

10 May
2023

12 and 13 May rail strikes: pre-strike intentions and information survey



Introduction



Transport Focus asked a representative sample of 2000 people from across Great Britain about the rail strikes due to take place on 12 and 13 May 2023.

This report details awareness levels of the strikes, the rating of information provided about services running or not running and rating the information about ticket refunds/exchanges.

The ASLEF strikes on 12 May and RMT strikes on 13 May will impact most train companies in England (and cross-border services in Scotland and Wales). There may also be some changes to services on 14 May, the day

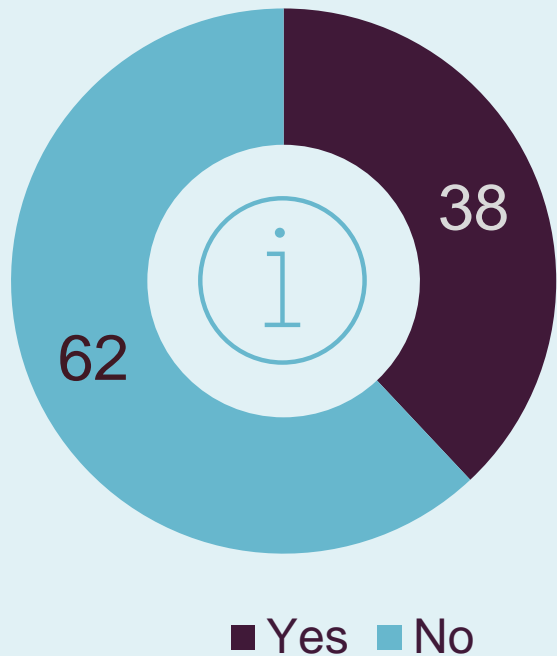
after the RMT strike. In contrast with many earlier waves of this survey, strike action is not impacting Network Rail. This means train companies not directly affected by the strike action can run a largely normal service on these dates.

Overall, we obtained responses from 180 people who said they intend to travel, or now no longer intend to do so because of the strike disruption between 12 and 14 May.

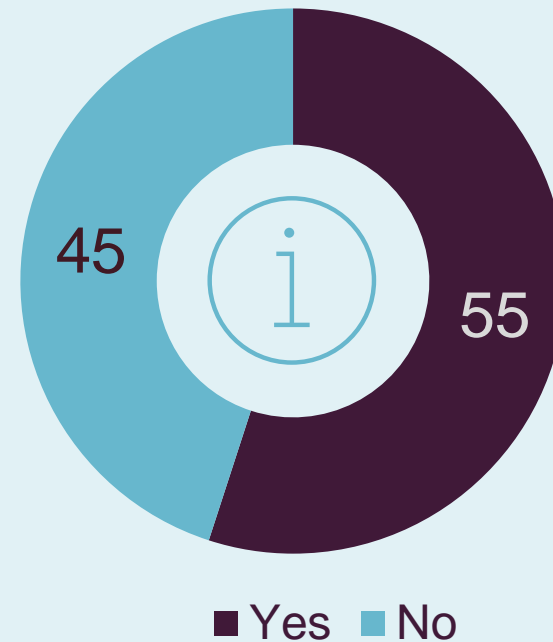
The survey was conducted between 5 and 7 May. Further detail on how we carried out this survey is available on page 14.

Just under four in ten are aware of strikes on 12 and 13 May. Higher among those who intended to use trains on those days.

Awareness among all respondents



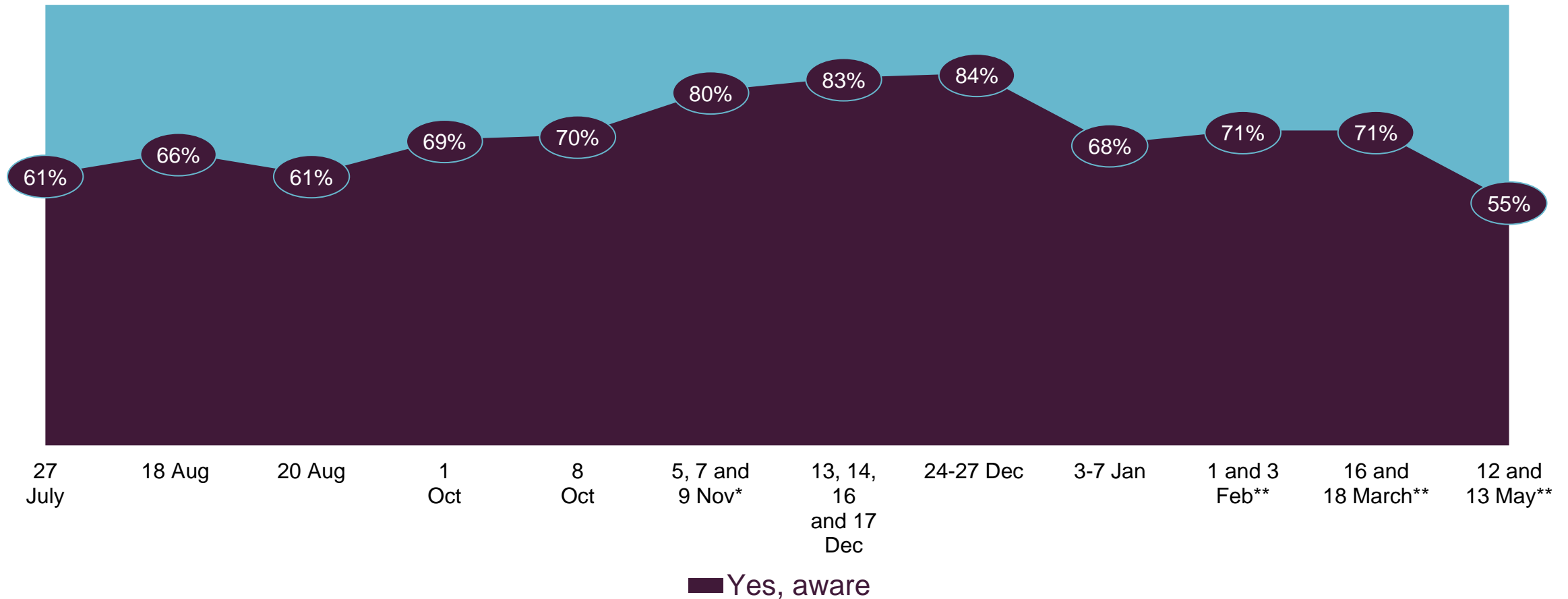
Awareness among those who intended to travel by train on 12 or 13 May



Q) Were you aware of the expected strike disruption on the days of the strikes (Friday 12 and Saturday 13 May);

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Awareness of strike disruption among those who intended to travel by train on strike days is lower than for previous strikes



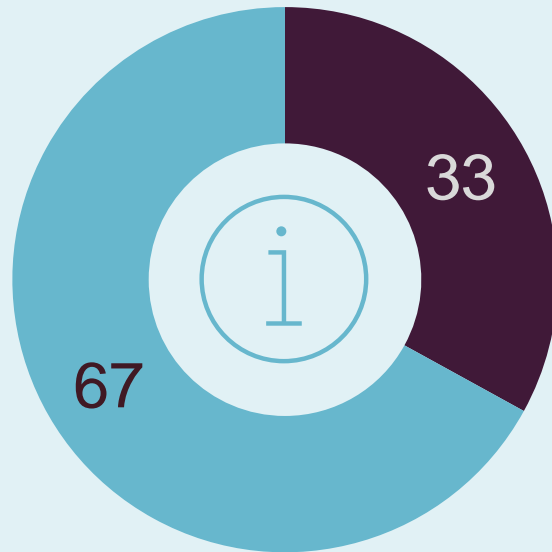
Q) Were you aware of the expected strike disruption on the days of the strikes* Nov strike dates were cancelled after our survey. ** Not Network Rail strike

Asked of those who intend or intended to travel on strike days 159, 135, 142, 196, 160, 332, 326, 232, 282, 186, 224, 180.

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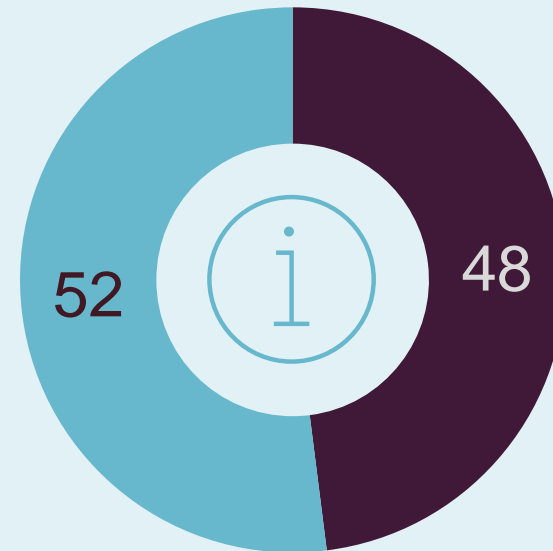
Overall, around a third are aware of potential disruption on 14 May. Almost half among those intending to travel by train that day.

Awareness among all respondents



■ Yes ■ No

Awareness among those who intended to travel by train on 14 May



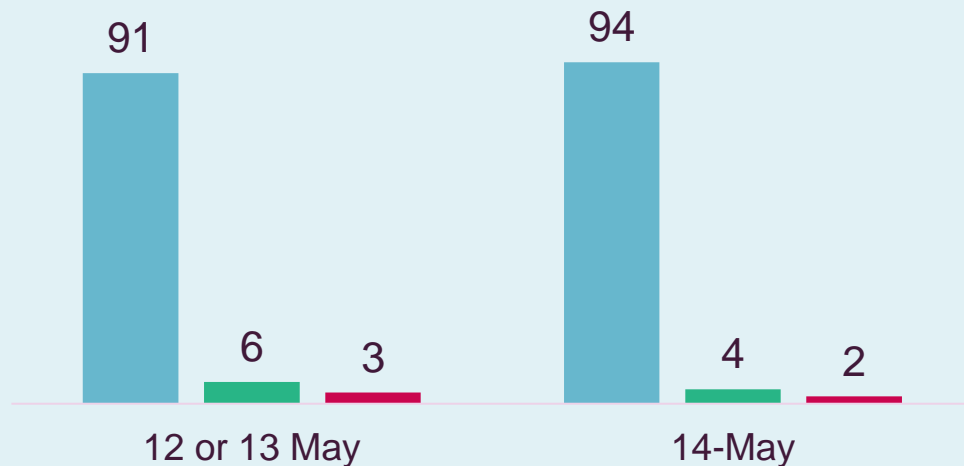
■ Yes ■ No

Q) Were you aware of the expected strike disruption on these days?.... the day following strikes (Sunday 14 May) when services may be disrupted or reduced

12 and 13 May rail strikes: pre-strike intentions and information survey. Sample sizes of charts: left 2023; right 130

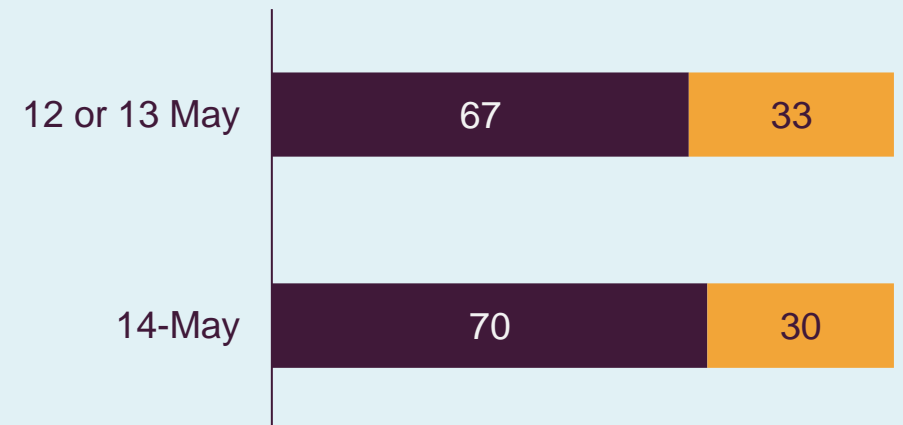
The majority of those who planned to travel by train on the affected days say they will no longer do so

Proportion intending to use train (%)



- Never intended to use the train
- Intended to use the train but not doing so now
- Still planning to use the train

Current intention among those who planned to travel on these days (%)



- Intended to use the train but not doing so now
- Still planning to use the train

Q. As far as travelling by train between Friday 12 May and Sunday 14 May which applies for each of these?

Sample size left chart = 2023, sample size right chart: 12 or 13 May = 180; 14 May = 130
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Examples of what those who decided not to travel by train said



I was going to use the train to go to the Eurovision song contest, I will now have to drive.

Will just mean I go on a different day. They effect me by feeling I've lost control of my life and affect me mentally.

I've got a flight to Poland on Friday and I now can't get the train to the airport.

I was planning to see my partner and require train to see them, unfortunately due to the strikes this is no longer possible.



Will need to travel by coach, will take longer.

I actually have a three-hour, in-person exam on the 12th, so I'll need to look into whether I can get to the exam centre without using the train.

I had booked tickets for the 12th May to arrive at Manchester as I had to then travel to the airport. I then had to cancel these tickets and re book others for the 11th. This has cost me a further £9 as I had to return the cancelled tickets by registered post and pay again to have new ones delivered. As well as the added financial cost, I suffered some stress regarding the planning of my journey.

Examples of what those who are still intending to travel by train said



They may disrupt my journey but I don't think my train will be cancelled.

I think the operators and trains I need will still be running but they might not be. I have decided to start out earlier than originally planned in case there are delays or cancellations. It might mean I reach my destination much earlier than I need to. I might need to make alternative arrangements for my return journey. This might mean spending a considerable amount on taxis as there will be no other conceivable way of making the journey.



Going to Oxford and Cardiff, will affect me as will be unsure on whether I can get back home or not. Waiting a long time for the next train.

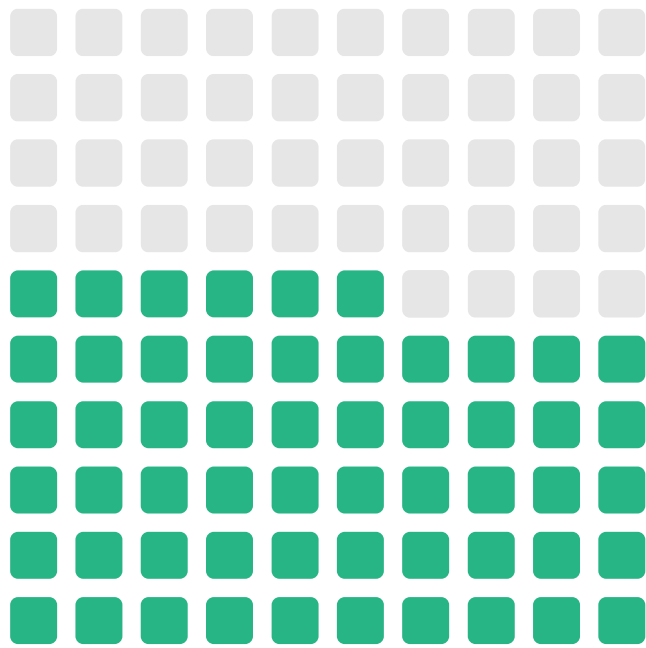
Limited train times so limit my choice of travel.

They will require me to take alternative routes which will take slightly longer but I will still be able to get to the places I need to get to.

Stopped one of my trains, turned my journey from 2.5 to 3.15 hours.

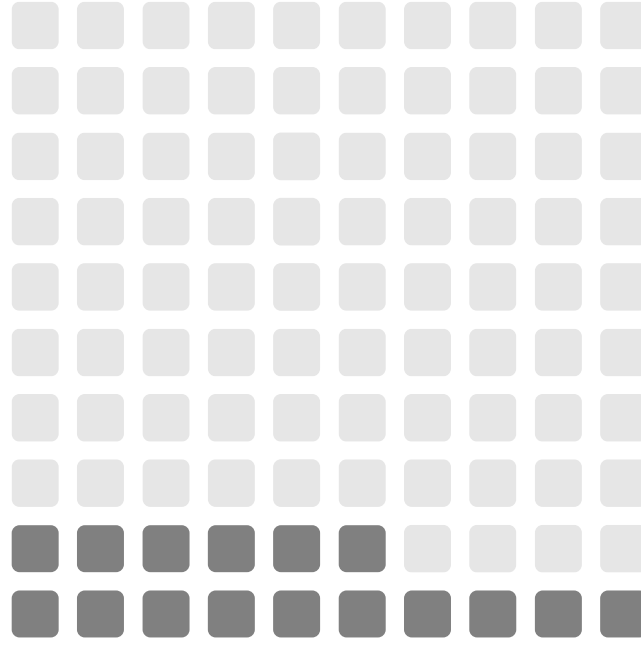
I need to travel on 14th May so I will be travelling, I wasn't aware there could be issues I will now look into it.

Just over half rated information on the train services which will and will not be running as good and a quarter said it was poor



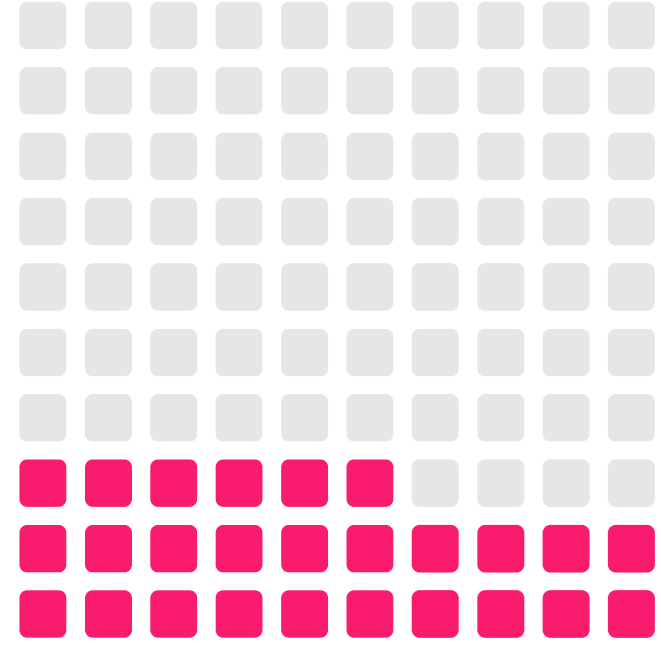
56%

Fairly good or very good



16%

Neither good nor poor



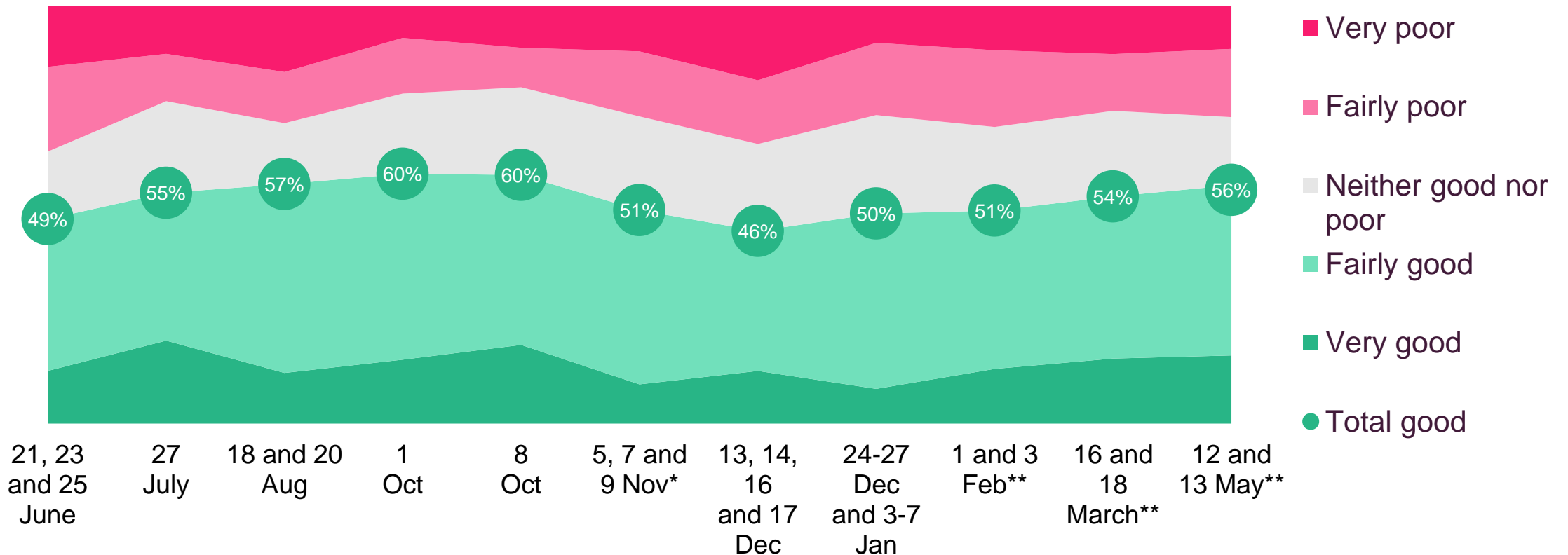
26%

Fairly poor or very poor

Asked of those aware and who intended, or still intend to travel either on strike days or days following when services may be impacted. Q. How do you rate the information available about the strikes in terms of the train services which will and will not be running. Sample size = 117. Results exclude those who said: 'Don't know/Did not look for information'.

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Rating of information available on 'which train services were running' during strikes over time

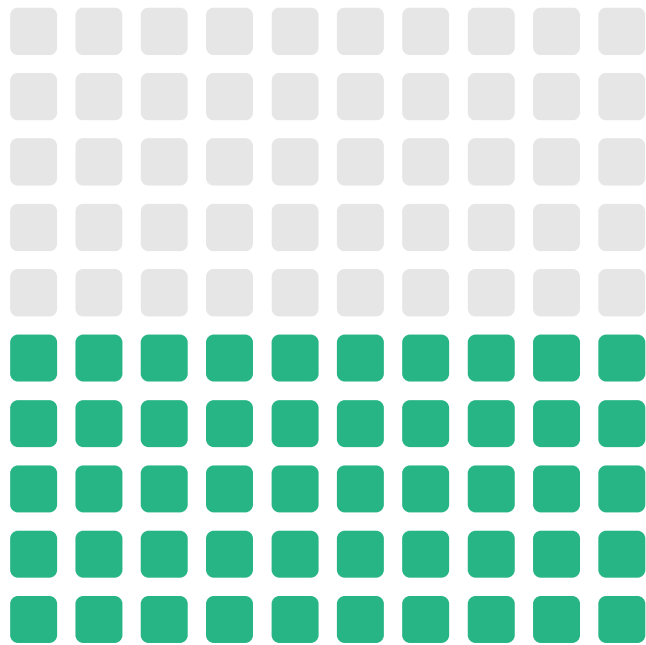


* Nov strike dates were cancelled after our survey. ** Not Network Rail strike.

Asked of those who intend or intended to travel on strike but then did not because of the strike affected days and aware of the strikes. Excludes those who said: 'Don't know/Did not look for information'. Sample sizes from left to right = 273, 134, 160, 204, 141, 242, 289, 339, 165, 193, 117.

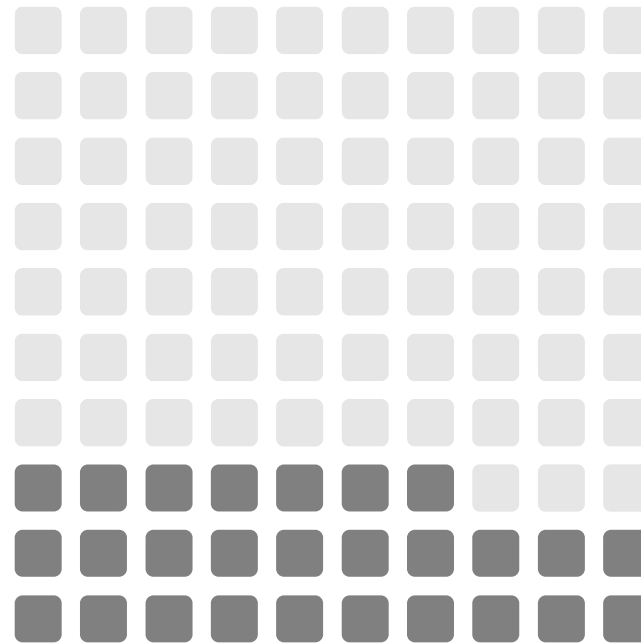
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Half rated information on changing tickets and refunds as good and just under a quarter as poor



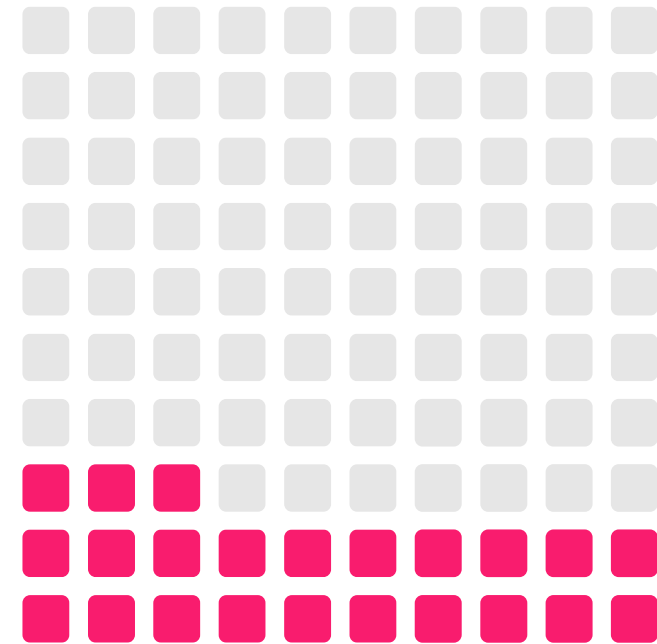
50%

Fairly good or very good



27%

Neither good nor poor



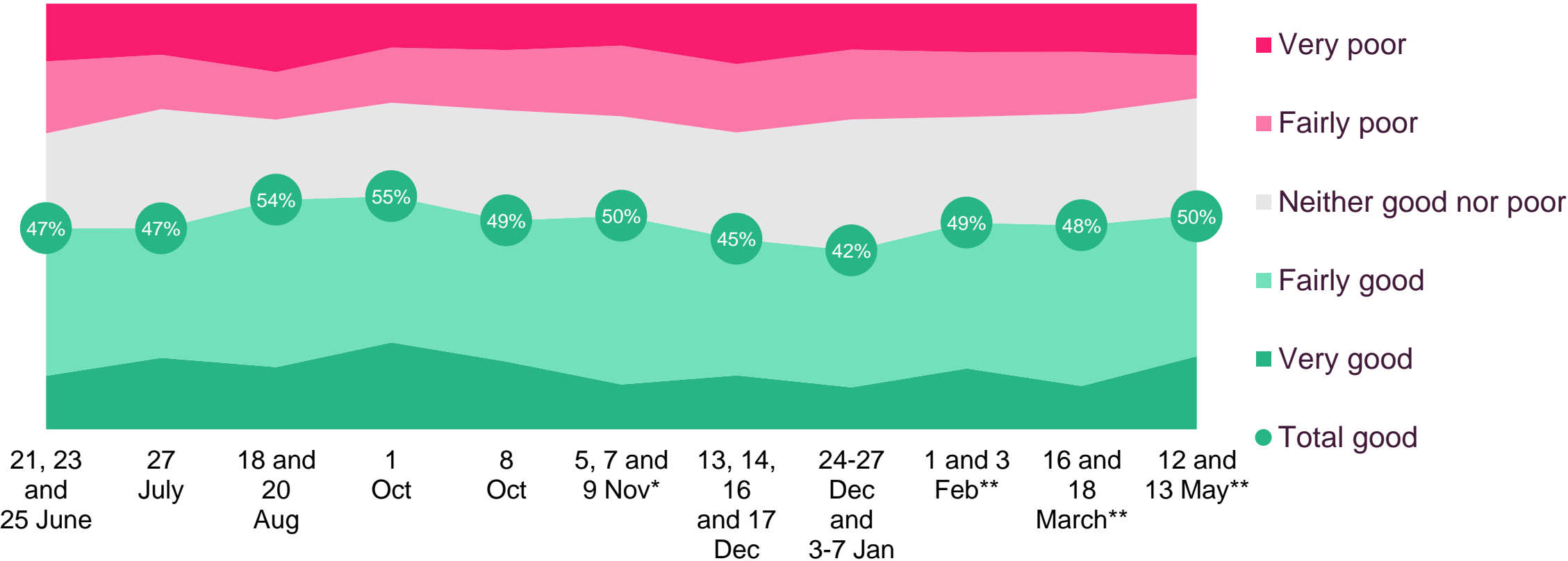
23%

Fairly poor or very poor

Asked of those aware and who intended or still intend to travel either on strike days or days following when services may be impacted. Q. How do you rate the information available about the strikes in terms of: the arrangements for changing your ticket or obtaining a refund if you are no longer travelling due to the strike. Sample size = 105 Results exclude those who said: 'Don't know/Did not look for information'.

12 and 13 May rail strikes: pre-strike intentions and information survey.

Rating information available on 'changing tickets/obtaining refunds' during strikes over time



* November strike dates were cancelled after our survey. ** Not Network Rail strike.

Asked of those who intend or intended to travel on strike but then did not because of the strike affected days and aware of the strikes. Excludes those who said: 'Don't know/Did not look for information'. Sample sizes from left to right = 223, 119, 136, 177, 125, 190, 252, 277, 146, 160, 105

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Examples of comments about how information available can be improved (on which services are running and/or ticket exchanges/refunds)



By having an up to date timetable of what trains will be running and when. Currently along the route I planned to use the train company has not given a timetable or guidance on whether there will be any trains at all. As such, one day I will drive instead and the other I hope to try and use the train.

By providing much more accurate detail and compensating for the disruption

Emails or texts rather than just on the news or posters in a station.



Make it more basic and clear. The information can be at times contradictory.

Send an email to ticket holders explaining if their booked train will run, including all legs of the journey.

I have the trainline app. It provides minimal detail that there will be strikes. It would be helpful to see more accurate information. I am hoping to still make my journey but some of the information on various sites is confusing.

Make the refund time shorter would be great.

A clear table of services that will be striking and the consequences.

Methodology and question text

Transport Focus asked about the 12-13 May rail strikes on a Yonder Consulting omnibus (conducted 5-7 May). The omnibus is weighted to be nationally representative of the population of Great Britain. The questions asked are shown below.

Intro statement: Rail strikes are planned for Friday 12 May and Saturday 13 May. Train services may also be impacted as a result on Sunday 14 May.

Q1) Were you aware of the expected strike disruption on?

i. The days of the strikes (Friday 12 and Saturday 13 May); ii. The day following the strikes (Sunday 14 May) when services may be disrupted or reduced:

Answer options: A= Yes; B = No.

Q2) As far as travelling by train between Friday 12 May and Sunday 14 May which applies for each of these? (please do not count journeys you might make on London Underground):

i. Strike days (12 and 13 May); ii. Day following strikes when train services may be disrupted or reduced (14 May):

A) Had no plans to travel by train on any of those days; B) Intended to travel by train on one (or more) of those days but won't be doing so now; C) Still planning to travel by train on one (or more) of those days.

Ask Q3 if aware of any strikes and going to be impacted [(Q1 i or ii = A) AND [(Q2 i. or ii = B OR C)

Q3. How do you rate the information available about the strikes in terms of:

- i. The train services which will and will not be running
- ii. The arrangements for changing your ticket or obtaining a refund if you are no longer travelling due to the strike.

Answer options: Very good; Fairly good; Neither good nor poor; Fairly poor; Very poor; Don't know / have not looked for any information.

Ask Q3a if asked Q3.

Q3a) How could the information available be improved? [Text box completion]

Ask Q4 if going to be impacted by strikes: Q2 i. or ii. = (B OR C)

Q4) Please tell us in as much detail as possible how you expect these rail strikes affect you [Text box completion]

Contact Transport Focus

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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:

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

We work to make a difference for all transport users.

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