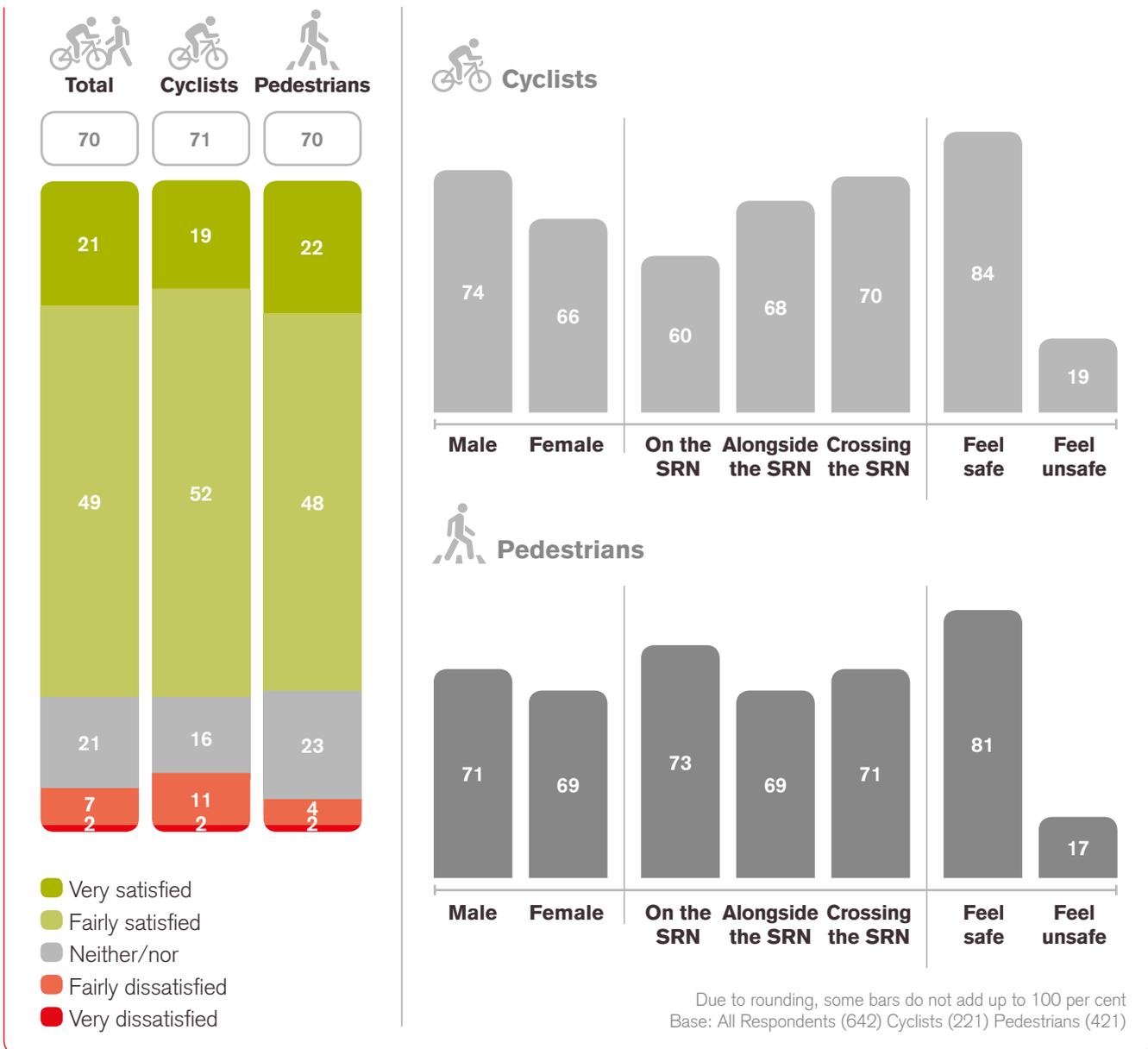
# Overall satisfaction

The survey found satisfaction among cyclists and pedestrians to be relatively high in relation to the part of their journey on a Highways England road. In part this is because cyclists and pedestrians are realistic about the degree to which Highways England's network is designed to cater for their needs. 71 per cent of cyclists and 70 per cent of pedestrians using the network in the West Midlands

study say that they are satisfied, as do 69 per cent of cyclists and 71 per cent of pedestrians in the Berkshire and Hampshire study.

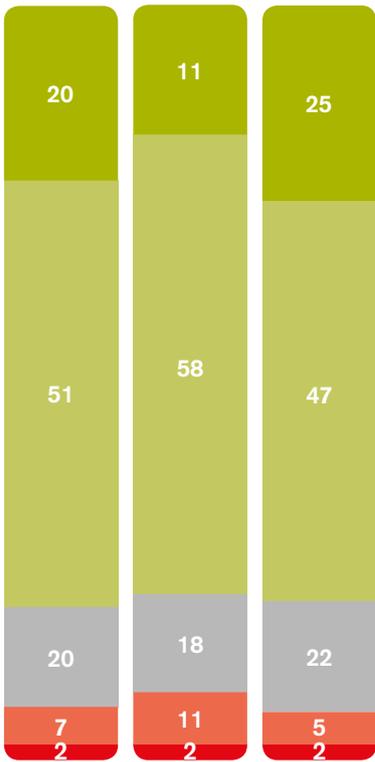
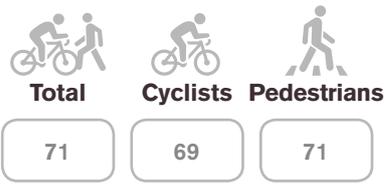
In each case, those who report that they feel safe during this part of the journey are significantly more likely than others to say that they are satisfied.

## Overall satisfaction of journey (%) – West Midlands



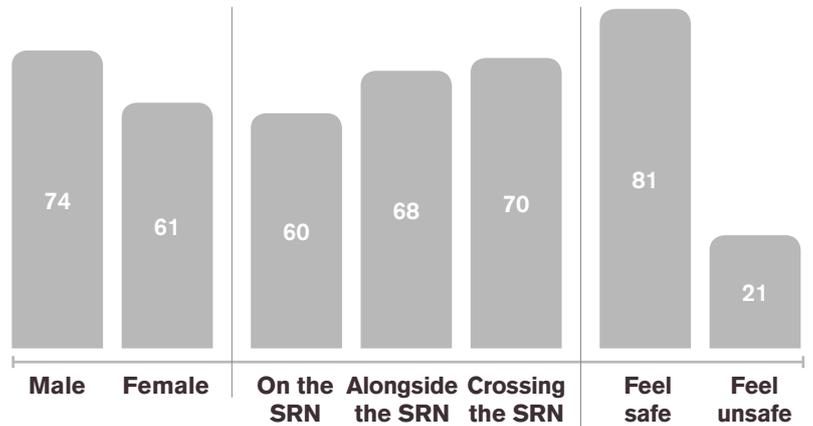
**Cyclist, pedestrians and equestrians:** measuring satisfaction with journeys on Highways England's network in the West Midlands, Berkshire and Hampshire

**Overall satisfaction of journey (%)** – Berkshire and Hampshire

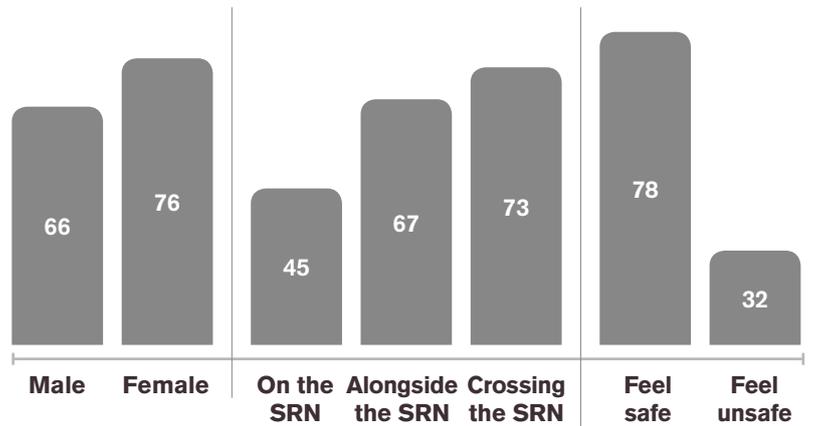


- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither/nor
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

**Cyclists**



**Pedestrians**

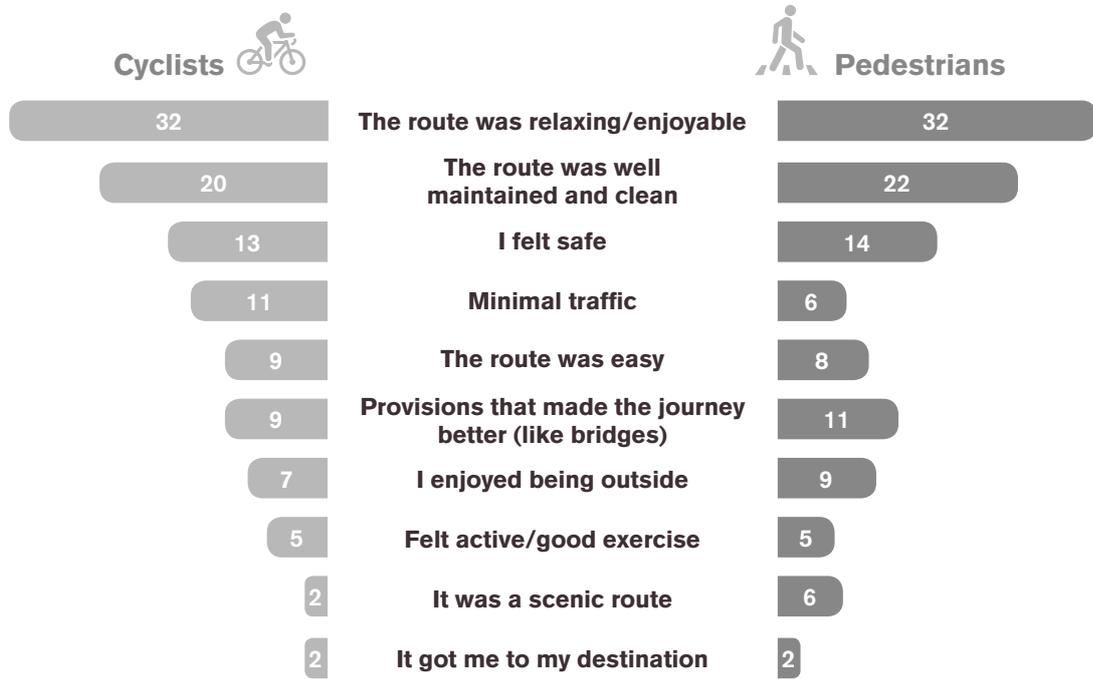


Due to rounding, some bars do not add up to 100 per cent  
Base: All Respondents (624) Cyclists (224) Pedestrians (400)

When asked for the reason why they are satisfied, both cyclists and pedestrians are most likely to comment that this was because the route was relaxing, well-maintained and clean, and because they feel safe when making the journey.



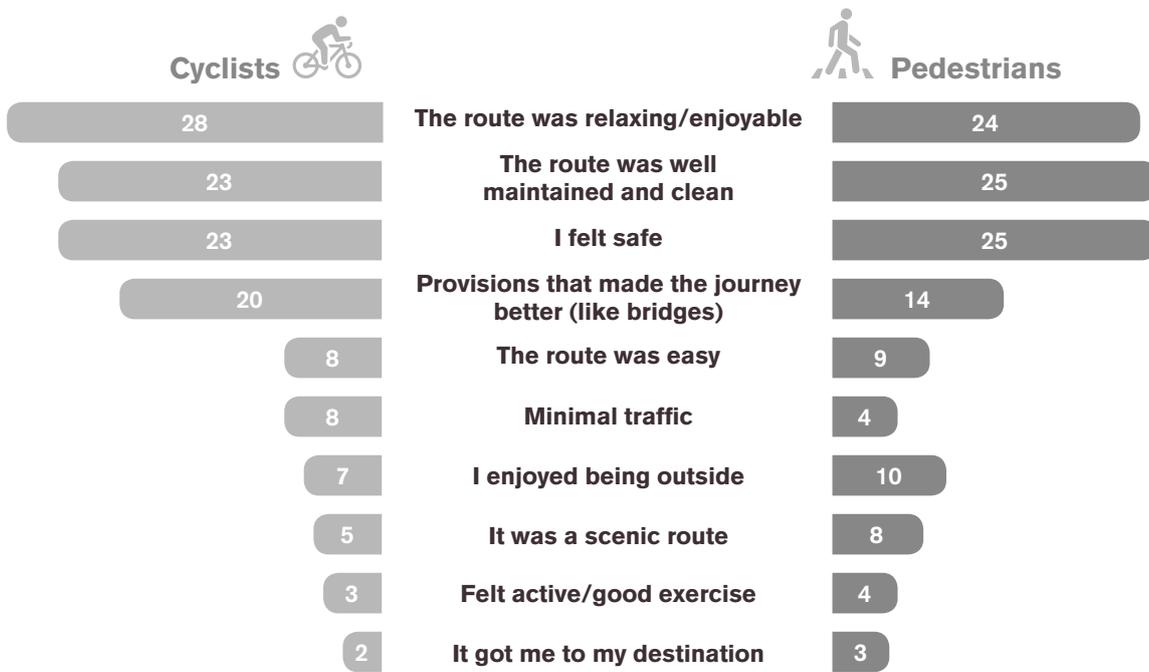
**Reasons for overall satisfaction of journey (% mentioned unprompted) – West Midlands**



Ordered by cyclist high to low

Due to rounding, some bars do not add up to 100 per cent  
Base: All Respondents (642) Cyclists (221) Pedestrians (421)

**Reasons for overall satisfaction of journey (% mentioned unprompted) – Berkshire and Hampshire**



Ordered by cyclist high to low

Due to rounding, some bars do not add up to 100 per cent  
Base: All Respondents (624) Cyclists (224) Pedestrians (400)

### The route was relaxing/enjoyable

"Left the car and enjoyed walking for a change – no problems happened"

Pedestrian, West Midlands

"Enjoyed riding alone to clear my head. Felt refreshed and rejuvenated afterwards"

Cyclist, West Midlands

"I was satisfied because it was a relaxed trip that allowed me to take in the scenery"

Cyclist, Berkshire and Hampshire

"It was a pleasant environment to walk through – both urban and rural; safe for pedestrians"

Pedestrian, Berkshire and Hampshire

### The route was well maintained and clean

"It's a fairly safe road not a lot of traffic on it and it's pretty well maintained"

Cyclist, West Midlands

"The pavement was clean and tidy. It wasn't very busy so it was easy to walk. I felt safe and didn't feel like any harm would come to me"

Pedestrian, West Midlands

"The path was well maintained and safe for pedestrians"

Pedestrian, Berkshire and Hampshire

"Where there were cycle paths, they were well maintained. Many of the roads themselves fairly easy to navigate"

Cyclist, Berkshire and Hampshire

### I felt safe

"Felt safe, plenty of space, good road conditions"

Cyclist, West Midlands

"It was a pleasant walk where I felt safe and at ease"

Pedestrian, West Midlands

"The path is wide and safe. The railings along the bridge are in good condition and you can look down onto the motorway safely"

Pedestrian, Berkshire and Hampshire

"Both the overpass and the underpass took the B roads well clear of any traffic and felt very safe"

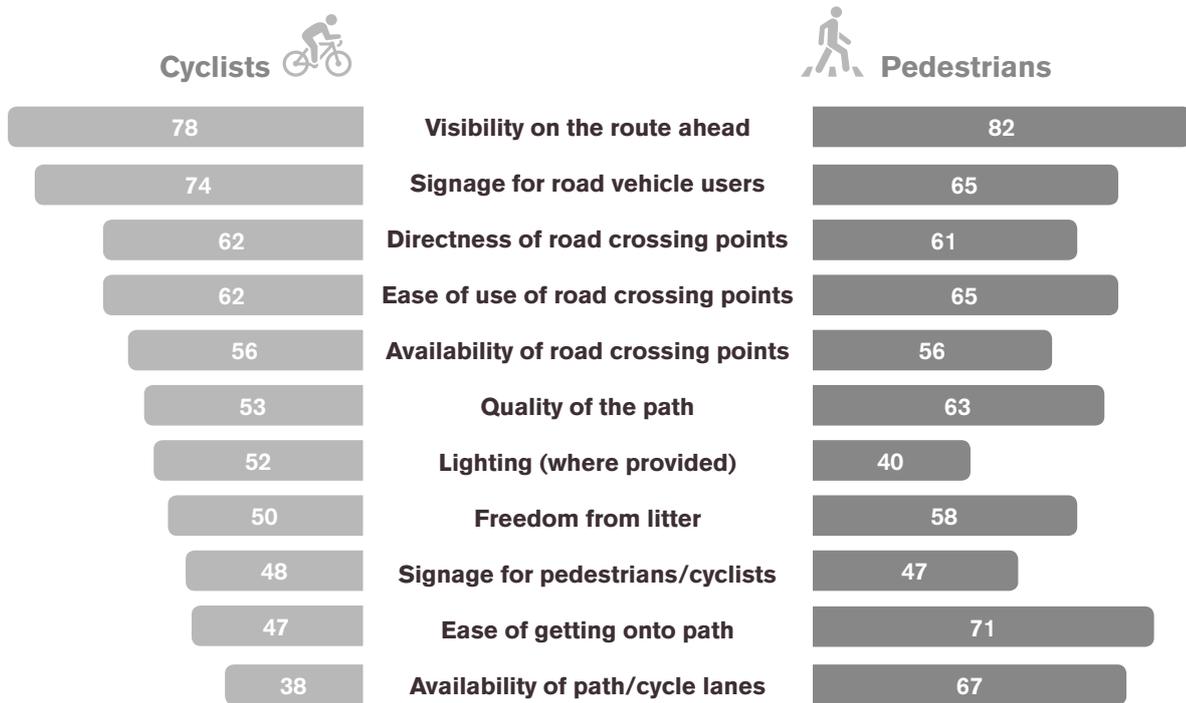
Cyclist, Berkshire and Hampshire

## Rating individual aspects of the route

For cyclists in both areas, visibility of the road ahead, signage for road vehicle drivers and the ease and directness of road crossing points are rated more highly than other aspects of the route. In contrast, these road users are less happy about the availability of a path for them to use.

Pedestrians, like cyclists, rate the visibility of the road ahead relatively highly, but tend to be happier than cyclists with the availability and ease of accessing any path that is provided. Pedestrians rate lighting, signage for pedestrians, and the availability of road crossing points lower than they do other aspects of their journey.

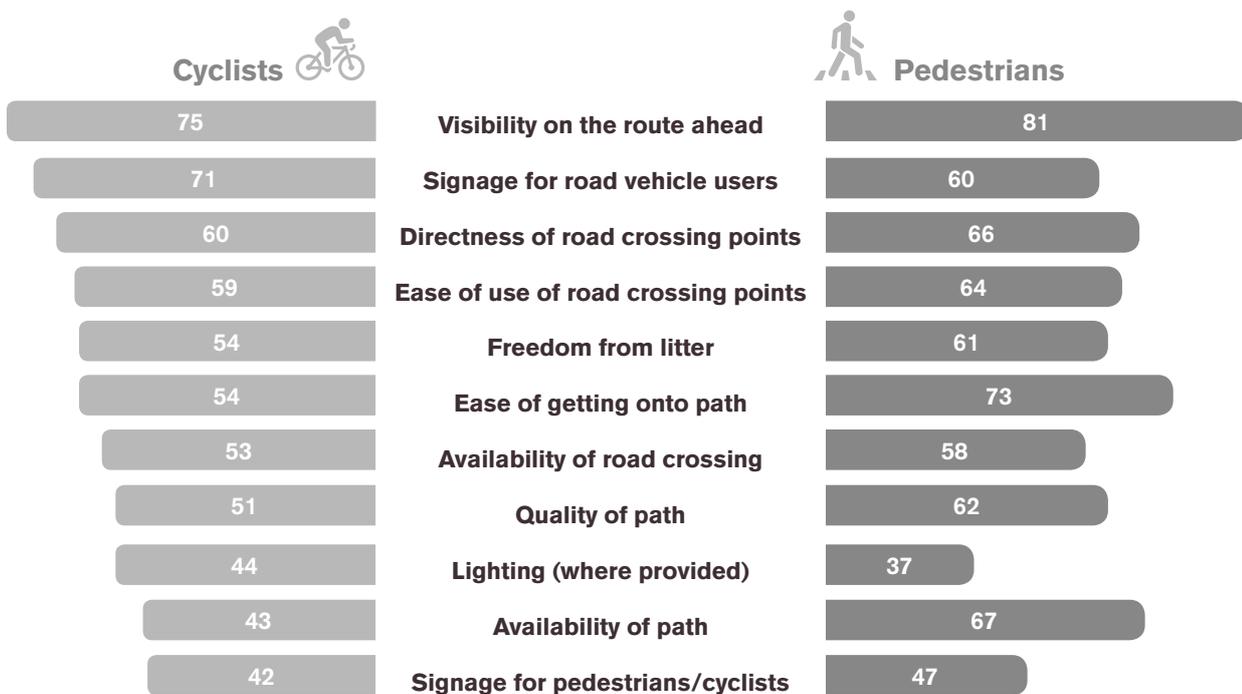
**Satisfaction with aspects of the SRN (% very/fairly satisfied) – West Midlands**



Ordered by cyclist high to low

Base: All Respondents (642) Cyclists (221) Pedestrians (421)

**Satisfaction with aspects of the SRN (% very/fairly satisfied) – Berkshire and Hampshire**



Ordered by cyclist high to low

Base: All Respondents (624) Cyclists (224) Pedestrians (400)

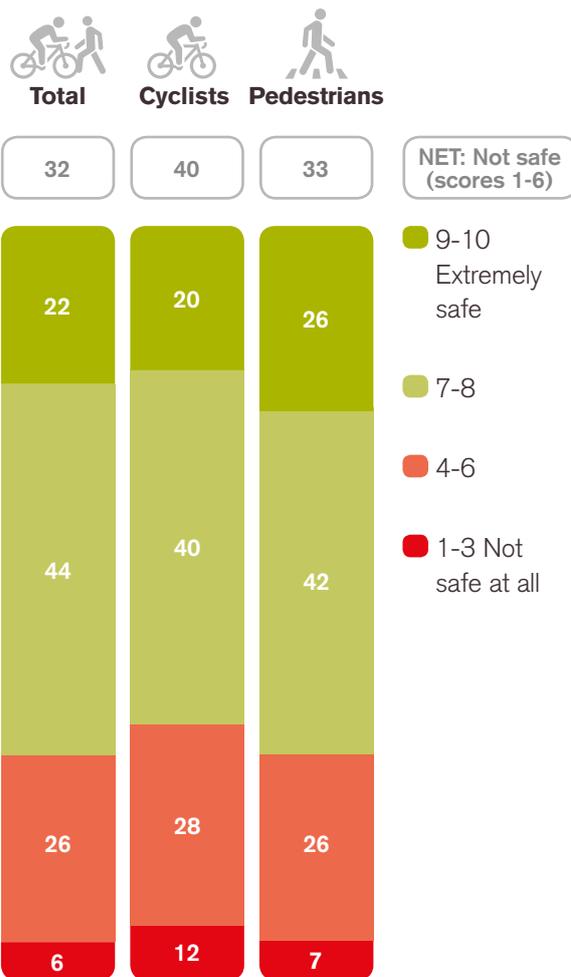
## Feeling safe

Cyclists are significantly less likely than pedestrians to feel safe on a journey which interacts with the Highways England network. Among both cyclists and pedestrians who report feeling unsafe, this is generally due to the proximity and speed of nearby traffic.

For pedestrians, personal security is a particular concern. Among those in the West Midlands study, pedestrians are more likely than cyclists to say that they feel unsafe because the area is secluded.

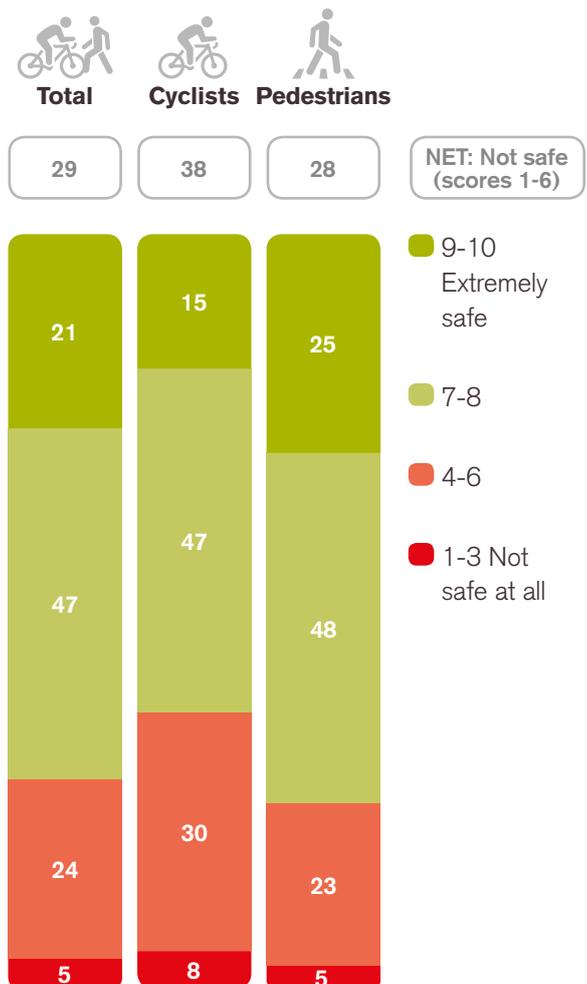


**Felt safe overall (%) – West Midlands**



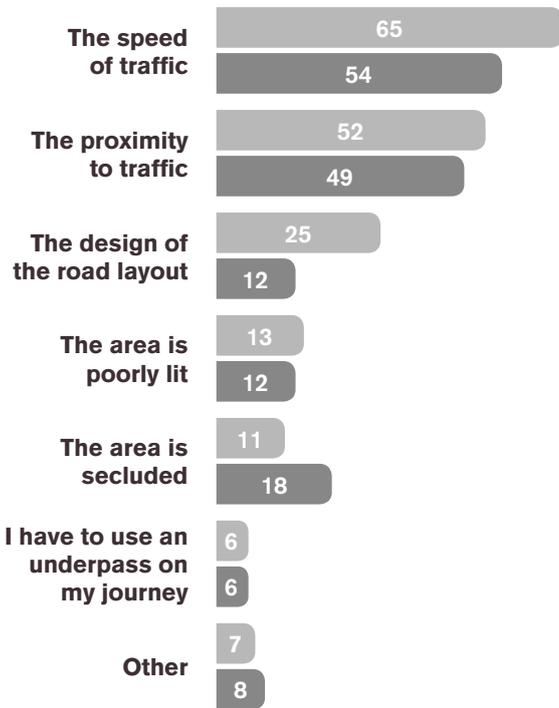
Base: All Respondents (642) Cyclists (221) Pedestrians (421)

**Felt safe overall (%) – Berkshire and Hampshire**



Base: All Respondents (624) Cyclists (224) Pedestrians (400)

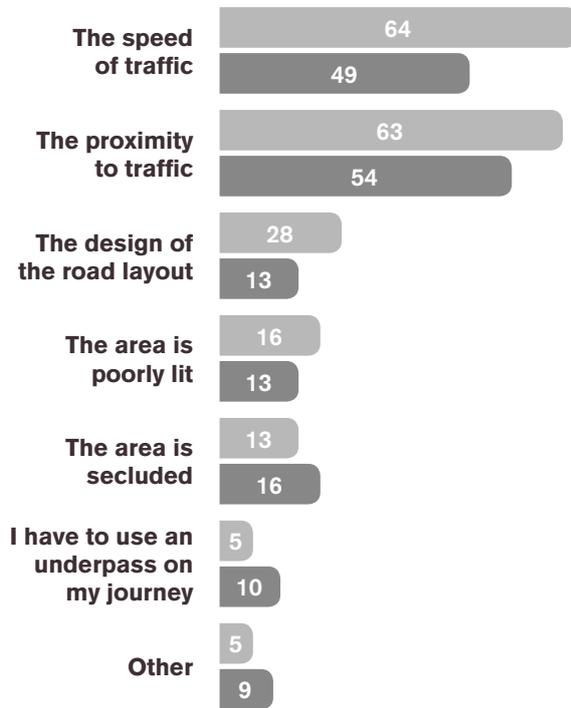
**Reason for safety concerns (%) – West Midlands**



■ Cyclists ■ Pedestrians

Based on respondents who rated 1-8 on how safe they felt. Cyclists (178) Pedestrians (313)

**Reason for safety concerns (%) – Berkshire and Hampshire**



■ Cyclists ■ Pedestrians

Based on respondents who rated 1-8 on how safe they felt. Cyclists (192) Pedestrians (299)



## Improvements to journeys

Cyclists and pedestrians in both areas were asked what they would like done to make their journey safer on, alongside or across Highways England's network. 12 per cent in the West Midlands study and 13 per cent in the Berkshire and Hampshire study indicated that nothing

requires improving, while the unprompted comments made by the remainder were grouped into several themes. In both areas improved lighting is frequently mentioned by cyclists and pedestrians. Those in the West Midlands study want lower speed limits and better signage to warn

### Better/ more lighting

"More street lighting where there is a great need for it to make cyclists and walkers look safe"

Pedestrian, West Midlands

"Lighting for when riding in the dark"

Cyclist, West Midlands

"More street lighting particularly in the underground pathways"

Cyclist, Berkshire and Hampshire

"Better lighting along the underpass would be appreciated. As it currently is, I might avoid making the walk during darker hours"

Walker, Berkshire and Hampshire

### Better / more signage

"Better signage to warn drivers of cyclists and pedestrians"

Cyclist, West Midlands

"More signage further down the road so they know pedestrians are crossing and are able to slow in time"

Pedestrian, West Midlands

"Signage for cars to slow down at junctions, especially where two roads with cycle lanes meet and cyclists may be crossing lanes"

Pedestrian, West Midlands



### Lower speed limits

"Lower the speed limits for cars. They drive much too fast in close proximity to pedestrians"

Cyclist, West Midlands

"Lower speed limits which are monitored"

Cyclist, West Midlands

"Caution signs and speed limitations at crossing points on main roads as some are accident black spots causing accidents"

Pedestrian, West Midlands

"Drivers need to be more respectful and slow down and not get too close, otherwise my horse will get scared of the noise and jump and maybe throw me off!"

Equestrian, West Midlands

car drivers of their presence, while those in the Berkshire and Hampshire study said wider or dedicated paths and more crossings are required. Equestrians would like to see Highways England's efforts focused on sections of the road network that intersect

with bridleways. They indicate the need for better driver education about how to pass a horse safely, and better enforcement of speed restrictions. They also flag the need for more crossing points that are designed to take their specific needs into account, as well as the provision of higher barriers on certain bridges.

### Dedicated / wider cycle lanes

*"Dedicated cycle lanes protected from the traffic"*

Cyclist, Berkshire and Hampshire

*"Just more consistent cycle lanes, wider than they currently are"*

Cyclist, Berkshire and Hampshire

*"Separate lanes for cyclists and pedestrians - too close together"*

Pedestrian, Berkshire and Hampshire

### More crossings

*"More designated road crossings, better lighting and signage"*

Cyclist, Berkshire and Hampshire

*"Slightly wider pavements and better pedestrian crossing facility"*

Pedestrian, Berkshire and Hampshire

*"Only experienced riders would use this roundabout as you have to ride with the traffic. If there were lights that would mean we would have time to cross. There are special buttons that you push with your crop so you don't have to get off your horse"*

Equestrian, West Midlands

*"I think you could say probably the bridleway bridges over the M4 probably between Reading and Hungerford need a bit of a survey to see what the parapet height actually is, because I think I've been told there's another one down here somewhere. They're not up to current spec basically."*

Equestrian, Berkshire and Hampshire

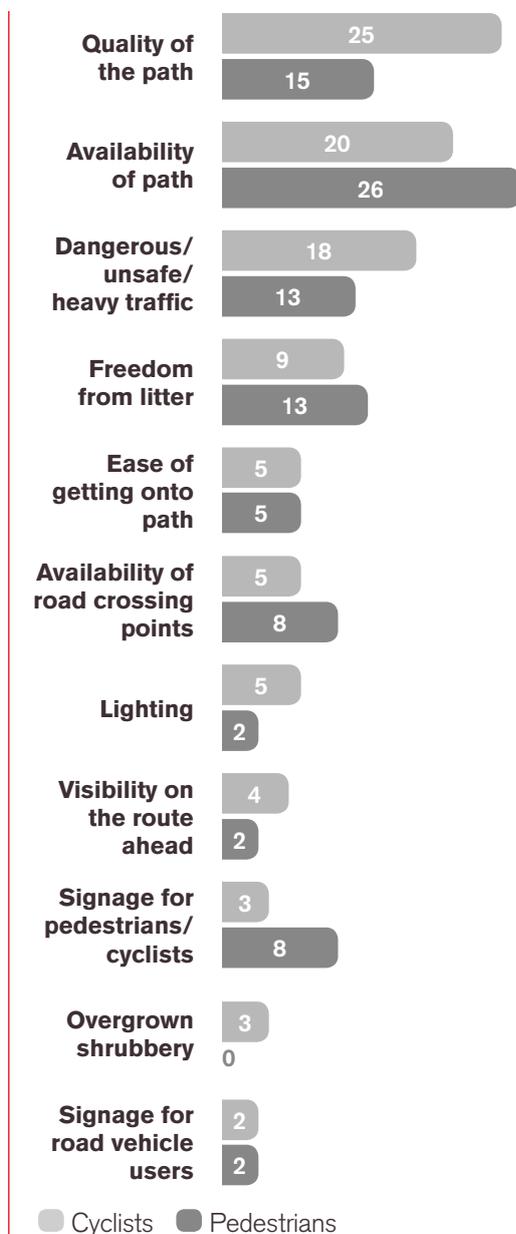


## Identification of hotspots

During the survey cyclists and pedestrians were asked to use a map to indicate where they had issues during the journey that related to the Highways England network. This produced results from 26 per cent of cyclists and pedestrians in the West Midlands study and 21 per cent in Berkshire and Hampshire. When asked about the nature of their concern, cyclists in each of the areas commented on the quality of the

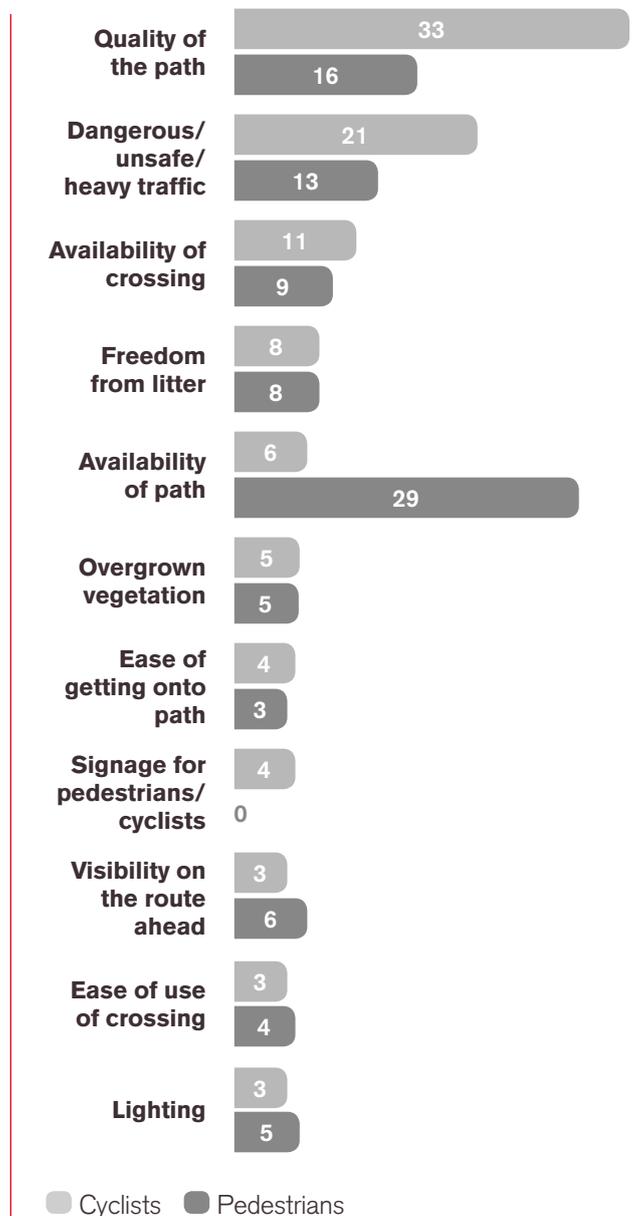
path provided for their use as the main reason why a specific location is flagged as an issue. They also flag locations where there are issues related to the proximity of traffic. Pedestrians similarly flag locations where the quality of the path is an issue, alongside those where there is no path. These represent the main reason for pedestrians to indicate a specific location on their journey.

**Reason for problematic hotspot (%) – West Midlands**



Base: All hotspots identified by respondents (239)  
Cyclists (106) Pedestrians (133)

**Reason for problematic hotspot (%) – Berkshire and Hampshire**



Base: All hotspots identified by respondents (189)  
Cyclists (80) Pedestrians (109)

## Area-specific findings

Using the information from the online survey, Transport Focus identified several locations within the West Midlands and within Berkshire and Hampshire. Transport Focus spoke to cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians making journeys in these locations to find out more about the

issues they face. A list of the locations which were explored is provided below and the results of the discussions can be found in the research agency report published alongside this document at [www.transportfocus.org.uk](http://www.transportfocus.org.uk).

### West Midlands – Highways England Area 9

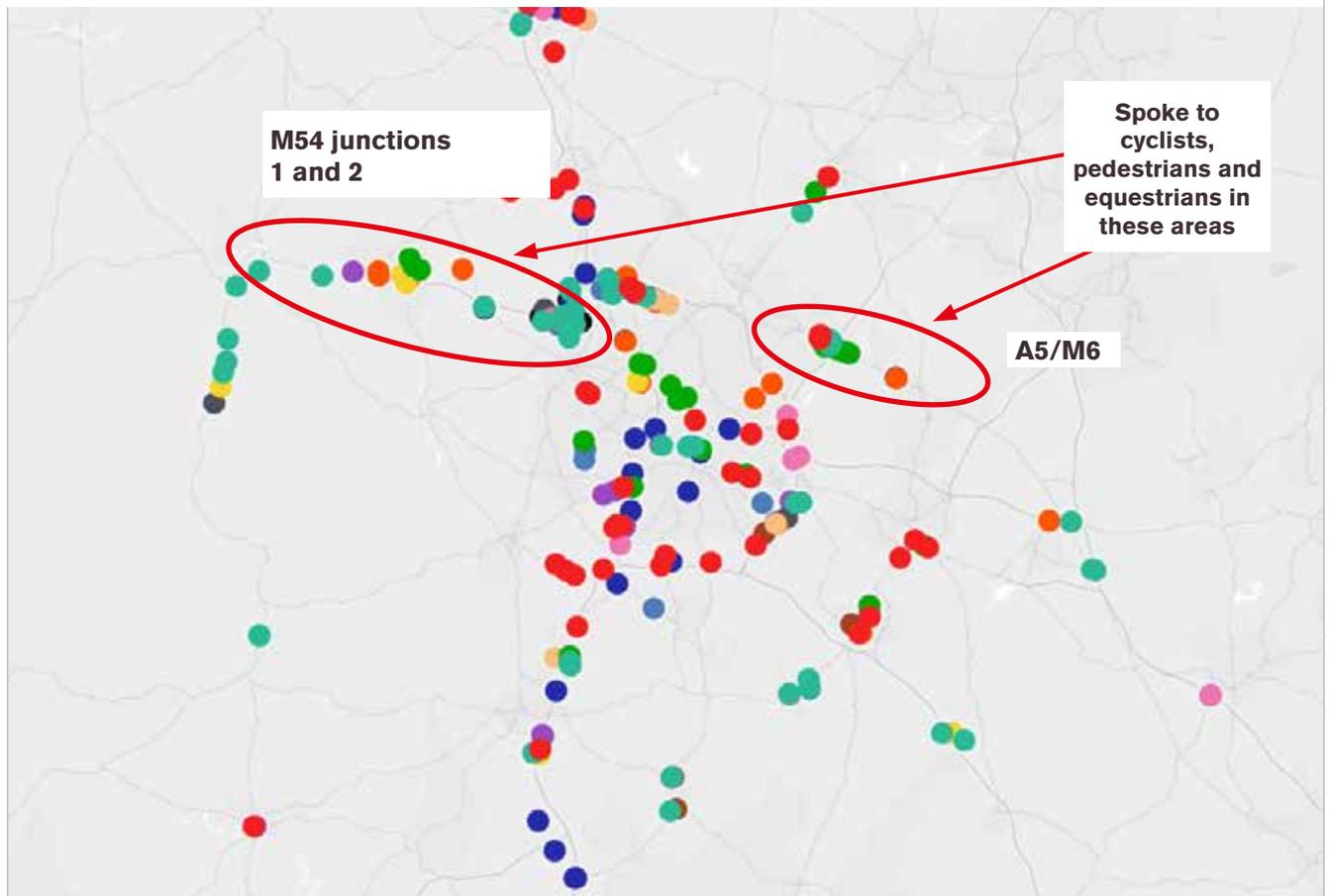
- M54 junction 1 and 2 (cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians)
- M54 Lawn Lane (equestrians / pedestrians)
- A5 / M6 Toll near Churchbridge (pedestrians / cyclists)
- A5 / M6 Toll near Norton Canes (pedestrians / cyclists)
- A5 / B4154 / M6 Toll Lime Lane (pedestrians / cyclists)

### Berkshire/Hampshire – Highways England Area 3

- A3 junction 4 (pedestrians / cyclists)
- A3 bridge at Scratchface Lane (pedestrians)
- A3 junction 5, Bedhampton Roundabout (pedestrians / cyclists)
- A27 Havant Bypass (pedestrians / cyclists)
- A27 / A2030 Eastern Road Roundabout (pedestrians / cyclists)
- M27 / London Road, Portsbridge Roundabout (pedestrians / cyclists)
- M4 junction 15, Medbourne Lane bridge (equestrians)
- M4 junction 14, near Shefford Woodlands (equestrians)
- M4 junction 13, near Snelsmore (equestrians)



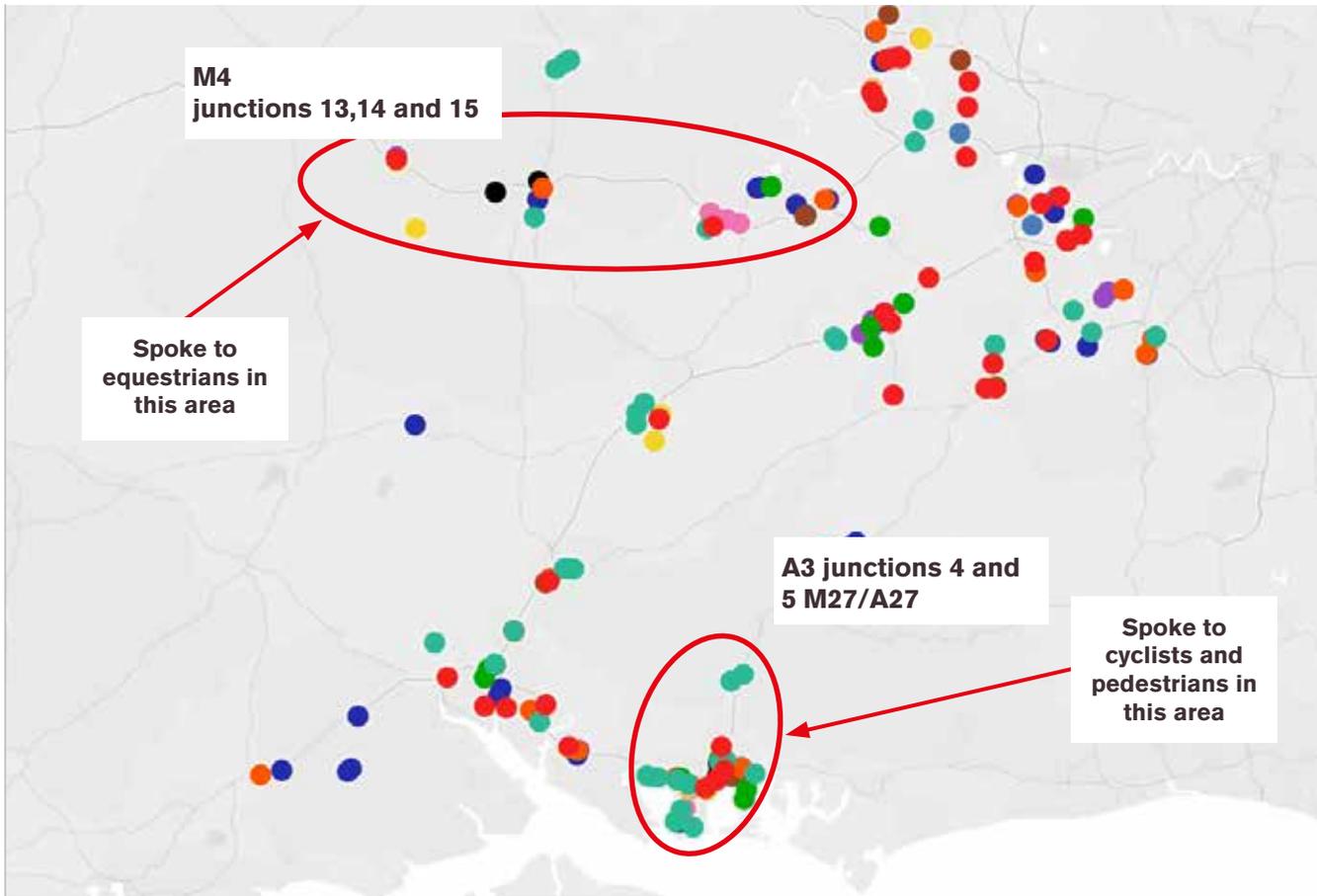
**Hotspot locations** – West Midlands



**Reason for complaint**

- |                             |                                    |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ● Quality of the path       | ● Ease of use of crossing          |
| ● Availability of path      | ● Signage for pedestrians/cyclists |
| ● Freedom from litter       | ● Signage for vehicles             |
| ● Ease of getting on path   | ● Lighting                         |
| ● Visibility of route ahead | ● Dangerous, heavy traffic         |
| ● Availability of crossing  | ● Overgrown shrubbery              |

**Hotspot locations** – Berkshire and Hampshire



**Reason for complaint**

- |                             |                                    |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ● Quality of the path       | ● Ease of use of crossing          |
| ● Availability of path      | ● Signage for pedestrians/cyclists |
| ● Freedom from litter       | ● Signage for vehicles             |
| ● Ease of getting on path   | ● Lighting                         |
| ● Visibility of route ahead | ● Dangerous, heavy traffic         |
| ● Availability of crossing  | ● Overgrown shrubbery              |

## How this research will be used

This project continues previous work Transport Focus has completed exploring cyclist, pedestrian and equestrian experiences of using Highways England's network, and which quantifies journey satisfaction among cyclists and pedestrians. The case studies generated by this research have been presented to Highways England so that it is aware of the issues and able to make improvements wherever possible. Transport Focus hopes to influence the way other areas of the Highways England network are designed, maintained and upgraded to better meet the needs of cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians.



## How this research was completed

In December 2018 Transport Focus commissioned the independent research agency Populus to measure satisfaction with journeys that cyclists and pedestrians made in the West Midlands, Berkshire and Hampshire on, alongside or across the Highways England network. This quantitative phase of research was used to identify locations in which to carry out subsequent qualitative research involving not only cyclists and pedestrians, but also equestrian users of the network.

### Quantitative research

In February 2019 Populus contacted people on its online panel, taking steps to ensure that questionnaires were completed in the context of a journey involving travelling on, alongside, or over a Highways England road. These steps included:

- An initial screening stage at which those completing the questionnaire were presented with a map and a list of the motorways and major 'A' roads within each area. At this stage respondents were asked to confirm that they had walked or cycled on, alongside or over any of the relevant roads in the last month.
- A stage at which those completing the questionnaire were taken to the Transport Focus interactive mapping system, managed by Beacon Dodsworth, that 'knows' which roads are managed by Highways England. Respondents were asked to plot the journey made: anyone who identified a journey which had not interacted with the Highways England network was screened out of the survey.

- A final data-editing stage in which implausible journeys and those made outside the areas of interest were removed from the analysis.

After these stages were complete 421 pedestrian journeys and 221 cycling journeys interacting with Highways England's network in the West Midlands remained in the data, as did 400 pedestrian journeys and 224 cycling journeys in Berkshire and Hampshire.

	West Midlands	Berkshire and Hampshire
<b>Cyclists</b>	421	400
<b>Pedestrians</b>	221	224
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>624</b>

### Qualitative research

The qualitative research stage was completed by undertaking face-to-face in-depth interviews with cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians who make journeys on routes which interact with the Highways England network. While several participants in this stage of the research were recruited through completion of the online survey, others were recruited near to the places of interest. Alongside all those involved in the research, Transport Focus would like to thank the British Horse Society which helped with the recruitment of equestrians to participate in the qualitative research.

As well as acting as a means of recruitment for the qualitative stage, the online survey helped determine the locations where the second phase of research should focus. During the online survey respondents were asked to pinpoint where they had experienced problems on their journey. This identified locations of interest, highlighting hotspots where qualitative research might be productive.

	West Midlands	Berkshire and Hampshire
 <b>Cyclists</b>	6	6
 <b>Pedestrians</b>	6	6
 <b>Equestrians</b>	6	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>

These included those making journeys on, alongside or over the Highways England network on foot, by bicycle or riding a horse.

Data from the online survey and from in-depth interviews were all plotted onto Tableau interactive mapping software, available via the following links:

**West Midlands:**  
<http://bit.ly/CPEComplaints1>

**Berkshire and Hampshire:**  
<http://bit.ly/CPEComplaints2>

(If you are reading a printed copy of this research please visit the Transport Focus website at [www.transportfocus.org.uk](http://www.transportfocus.org.uk) in order to access these links)

In total 36 qualitative interviews were carried out (18 in each area).



## Contact Transport Focus

Any enquiries about this research should be addressed to:

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Transport Focus is the operating name of the Passengers' Council

## Transport Focus is the independent consumer organisation representing the interests of:

- all users of England's motorways and major 'A' roads (the Strategic Road Network)
- rail passengers in Great Britain
- bus, coach and tram users across England outside London.

**We work to make a difference for all transport users**