



# Strategic Roads User Survey

Findings for the East: October 2021 – September 2022

Report published July 2023

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# Introduction



## Strategic Roads User Survey (SRUS)

Transport Focus represents the interests of users of England's motorways and major A-roads, known as the Strategic Road Network (SRN). These are the roads managed by National Highways on behalf of the Government.

Through the Strategic Roads User Survey (SRUS), Transport Focus gathers journey experience feedback from a representative sample of SRN users.

SRUS is also used by the Office of Rail and Road to monitor National Highways' performance.



## Push-to-web approach

Invitation letters are posted to a representative sample of households in England

Instructions in the letter direct participants to an online survey, for which participants are incentivised



## Participants answer about:

Their most recent journey on the SRN within the last four weeks at the time of completing the survey

One specific motorway or major A road within this journey (defined using an interactive map). This ensures feedback is received for all regions and across a full range of roads within them



**7,342** responses received in total over this period  
**1,051** for roads in the East



Results in this report cover 12 months:

**October 2021 – September 2022**

# Key findings for this year: SRN experience in the East

**73%** Three quarters of SRN journeys here are felt to be satisfactory overall

*Similar to the national average across this and all key measures*



Satisfactory journeys (as nationally) are when **traffic flows freely** without disruption



**Factors for dissatisfaction here are:**

- **Roadworks** – with a perceived increase in the number of roadworks on the East's major A roads in particular from Spring 2022 – where impact is typically greater due to fewer lanes, and where it is more difficult to inform drivers in advance
- **Poor road surfaces** – more commonly identified as an issue in the East than elsewhere
- **Single rather than dual carriageways, adding to congestion** – partly linked to the relatively high proportion of journeys taking place on major A roads rather than motorways here, but also exacerbated at times by roadworks



**A12 and A47 epitomise many of these issues:** Drivers experience poor road surfaces and congestion on the A12, and ongoing frustration with single lane provision on the A47



**The M1 here sees a high incidence of roadworks and other delays,** with smart motorway sections felt to worsen the experience overall



**Management of litter also felt to be particularly poor on major A roads here**

**Other trends, which are also common across the whole SRN network:**



Safety perceptions high overall, but some feel less at ease: less familiar drivers, lighter commercial/goods drivers, motorcyclists



Poor driving perceived as common – and while drivers are accountable, the way roads are managed can be felt to provoke poor driving behaviour.



HGV drivers less satisfied overall, experiencing the same issues when they occur, to a sharper degree



# Issues for National Highways East to consider

After analysis of quantitative and qualitative data in SRUS about journeys in the East, it appears that National Highways should focus on the following as part of efforts to improve road user satisfaction:

## ✓ **Fix surface defects and renew older surfaces that are seen as rough**

## ✓ **Roadworks**

- Ensure roadworks cause the least disruption possible, for the shortest duration and affecting the shortest stretch of road possible
- Strive to reduce instances where SRN users encounter multiple sets of roadworks on the same journey
- Communication. It appears that more work is needed to inform road users in advance where roadworks will have significant impact, in particular when it comes to less frequent users and the best channels to reach them
- Communication. Explaining the benefits that will result and the rationale for temporary speed restrictions may alleviate some frustration
- While not exclusive to these routes, **particular focus on the A12, A47 and M1** is advisable.

## ✓ **Smart motorways, specifically the M1**

- Strive to reduce the occasions when drivers see a variable speed limit that feels inappropriate, including when restrictions are felt to stay in place when no longer needed
- Better 'in the moment' communication about why speed limits or lane closures are in place
- Ongoing communication to the public at large about how smart motorways work, including providing evidence of reduced congestion and about safety
- Communication and behavioural nudges to encourage better driving etiquette, and so minimise poor driving practices perceived to be caused by the way smart motorways function.

## ✓ National Highways should note that, relative to other regions, East has more road users dissatisfied with **litter**

# Some overall findings

“Key metrics”



# Three quarters of SRN journeys in the East are felt to be satisfactory: similar to the national average across most key measures

Key metrics  
Oct 2021 – Sep 2022



Overall satisfaction

**73%**

Very satisfied 32%  
Fairly satisfied 42%

Journey time

**72%**

Very satisfied 35%  
Fairly satisfied 37%

Management of roadworks

**47%**

Very satisfied 14%  
Fairly satisfied 33%

Feeling safe

**83%**

Very safe 31%  
Fairly safe 53%

England-wide

**72%**

Very satisfied 34%  
Fairly satisfied 38%

**71%**

Very satisfied 34%  
Fairly satisfied 37%

**49%**

Very satisfied 16%  
Fairly satisfied 33%

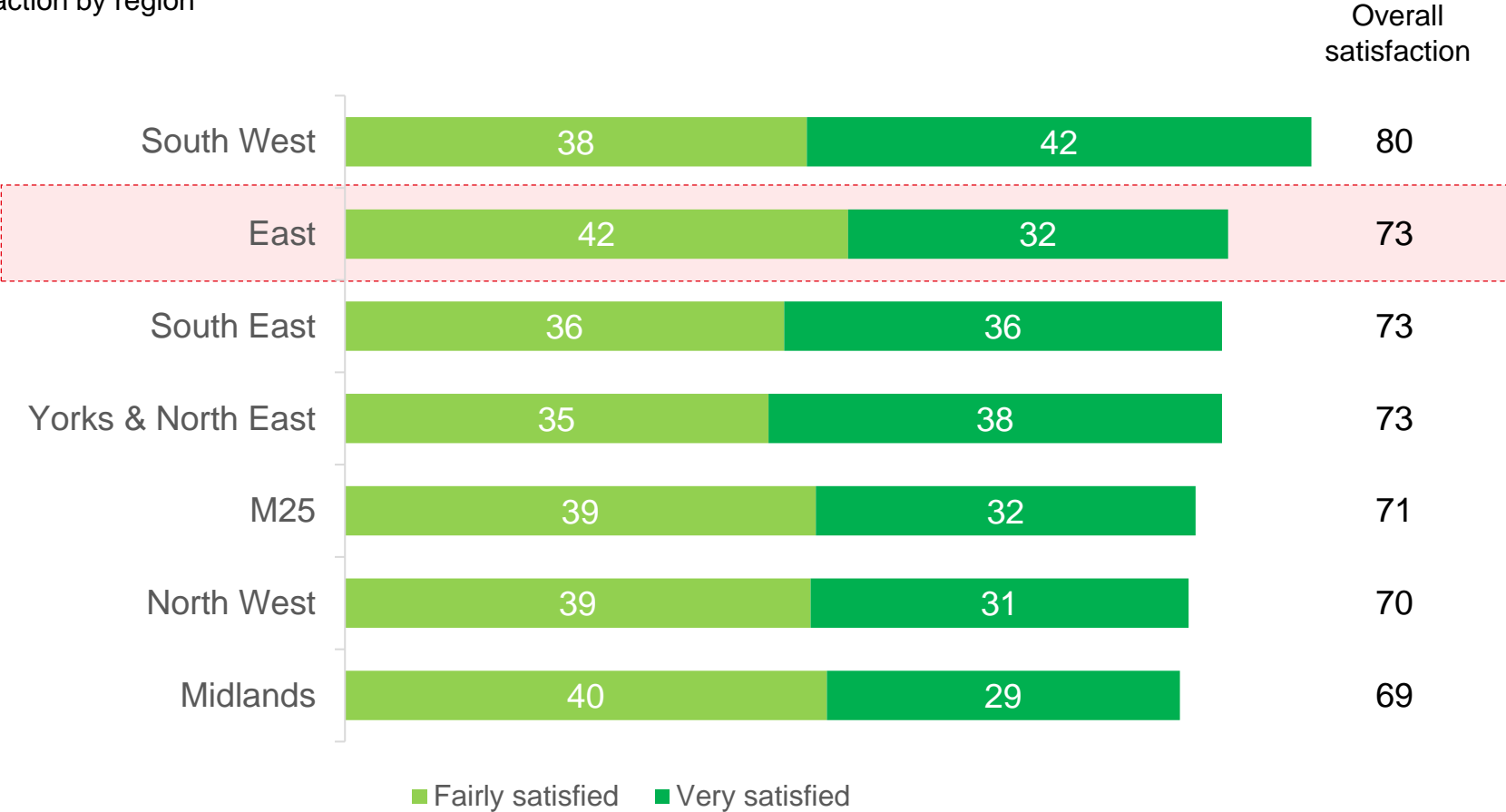
**80%**

Very safe 31%  
Fairly safe 50%

Base: all SRN users surveyed, Oct '21 – Sep '22  
All: overall satisfaction (7,322), journey time (7,295), roadworks management (1,690), feeling safe (7,313)  
East: overall satisfaction (1,047), journey time (1,044), roadworks management (235), feeling safe (1,046)

# While similar to the average overall, the East saw a comparatively lower proportion of very satisfactory journeys

Overall satisfaction by region  
(% very/fairly)

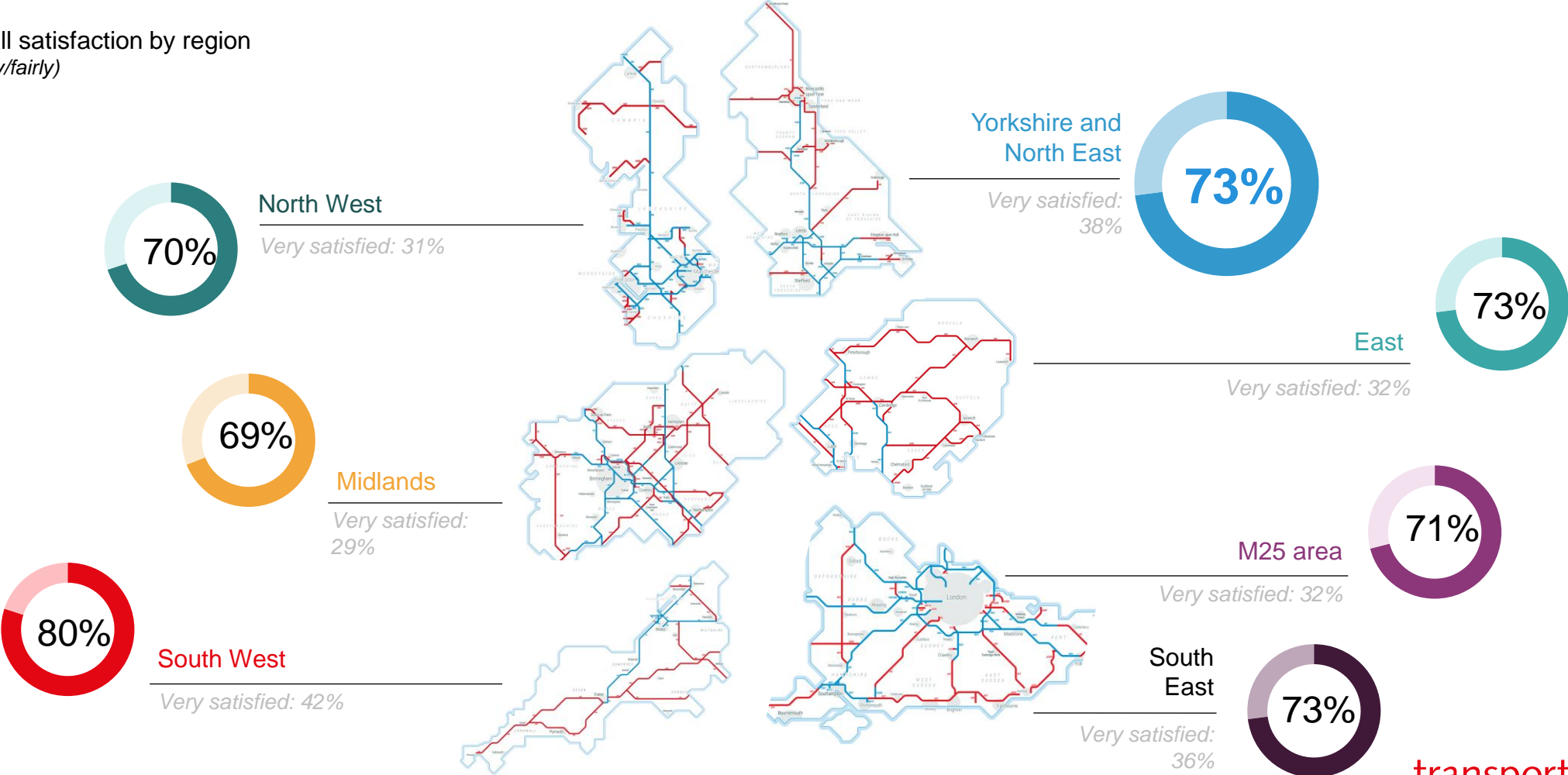


Base: all SRN users surveyed, Oct '21 – Sep '22 (7,322)  
South West (917), East (1,047), South East (1,504), Yorkshire and NE: (1,014), M25 (1,057), North West (1,088), Midlands (1,641)



# While similar to the average overall, the East saw a comparatively lower proportion of very satisfactory journeys

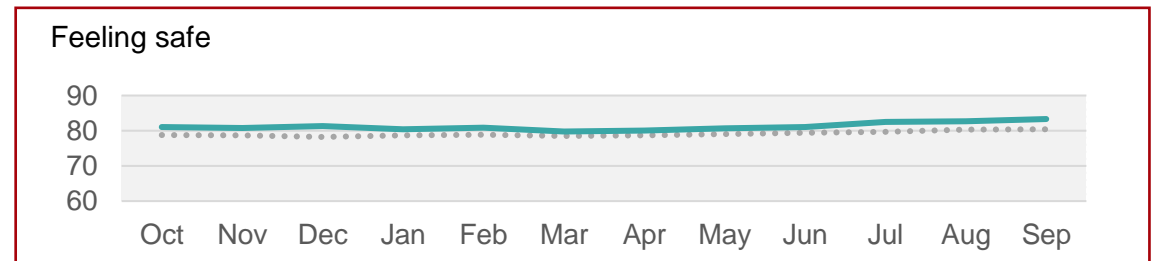
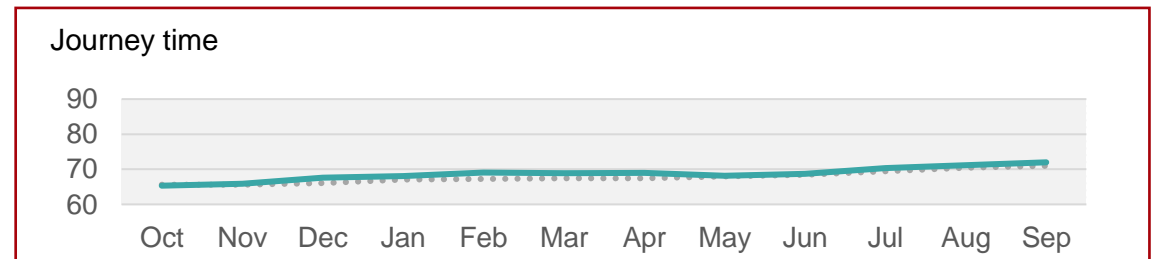
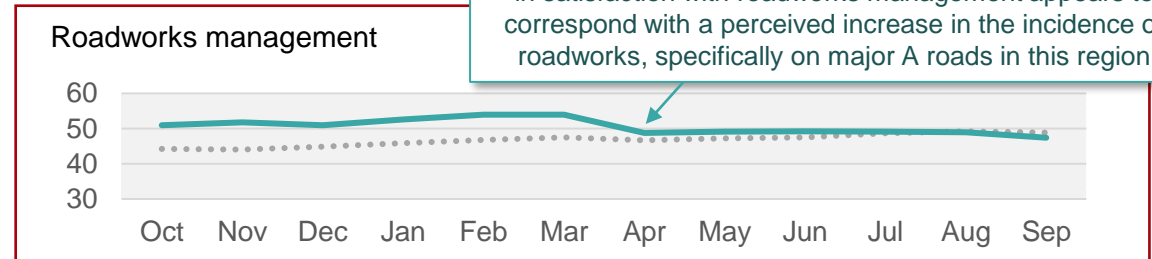
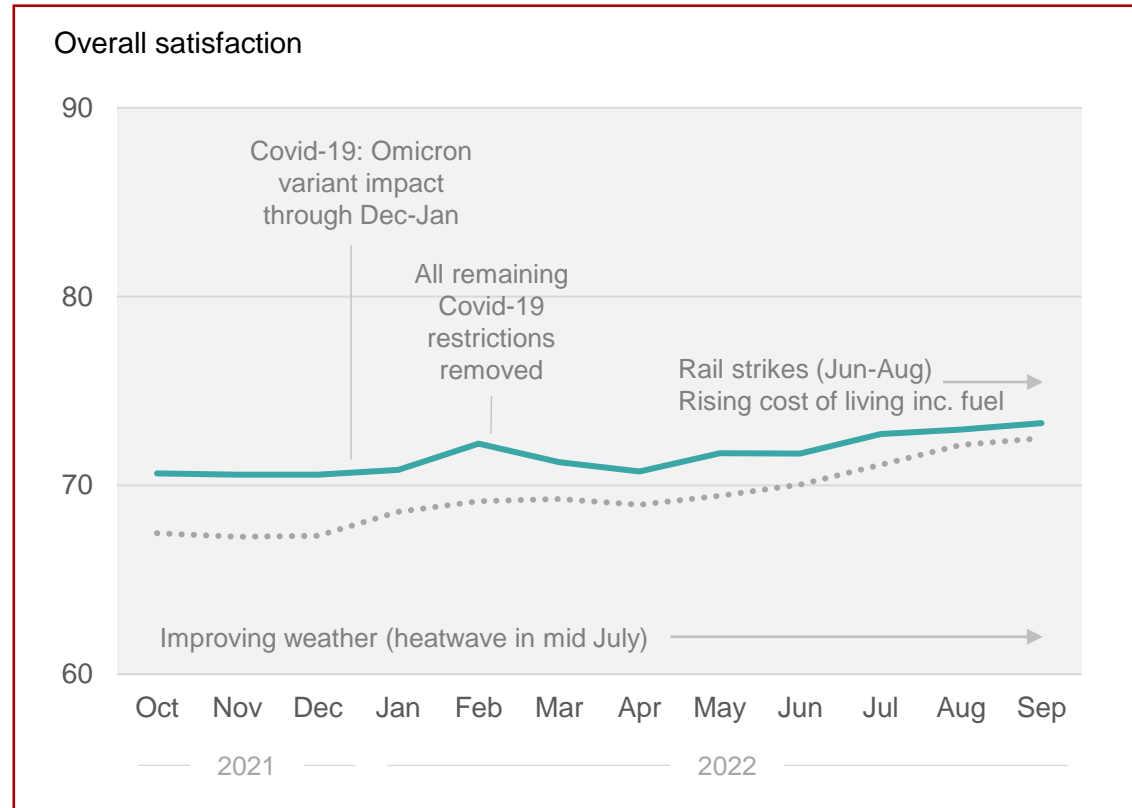
Overall satisfaction by region  
(% very/fairly)



Base: all SRN users surveyed, Oct '21 – Sep '22 (7,322)  
South West (917), East (1,047), South East (1,504), Yorkshire and NE: (1,014), M25 (1,057), North West (1,088), Midlands (1,641)

# A turbulent year for travel, feedback indicates overall journey experience improved nationally. Similar in the East, though roadworks management rated less well from Spring onwards, which appears to have hampered overall satisfaction here

Key metrics over time (% very/fairly, rolling 12 monthly\*)



— East  
 ..... All regions

Base: all SRN users surveyed, Oct '21 – Sep '22 (2,844-7,322)  
 East: (447-1,047)  
 \*Until March 2022, data is YTD from April 2021 onwards, due to a methodology change in April 2021  
 Data is shown as fully 12 month rolling figures from March 2022.

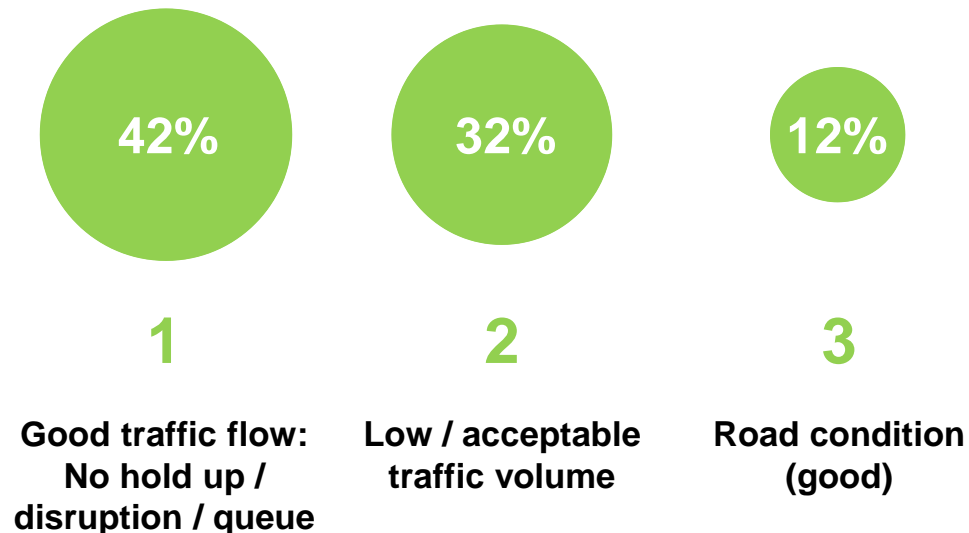
# Understanding “overall satisfaction” in more detail



# There are three main themes in the reasons users give for satisfactory journeys in the East

Strategic road users in this region were asked **why** they were satisfied or dissatisfied with their journey, in their own words. We have quantified the key themes which arose, from a random sample of their responses.

**Satisfaction:** top 3 reasons  
(very / fairly satisfied)  
% mentioning topic



Some also mention negative factors, which usually explain why they rated their journey as “fairly” rather than “very” satisfactory.

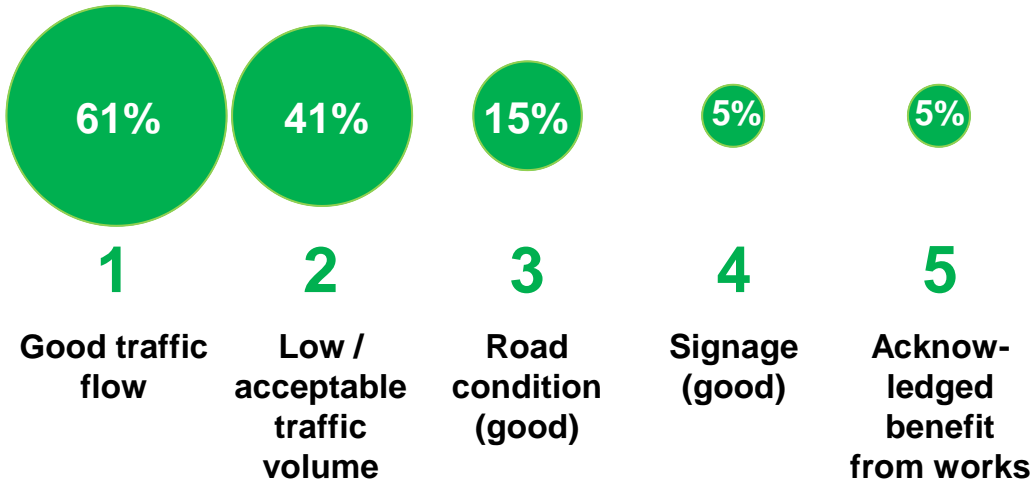
Typically, this is the case for journeys which are affected at least in part by disruptions or congestion. However, poor road condition in particular is mentioned more frequently here in the East – even amongst road users who are otherwise broadly satisfied – than in other regions.

See more on this on the next page.

*(Other data shown here is broadly reflective of all regions).*

# Ultimately the absence of disruptions and congestion make for **fully satisfactory** rather than simply “ok” journeys

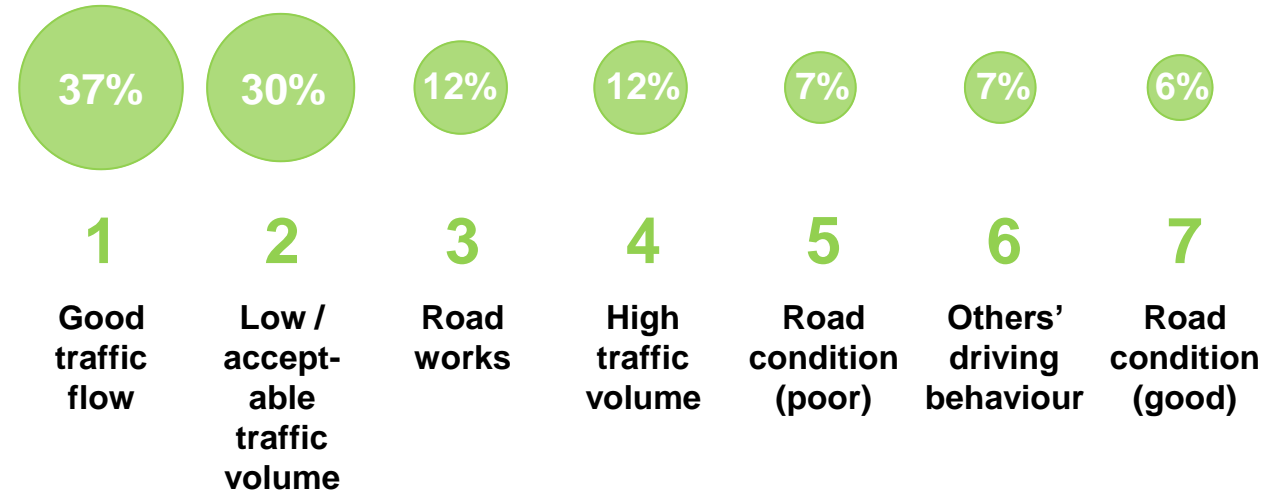
**Very satisfied:** top reasons  
% mentioning topic



Plus:

- ✓ a **range of other factors relating to good management and features** of roads
- ✓ and a **near-total absence of issues** like roadworks, congestion, poor maintenance / markings / signage, etc.

**Fairly satisfied:** top reasons  
% mentioning topic



Plus a **range of other factors relating to poor management and features** of roads

It's worth acknowledging that those who are “fairly satisfied” with SRN journeys often still experience some issues. So while three quarters are satisfied overall in the East, there is scope to increase the proportion who are “very” satisfied (currently around a third in this region)

Findings on this page are at national level



# Absence of (anticipated or previous) disruption makes for a good journey; fairly satisfied users often feel some aspect of a journey could have been better – or they see a good journey as atypical

## Very satisfied: Example comments (East)

- “ Traffic was flowing nicely and there were no road works and I was able to maintain the speed limit ”
- “ No hold-ups, traffic moved well ”
- “ Fast moving traffic, no delays, good road surface ”
- “ The upgrades that have been carried out over recent years have been completed during lockdown 1 and have had a material effect on the journey ”
- “ Clear, dry, bright, minimal traffic ”
- “ The road surface was good and the traffic lighter than usual for this time of day ”
- “ The traffic was manageable and the road itself has been maintained ”
- “ It was a clear fast road with well marked junctions ”
- “ There were no delays, and the recent upgrade weeks where the A14 meets [the A1] are tidy and a big improvement to traffic flow. ”

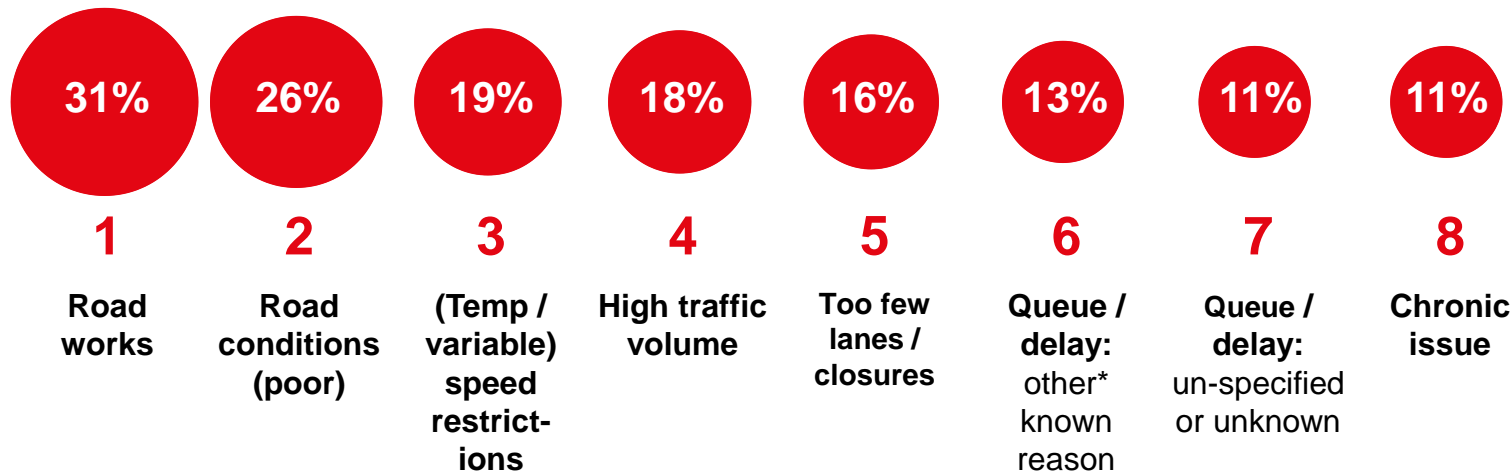
## Fairly satisfied: Example comments (East)

- “ Most of journey was good but there is stretch near Hatfield Peverel with 40mph limit for no apparent reason. ”
- “ Fairly heavy traffic - a little slow at times ”
- “ There is a single carriageway section that feels dangerous, even though there is a speed restriction. There are many side roads/junctions and the drivers on the A47 always feel in a rush and unforgiving ”
- “ The roads were mainly clear, except for around the Black Cat roundabout. This took additional time. ”
- “ There was a hold up when we all ground to halt, but it didn't last long ”
- “ The traffic was fairly light, but the quality of the road is poor! Never a comfortable drive ”
- “ Several badly repaired potholes and litter on the edges of the road. ”
- “ The road could do with some repair. The journey went well but it was at a quiet time. Usually that route would be slow in busy periods ”

# Roadworks and poor surfaces are the most common reasons for dissatisfaction in the East, along with speed restrictions, congestion and perception of insufficient lane provision

Strategic road users were asked **why** they were satisfied or dissatisfied with their journey, in their own words. We have quantified the key themes which arose, from a random sample of their responses.

**Dissatisfaction:** top reasons  
(very / fairly dissatisfied, East)  
% mentioning topic



**Dissatisfaction:** other reasons  
(very / fairly dissatisfied, East)  
% mentioning topic

Too many / criticism of HGV	8%
Safety	6%
Others' driving behaviour	6%
Poor signage / info	5%
Other	15%

Note that **while roadworks are among the most common reasons for dissatisfaction, other delays can be more impactful when they happen.** For journeys affected by roadworks, 21% are dissatisfactory; this compares to 35% when affected by other types of delays, and 52% where traffic is congested for any reason.

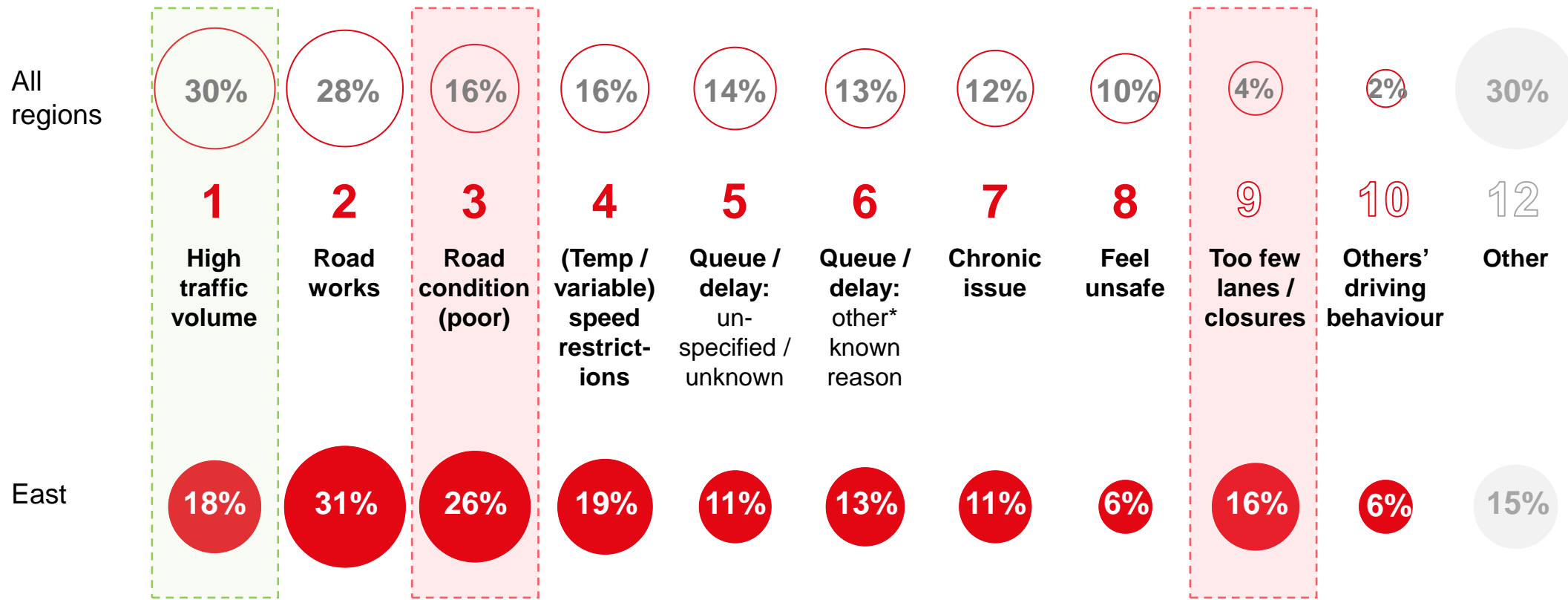
Together with qualitative feedback as here, this suggests that there may be some more tolerance for “deliberate” disruptions – about which drivers can be informed in advance – but congestion and delays, especially if unexpected or (perceived as) avoidable, are less acceptable. Information doesn’t solve, but can help to mitigate, these scenarios.

Base: sample of those giving a rationale for overall satisfaction rating Oct 21-Sep 22 – dissatisfied, East (62, all regions (200)

\* i.e. not (only) roadworks, speed restrictions / traffic volume; includes accidents, stranded vehicles, debris, and traffic management infrastructure like roundabouts, traffic lights, etc., for example

# Poor road surfaces are a more common reason for dissatisfaction here than any other region, as is perception of insufficient lane provision *(this latter issue is second only to Yorkshire)*

Dissatisfaction: top reasons – East comparison to average  
*(very / fairly dissatisfied) % mentioning topic*



Base: sample of those giving a rationale for overall satisfaction rating Oct 21-Sep 22 – dissatisfied  
 All regions (200), East (62)

  Less common in this region than average  
  More common in this region than average

# These issues can cause real frustration – and some aspects of SRN management can be emotive

**Dissatisfied** (very/fairly): Example comments (East)

“ Only two lane carriageway, should be at least three lanes, too many lorries. ”

“ Roadworks have been on this road for over a year and are still causing problems ”

“ 40 mph limit for a long stretch of the road with no work being undertaken and no reason for the limit given ”

“ The A120, despite upgrades to the surface, is horrendous to drive on, It is so in need of being turned into a dual carriageway, with the ferry port, and a large town at the end of it, the extra road traffic always causes slow journeys, and it is in constant need of repair due to the heavy traffic it takes ”

“ The road is completely inadequate for the amount of heavy traffic which it carries all the time. It is a very dangerous road. ”

“ Roadworks around Cambridge and quality of road surface particular Wymondham A11 stretch is terrible. Other parts have potholes and poor surface ”

“ The A12 is not a particularly good road. It is full of patchwork repairs and very noisy and uncomfortable in parts. ”

“ The road surface is dangerous in places ”

“ There was road works or 40/50 mph zone most of the way ”

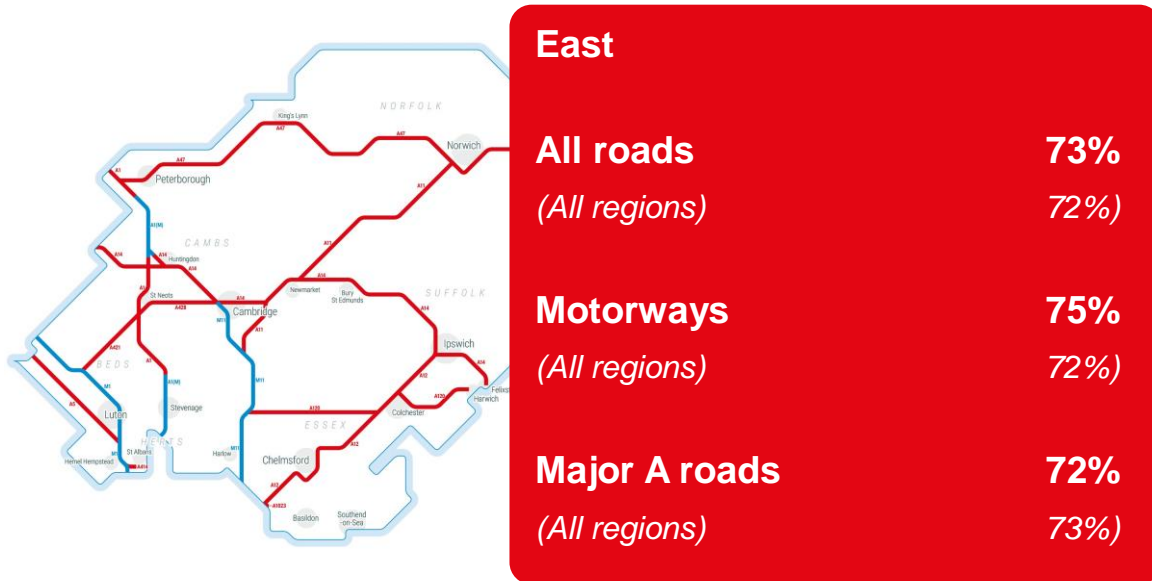
# Further patterns for motorways and major A roads in the East





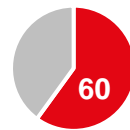
# There is of course a range of experience across the East region. In particular, that part of the M1 in East region and the A12 are delivering low levels of satisfaction

Overall satisfaction by road / road type within the East



Overall satisfaction by road\*

A1(M)	83	A120	69
M40	81	A47	67
A14	78	M1	61
A1	74	A12	59
M11	73		



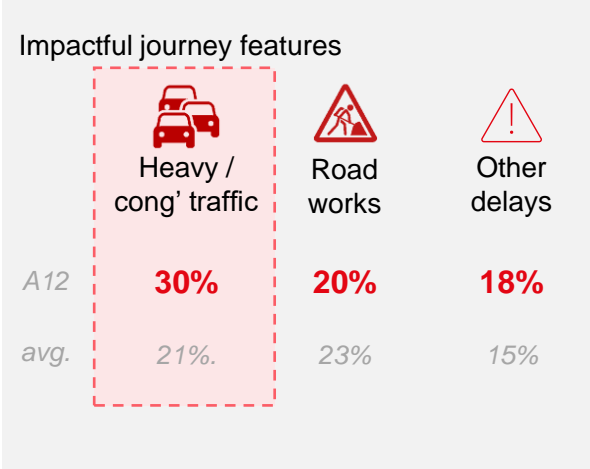
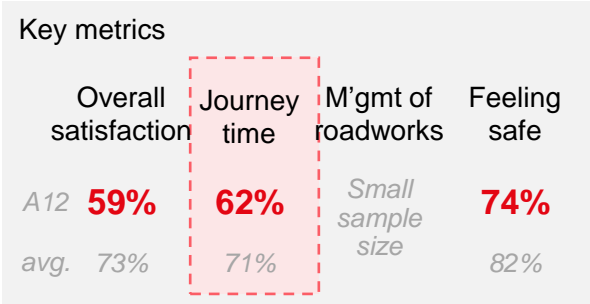
Context: major A roads account for the majority of survey results for the East region, with 60% of all responses relating to major A road journeys. This compares to 47% on average and is the highest proportion of major A road journeys across all regions.

\*Results shown for individual roads where sample size is ≥75. All data at road level based on Apr '21 – Sep '22.  
All Motorways: All regions (3,902), East (422). All A Roads: All regions (3,420), East (625)

# A12 and A47 epitomise key issues experienced in this region: poor road surfaces, and congestion made worse by single-lane and speed-restricted sections respectively

## A12

**Congestion and poor road surfaces especially notable here**



Drivers' comments also emphasise **poor road surfaces**, and journeys slowed by **long 40mph sections**

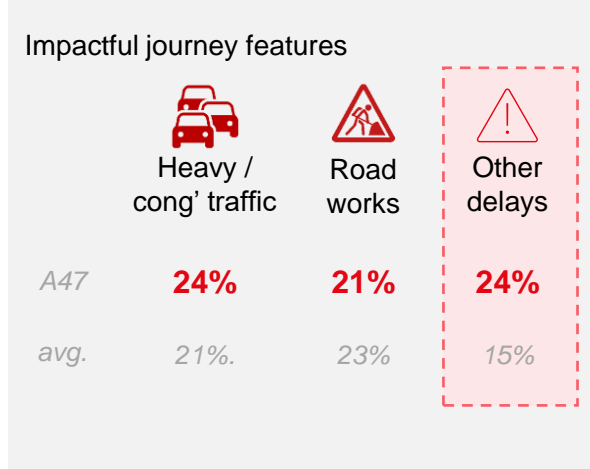
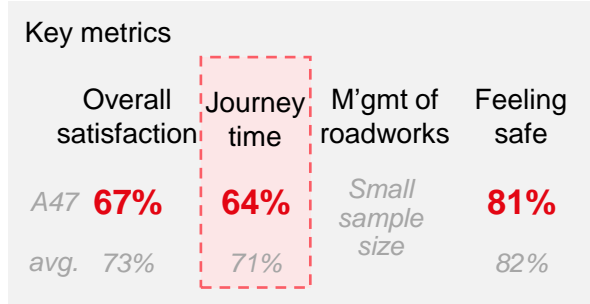
“...surface has deteriorated... sections that have been mended are better ”

“ There is a large section (10 miles) reduced to 40mph and has been for a long time. Also road surfaces not good, a lot of holes. ”

“...40mph section ...extended by 10 miles more than needed as it's for ...improvement works in Colchester, but it starts near Chelmsford. ”

## A47

**Single carriageways exaggerating congestion, to slow down (theoretically) short, regular journeys**



Comments in drivers' own words focus on road surfaces and **congestion, often linked to frustration with single lane areas**

“ ...bumps and pot holes, long single carriageway section. ”

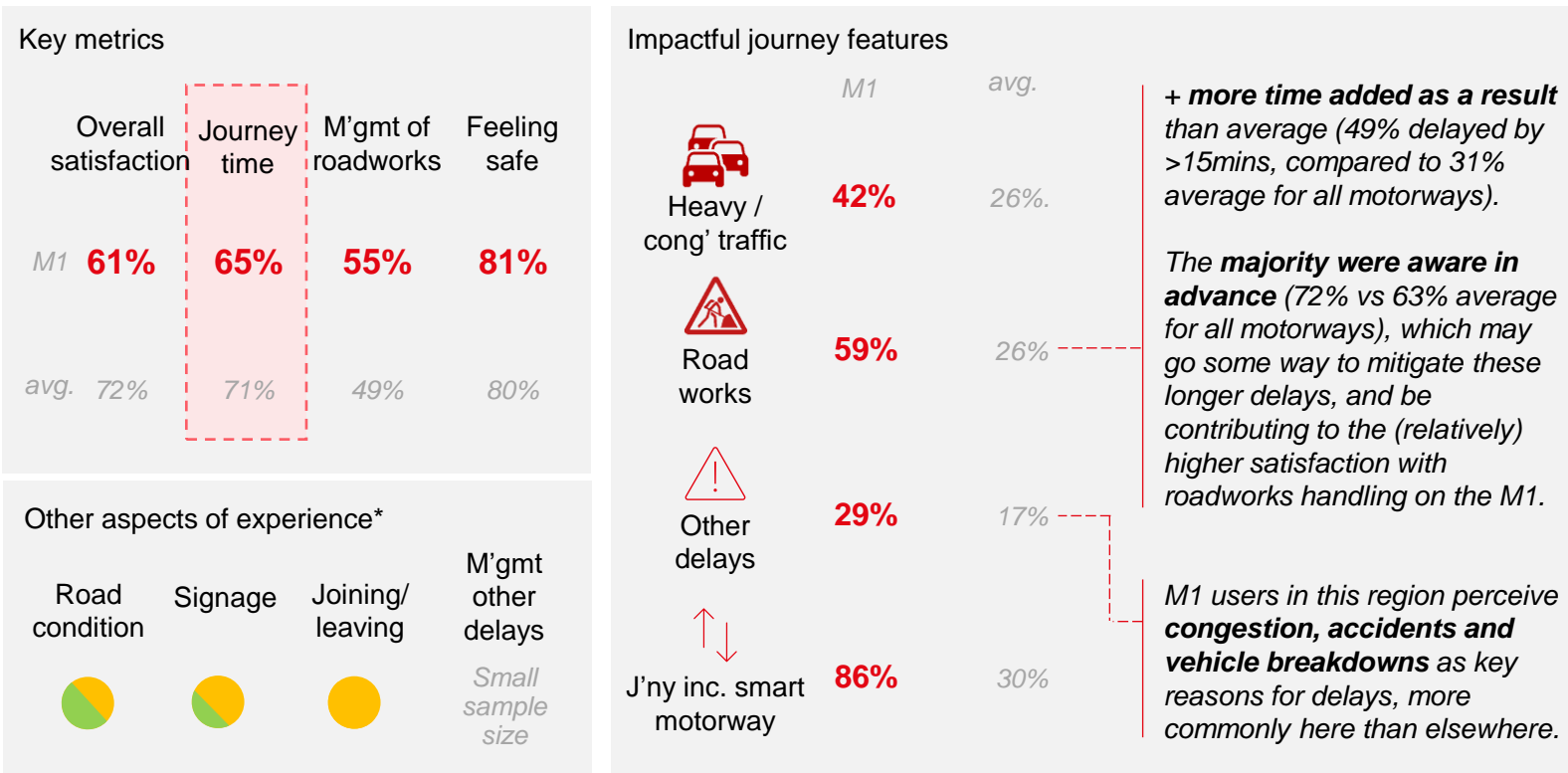
The A47 also has a relatively high proportion of shorter commuting journeys, being made on weekday peaks, and with greater frequency – so the **ongoing nature and repeated experience of the same issues here is also likely to be contributing to overall frustration**

SRN users in the East on A12 (169), A47 (161), Apr '21 – Sep '22

\* “Traffic lights” used here indicate how these users rate the range of measures within each of these topics (e.g. “Road condition” covers surface, lighting, markings, cats eyes, litter), compared to ratings for all motorways. Some sample sizes are smaller on some of these measures individually (e.g. lighting is only rated by those driving after dark), so we are presenting an overview of experience (which also takes into account free-text comments.). See pg 52 for detail

# More M1 journeys are slowed by roadworks, congestion and other delays, than the average for all motorways. The use of temporary speed restrictions through smart motorway sections is often perceived to worsen rather than improve journeys

**M1** Unlike the A12 and A47, day to day functioning of the M1 (like condition, marking, lighting, signage) is felt to be more reasonable. Bigger issues here are congestion and the incidence of roadworks, and smart motorway features intended to aid them



+ **more time added as a result than average (49% delayed by >15mins, compared to 31% average for all motorways).**

*The majority were aware in advance (72% vs 63% average for all motorways), which may go some way to mitigate these longer delays, and be contributing to the (relatively) higher satisfaction with roadworks handling on the M1.*

*M1 users in this region perceive **congestion, accidents and vehicle breakdowns** as key reasons for delays, more commonly here than elsewhere.*

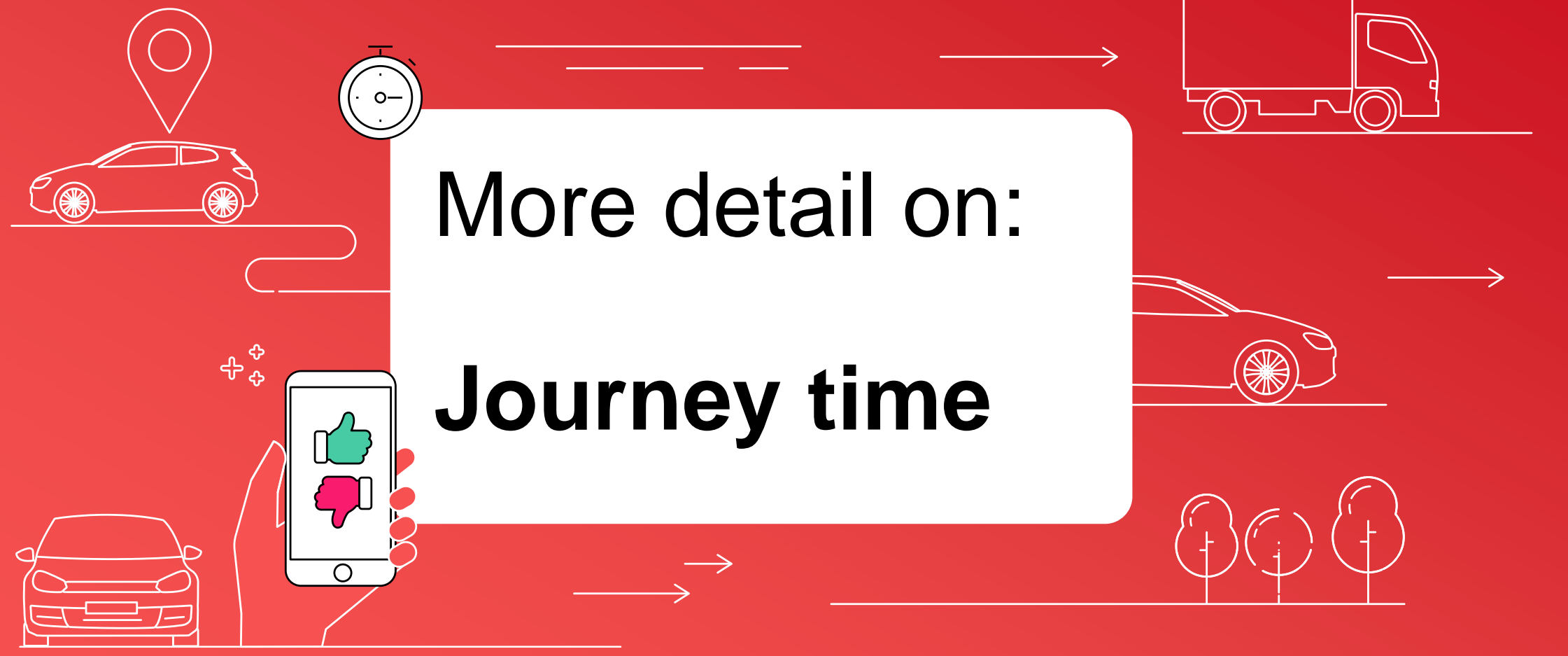
All of this is reflected in the way that M1 users in this region explain their satisfaction rating; their focus is on:

- **congestion** – perception of which is possibly heightened by the **volume of HGVs** here
- frustration with aspects of **smart motorway management** – especially **lack of hard shoulder** and “incorrect” or unnecessary **temporary speed restrictions**

“ High volume of traffic, no hard shoulder, many HGVs very close together, felt fast and potentially dangerous. ”

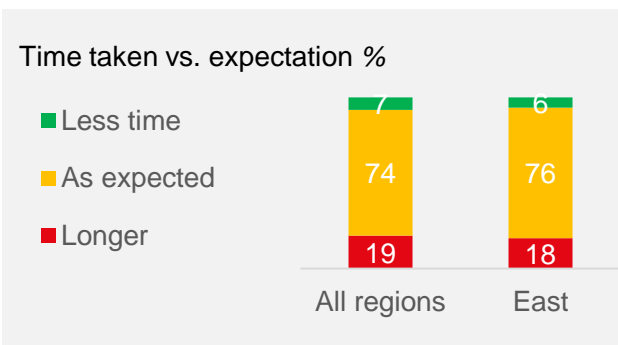
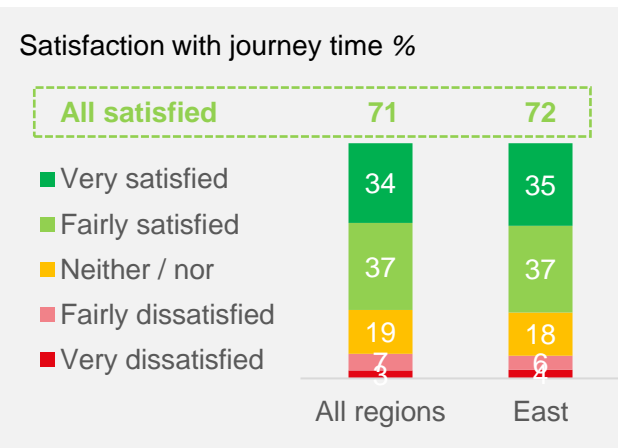
“ I think the smart motorway is a bad idea ...it would be safer if there was a permanent hard shoulder. ...the M1 gets very busy ...[it needs] an extra lane ...so the hard shoulder isn't used to relieve congestion. ”

More detail on:  
**Journey time**



# Users' experience of journey times on the SRN in the East

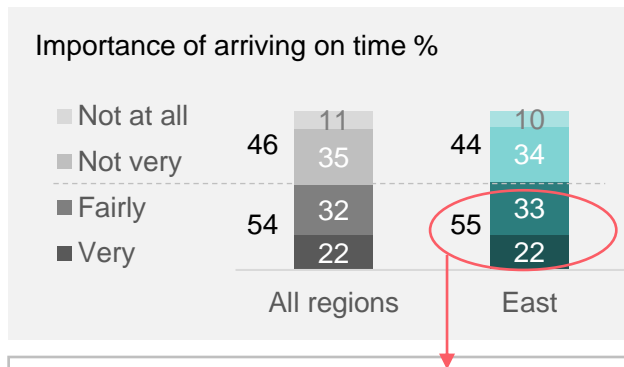
Satisfaction with journey times similar to the all-region average, with three quarters meeting expectations here



Journey times felt to be very slightly better on motorways than major A roads here

	Satisfied with journey time	Journey longer than expected
<b>M</b> M'ways		
All regions	71	20
East	<b>74</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>A</b> Major A roads		
All regions	71	17
East	<b>70</b>	<b>17</b>

Punctuality is overtly important in half of journeys



- This is usually:
- associated with work journeys
  - more for outward journeys, especially in weekday morning peaks
  - a little more so for van/lorry drivers


**60%** set off early (vs. 59% on average)  
 ...allowing **26 mins contingency** (vs. 24 mins on average)

Setting off early is associated with same-day commuting journeys, especially in morning peaks.  
 However, in other contexts, even where arrival time is important, people are no more likely to allow contingency (perhaps they are not able to, e.g. among delivery drivers?)

Many people set off earlier if they can, so **advance information on delays is vital**.  
 Nevertheless, it cannot be assumed that they will or can do this, so **continued pressure is also needed to improve and protect journey times** where possible

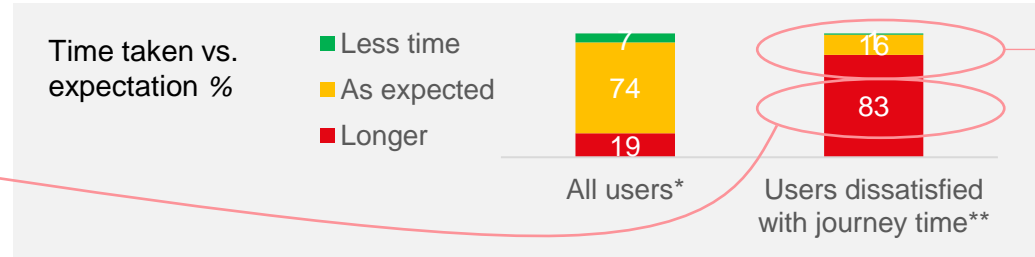


# What causes dissatisfaction with journey time?

Findings on this page are at national level 

Almost all dissatisfaction with journey times comes when the **journey is longer than expected:**

Similar pattern by region



...but there is also a substantial minority who **know their journey time will be poor, and this is indeed subsequently borne out**

## When things don't go to plan

- Heavy traffic features in most journeys which are felt to take too long
- Roadworks also often contribute, but other types of disruption tolerated even less

Journeys with dissatisfactory duration**: % featuring...	(Benchmark: all journeys)
Roadworks	47 25
Other delays	59 17
Heavy / congested traffic	76 24

Base:  
 \*SRN users surveyed, all regions Oct '21-Sep '22 (6,849)  
 \*\*All dissatisfied with journey time (684)  
 \*\*\*Delayed by xx mins due to roadworks / other (105-902)

When this means added time, there is **some tolerance for delays up to 15 mins for roadworks**, but **much less so for other types** of disruption



## Longer term dissatisfactory road provision

Journeys that are expected to, and indeed do take longer than they should, are disproportionately prevalent....

- On major A roads
- In certain regions (especially SE and NW)
- Among frequent users, especially commuters or those travelling for other work reasons
- Weekday morning peaks
- OR after dark
- When weather is worse

And users' comments indicate that often (for c. 40% of journeys), **they experience ongoing issues that they perceive should or could be addressed**

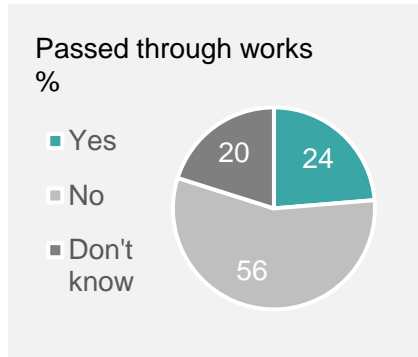
- “ Always surface water ...and always heavy traffic no matter what time of day [M6] ”
- “ Despite upgrades to the surface, [this road] is horrendous... It is so in need of being turned into a dual carriageway...and it is in constant need of repair due to the heavy traffic it takes [A120] ”
- “ Traffic volume...[it's] the only major road [here] ...so everyone uses [it] for every journey [A500] ”
- “ Stupid amounts of traffic lights that ...allow one car out of a pointless side road that barely anyone goes down [A47] ”



# More detail on: **Experience of roadworks**

# SRN users' experience of roadworks in the East

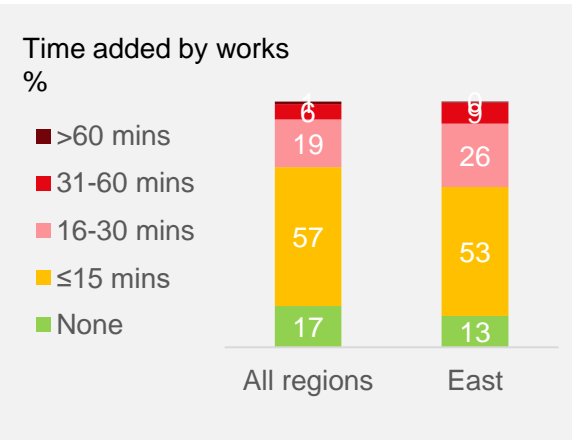
## A quarter of journeys in the East region passed through roadworks



Compares to all-regions average of 25%.

Throughout the year the perceived volume of roadworks was similar on both motorways and major A roads here. However, feedback indicates that **the incidence of roadworks on major A roads in East region increased from April onwards**, while there was an overall small decrease on the region's motorways.

## Most affected journeys were delayed by no more than 15 mins, but delays due to roadworks in the East were perceived to be a little longer than elsewhere on average



*This pattern is true for both motorways and major A roads here, but the impact is felt particularly sharply on motorways:*

*43% of affected motorway journeys in the East took an additional 16 mins or more, compared to 31% on average for all motorway journeys.*

## Under half of those affected were satisfied with roadworks management



*Despite longer delays caused by roadworks on motorways here, satisfaction with their management was relatively higher on motorways, at 53% (vs. 49% for all motorways).*

*Only 41% were satisfied with works management on major A roads here (vs. 49% for major A roads across all regions).*

## Advance warning increases satisfaction with how roadworks are managed, and the earlier the better (though satisfaction is low overall despite this)

Satisfaction with roadworks management, among those who were.... %	Unaware	Aware after setting off (not before)	Aware before setting off
	35	50	53

Inevitably it may be difficult to truly satisfy users in the context of a disrupted journey, but other factors in management of works can exacerbate this experience.

Comments from users who are dissatisfied with roadwork management highlight themes including:

- Perception of unreasonable impact:
  - Excessive number of encounters with works
  - Unnecessary length of road affected
  - Excessive duration
- Little evidence of work taking place in practice
- Unclear benefit (or explicit disagreement with purpose, especially relating to smart motorways)
- Speed restrictions – especially multiple variations, and narrowed lanes
- Poor lighting or signage

# Finding out about roadworks in the East

**60% of those affected were aware of roadworks in advance of the journey, with previous exposure the main source of awareness**



Reflecting this reliance on prior exposure, advance knowledge of works is associated with more frequent usage – especially commuters and professional drivers. **Those making less frequent journeys, typically for leisure, are less informed.**

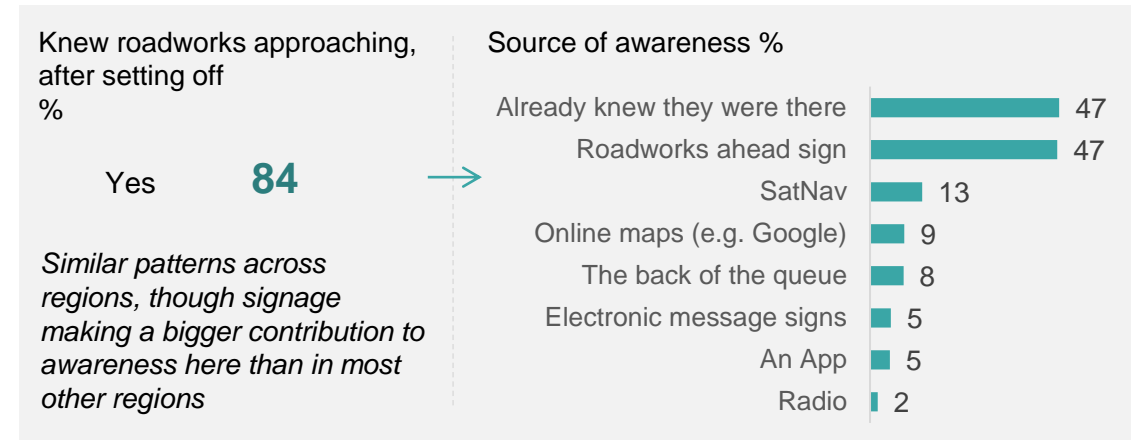
Likely linked to this, people are less informed when travelling off peak and at weekends.

### Can more be done...

- in periods of higher leisure travel to target less-informed groups?
- around road-side signage visibility, especially in the dark?
- to inform people in advance about works on major A roads in particular

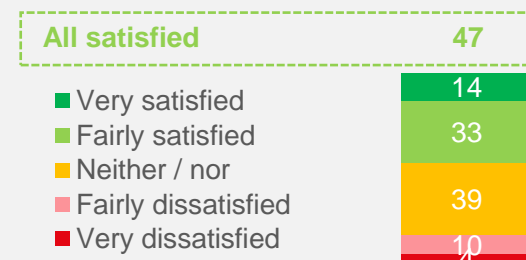
Base: All affected by roadworks in the East (241)

**Most were aware they were approaching roadworks as they made the journey: own experience again important here, along with road signage**



**And in this context, in-journey information is satisfactory to only half of those who were aware of approaching works (Similar to all-region average)**

Satisfaction with info provided, after setting off %




Information from any source aids satisfaction here.

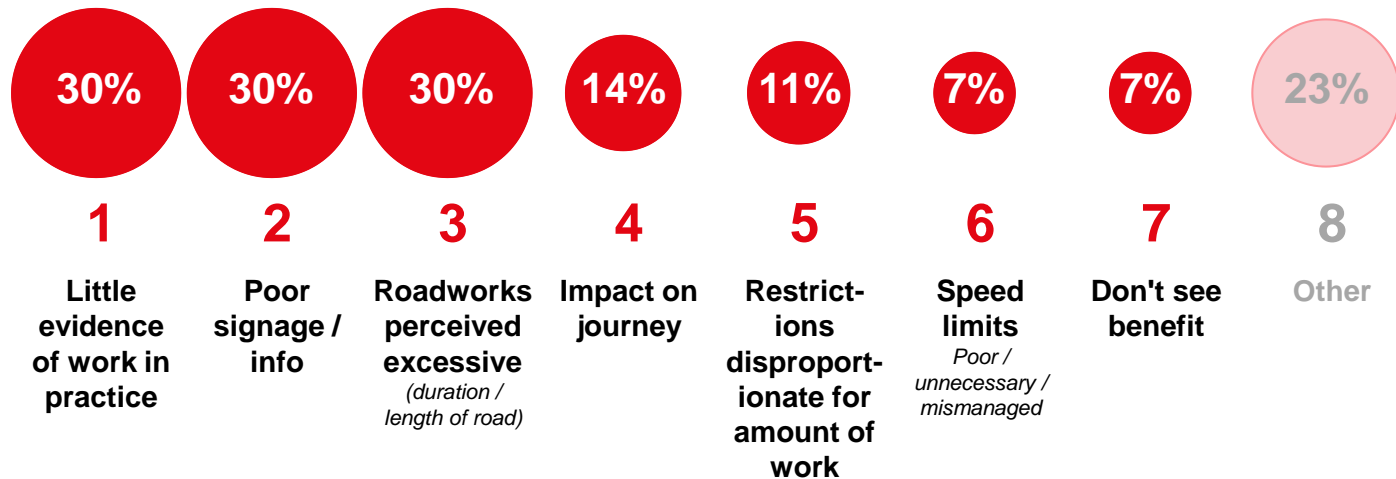
Again, users typically feel that information is a little better on motorway journeys compared to A roads, and this is especially true in this region.

# Dissatisfaction with works management usually driven by apparent absence of actual work, signage issues, and a general perception of there being too much, for too long

Strategic road users were asked **why** they were satisfied or dissatisfied with roadworks management, in their own words. We have quantified the key themes which arose, from a random sample of their responses.

Findings on this page are at national level 

**Dissatisfaction** with roadworks management: top reasons  
(very / fairly dissatisfied)  
% mentioning topic



**Similar pattern overall for motorways and major A roads**, though with some minor differences.

- M** Dissatisfaction with management of motorway roadworks is a little more often based on:
- the **perception that the length of road affected is excessive**
  - and/or that **restrictions in place are unwarranted** for the perceived amount of work underway

(Likely linked to this), motorway users are also:

- less likely to see the benefit of works
- ...but to experience greater journey impact


- A** Dissatisfaction with works management on major A roads is a little more commonly linked to:
- **duration**
  - **lack of work taking place in practice**

(possibly linked to higher familiarity with major A roads among those using them, compared to motorways)

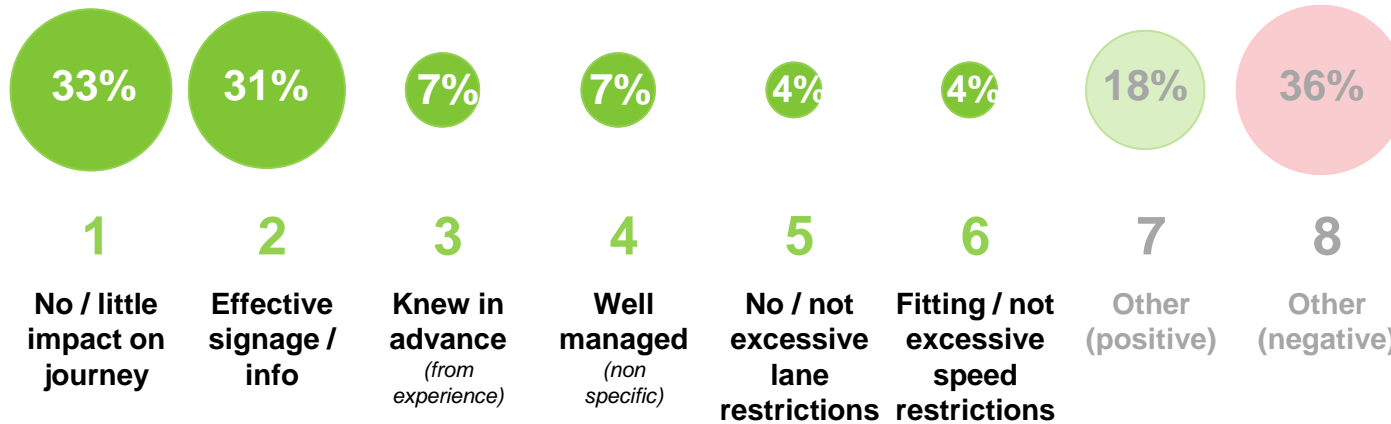
Analysis here is shown at all-regions level, but **qualitative feedback is similar in the East as a whole**.

# When SRN users are satisfied with roadworks management, it's typically due to little material impact, and/or that they feel informed

Strategic road users were asked **why** they were satisfied or dissatisfied with roadworks management, in their own words. We have quantified the key themes which arose, from a random sample of their responses.

Findings on this page are at national level 

**Satisfaction** with roadworks management: top reasons  
(very / fairly satisfied)  
% mentioning topic



(Those satisfied overall with roadworks management still have some negative comments)

**Similar pattern overall for East SRN users, though (even when satisfied with roadworks management) those affected here were more likely than elsewhere to comment that they didn't know sufficiently in advance**

“ There were sufficient signs and coneage... [but] I couldn't get Waze to work properly before I set off, so couldn't check as far in advance as I would have liked. ”

“ The signs were too close to the works to change route ”

“ They were well signposted but I didn't know in advance they were there ”

Base: sample of those giving a rationale for satisfaction with roadworks Oct 21-Sep 22  
All (202), A roads (101), Motorways (101)  
East (all roads) (50)



# Free-text comments relating to roadworks span a range of issues

Findings on this page are at national level 

## Perception of unreasonable impact

- “ Extreme number of roadworks / holdups meant I had to find a number of alternative routes. ”
- “ The amount and length of roadworks and variety of speed limits. ”
- “ There is too much road improvement work ...between very short distances ”
- “ Ringwood roundabout is a mess at the moment. Roadworks going on forever. ”
- “ Roadworks have been on this road for over a year and are still causing problems ”
- “ Constant road works ...There's been plenty of time to do these in the last 2 years when the motorway was quiet through covid ...but then when everything back to normal at... more road works ”
- “ There is a 40mph section that seems to have been extended by around 10 miles more than needed as it's for a very small piece of road improvement works in Colchester, but it starts near Chelmsford. ”
- “ That expensive roadworks near Sainsbury has been going on for years! It's really annoying. ”

## Management measures

- “ Road works ...very badly lit ”
- “ Resurfacing roadworks ...with REALLY AWFUL diversions indicated ”
- “ ...miles of work has been completed but the reduction to only 2 lanes is still in place. The lane reduction needs removed for the first few miles as it's complete ”

## Unclear / disputed benefit

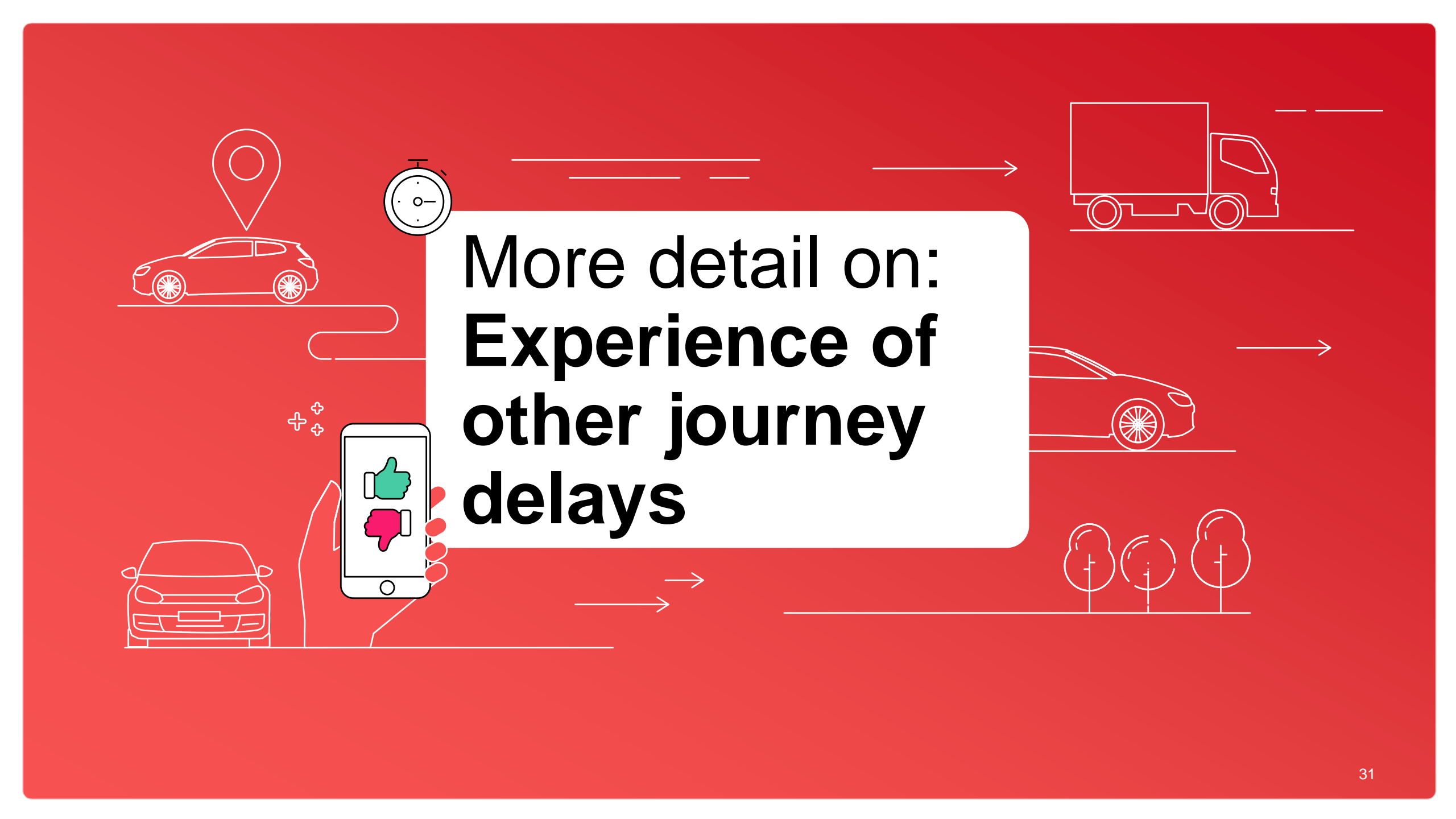
- “ Extensive roadworks and speed restrictions connected to creation of 'smart' motorway; a concept that is fundamentally flawed. ”
- “ Brexit-related roadworks, contraflows and speed restrictions still in place. ...a pain in the backside. One of the worst bits of motorway in the whole country. ”
- “ The "road improvements" they are implementing aren't even a token gesture in addressing the overall problem of the road being totally inadequate for the sheer volume of traffic that uses it. ”
- “ ...always some road closed, yet there are so many potholes on the very same fixed road after years of roadwork. ”

## Little evidence of work in practice

- “ Too many road work obstructions with no work being carried out, i.e. traffic calming exercise. ”
- “ Traffic cones limiting lanes but no works apparently underway ”
- “ 40 MPH limit for a long stretch with no work being undertaken and no reason for the limit given ”
- “ Miles of lane closures but little work actually taking place ”

Keeping the impact of roadworks to a minimum is a real priority – with considerations for duration, length of road affected at any one time, and timing/placement of traffic management measures which are not perceived to be excessive

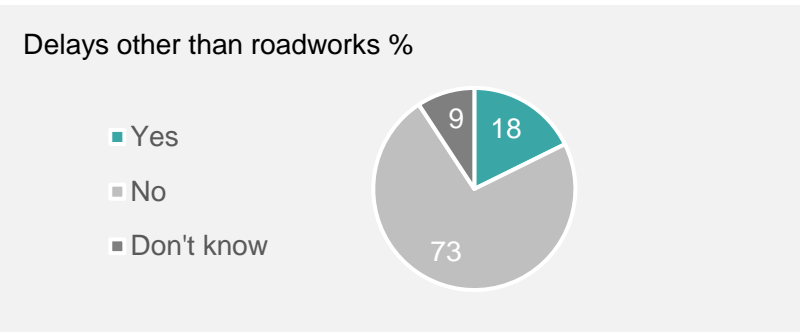
In addition to information to warn about the fact of works taking place, users may benefit from more – or more accessible – information about why works are taking place, along with the rationale for the measures used to manage traffic as they happen



More detail on:  
**Experience of other journey delays**

# Users' experience of other journey disruption in the East

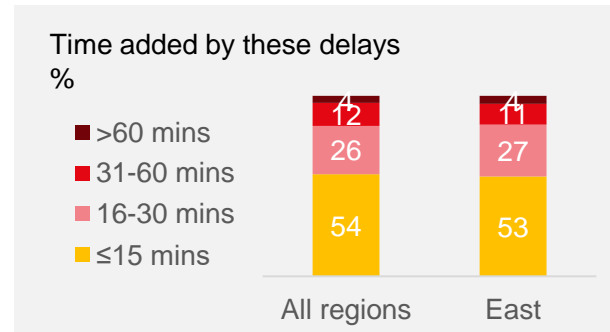
## Relatively fewer journeys were delayed for other reasons



*In line with all-region average*

*Similar pattern for motorways and major A roads, both here and at national level*

## ...but these delays are typically longer than for roadworks



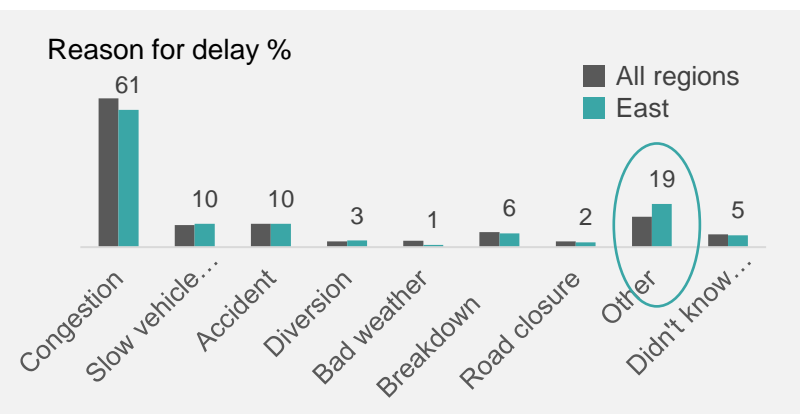
*Delays on motorways typically a little longer than on major A roads. A similar pattern in this region specifically.*

## ...And fewer than a third of those affected are satisfied with their management



*In line with all-region average.*

*Satisfaction with delay handling is typically a little stronger on motorways than major A roads; this is especially true in the East region.*



*Similar pattern to all-region average, though a slightly wider variety of different issues are perceived as causing delays in the East.*

*In particular, when users give feedback in their own words, insufficient lanes / capacity – and so a greater susceptibility to delays when other issues occur – is a common topic*

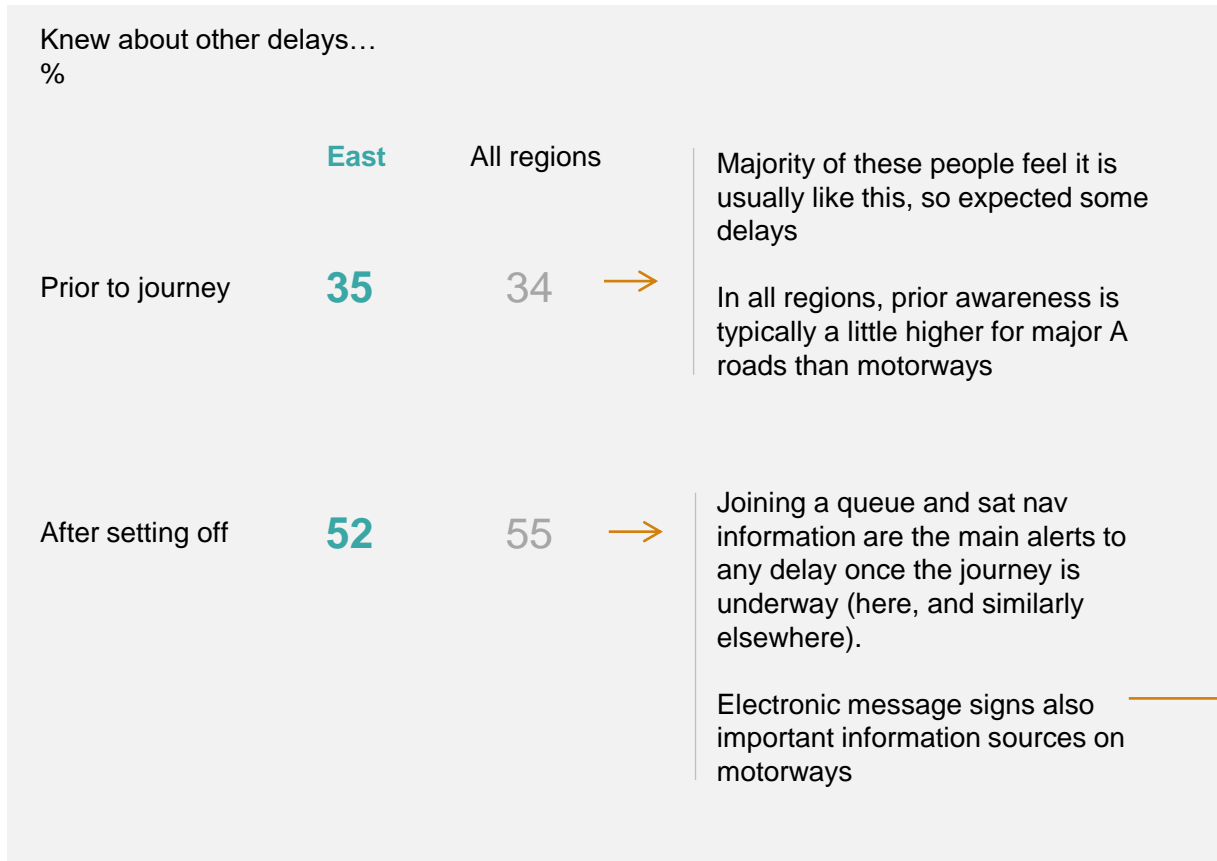
“ Single carriageway most of the way makes progress slow... In comparison to roads in the north of England and abroad the road is woefully inadequate. ”

“ Slow progress, not enough dual carriageway ”

“ Very slow, single track road with little overtaking opportunity due to slow tractors and cyclists ”

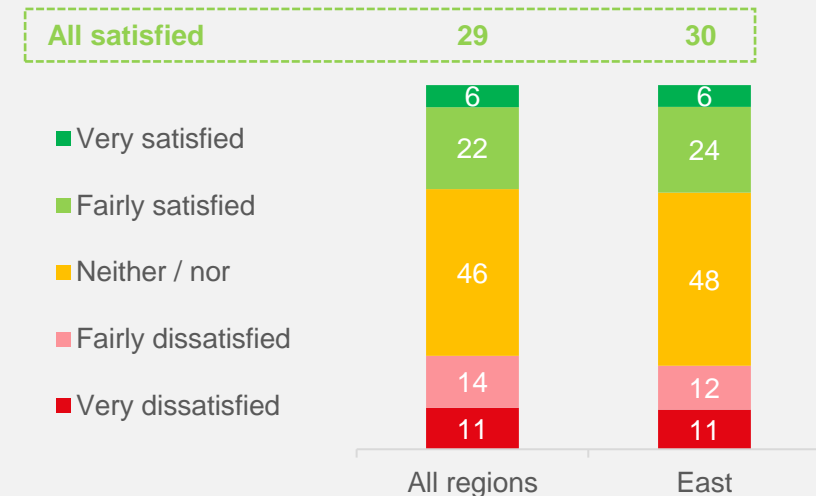
# Finding out about other types of delay in the East

Only a third of those affected by other types of delay were aware ahead of the journey, and half after setting off.



...all leading to relatively low levels of satisfaction with delay-related information

Satisfaction with info about non-roadworks delays %



With this additional, live channel, information on motorways is typically more satisfactory than on major A roads (37% satisfied with delay information on East region motorways, 21% satisfied on East region major A roads).

This pattern is similar across most regions.

Base: All affected by delays other than roadworks in the East (168)

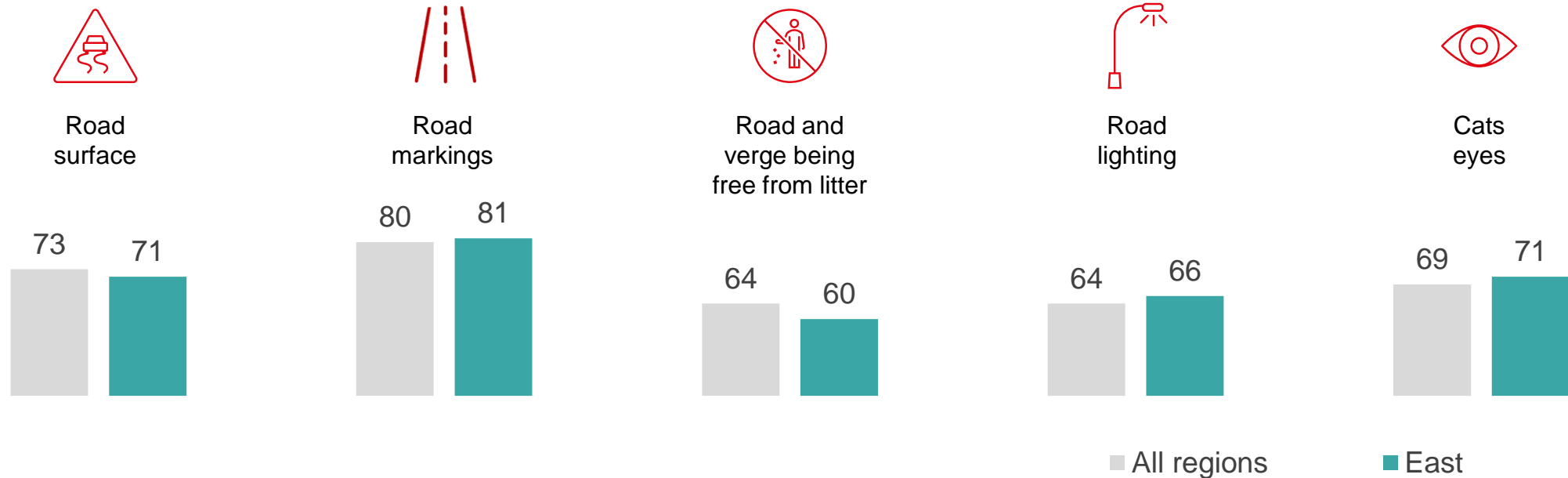


More detail on:

**Day to day  
functioning of SRN**

Most are satisfied with road markings, but typically less so on other aspects of road condition and lighting. In addition, East region is rated lower than all other regions for road surfacing and especially litter.

Rating of road condition  
% very / fairly satisfied, East vs all-region average



*Motorways in this region perform a little above the all-region motorway average for all of these aspects of the SRN experience.*

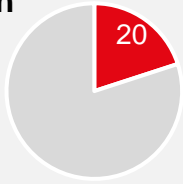
*However, major A roads here perform consistently below average for equivalent road types, especially on road surface, lighting and litter,*

Base: Road surface / marking / litter, all regions (6,212-7,234), East (900-1,037)  
Lighting / cats eyes, among those travelling after dark, all regions (1,058-1,158), East (179-192)



# Little spontaneous comment on litter from users, but it can affect broader impressions of safety and maintenance

**20% were dissatisfied with litter along the road and verge in this region**



16% average across all regions



The majority of those commenting on litter / debris were **fairly** satisfied or dissatisfied with their journey overall – rather than having conviction either way

Comments from these people indicate key themes in what the presence of litter means to users →

Unightly, if not materially affecting journey time and therefore the overall journey

“ The road side edges are a bit of a mess now - sad as it is a relatively new road ”

“ ..Plus, the ugly sight of the horrendous littering on the A1, all the way!!! ”

“ No delays but huge litter on the slip roads. Please remove all the litter ”

Vegetation also contributes to untidy appearance

“ Weeds too high on the banks and barriers ”


Growing environmental consciousness may also heighten awareness and concern for impact of litter?

“ Litter everywhere especially plastics on the hard shoulder and central reservation ”

...although people do sometimes experience – or fear – more tangible effect

“ ...such a shame is the amount of rubbish on the sides of the roads ...[which] has got much worse. They used to pick up rubbish - what has happened? It is dangerous if it gets on the road and also it is a fire hazard. ”

“ The hard shoulder always has rubbish and debris which worries me if I need to pull over ”

Findings on this page are at national level unless stated 

Implication that roads are not maintained in other ways

“ The rubbish on the side of the road is disgusting. Admittedly people shouldn't drop litter but it appears that you do very little to maintain the road. It's embarrassing. ”

And possibly draws more attention to other evidence of poor maintenance?

“ Several badly repaired potholes and litter on the edges of the road. ”

# What are the issues with lighting?

Findings on this page are at national level 

Recap: when we asked for comments in users' own words,

**Lighting, cats eyes and road markings were mentioned as a reason for**

**dissatisfactory journeys, by 2%** of those who were fairly or very dissatisfied overall:

**Not one of the bigger issues, but important to some**

At the very least, drivers often feel uneasy in these scenarios:

“ I don't like driving home when it is dark, but there were so many lorries on the road, which I had to pass and quite a few potholes, which I couldn't see or, tried to navigate ...The road was very dark and therefore difficult to manoeuvre. ”

**Most common complaint is simply insufficient lighting**

“ The [road] is not lit in this section which makes driving harder ”

“ ...the road... is VERY badly marked with the cats eyes and road markings being non-existent ... It is dangerous, especially in the dark or half light. ”

“ This road has enough traffic to warrant motorway standards. It is frankly dangerous as it has too many bends, poor junction layouts and no lighting. ”

“ Much of the initial journey from York was on unlit roads where it was difficult to travel at speed without high beams on, unfortunately this was not possible with oncoming traffic. Even without sufficient lighting there were sections of road with no cats' eyes (or they were[n't] very reflective). ”

**But some other themes also arise in users' comments:**

Poor lighting is **especially noticeable or impactful when affected by roadworks or other disruption**

“ ...There was also roadworks which caused unexpected detours via some very dark single-track lanes. ”

“ Roadworks complicated the journey - watching out for road signs on a dark, wet night with slight traffic congestion ”

**....or poor weather**

“ Clear of traffic but low lighting so hard to see in the rain ”

“ No motorway lights in heavy rain makes it very dangerous to drive especially when there is traffic all the time ”

Lighting is often felt to be **important – and noticed as poor – when combined with other examples of poor maintenance**

“ Poor lighting over grown road signs making it almost impossible to see directions ”

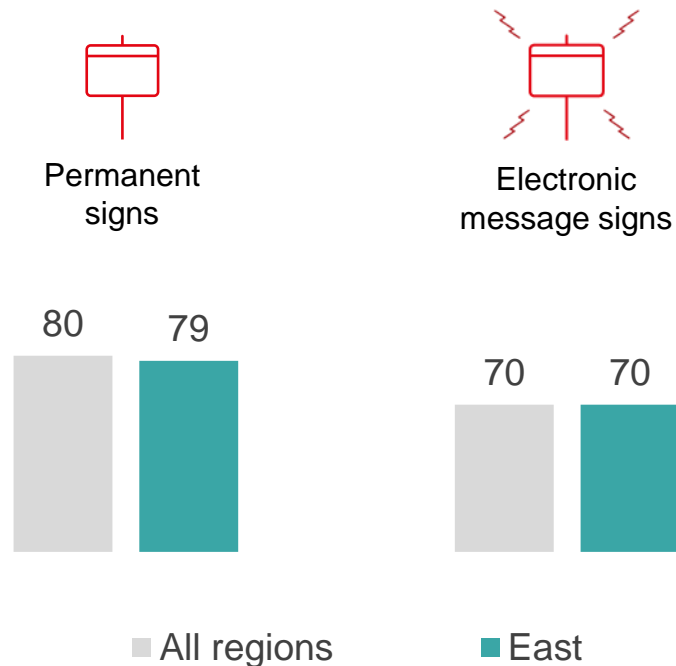
“ Poorly lit with unclear nearside verges ”

“ Long time spent driving on reduced carriageway in poor light with poor marking and uneven road surface ”

# The East performs similarly to the national average for signage

## Rating of signage

% very / fairly satisfied, East vs all-region average

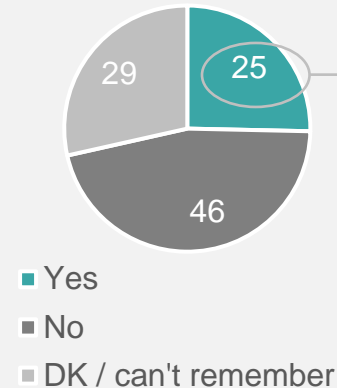


Both motorways and major A roads in this region perform on average for equivalent road types, on these measures

Base: Permanent signs (6,937), East (988)

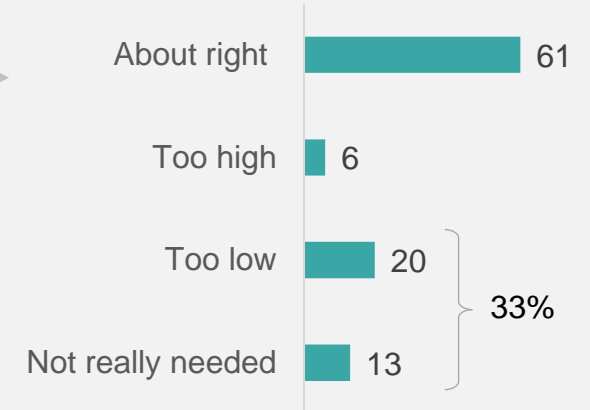
Electronic signs, among those having seen them, all regions (4,906), East (673)

## Saw electronic signs % East



Similar pattern across all regions though the East has among the lowest usage and visibility of this signage type

## Appropriateness of electronic speed limits for conditions % East



Similar pattern across all regions

# More on users' experiences with electronic signage

Findings on this page are at national level



19%

Temporary or variable speed limits was the third most common reason given for dissatisfactory journeys in the East, mentioned by almost a fifth of all those giving a reason

....but SRN users who were dissatisfied with electronic signage mentioned other issues including...

- **Variability** of speed limits within journey
- **Contradicting information** with other sources
- Wider **dislike of smart motorways**
- **Lack of (reasonably expected) information** (diversions, closures)
- **Compliance with speed limits** and other instructions (often linked to perceived needlessness)

## Apparently needless speed limits are the most frequent complaint

“ ...there were no obstructions at all, the only thing that caused the congestion were the speed limits themselves ”

“ ...limited to 50mph ...and there's no work actually taking place ”

“ Signs indicated reduced speeds due to pedestrians on the motorway, but this was not the case. ”

“ ...Try as we might we couldn't see this stranded vehicle or any other reason for closing 2 lanes and reducing the speed limit. Obviously someone had forgotten to reset the signs for the hundreds of motorists on the road. ”

“ The speed limits are always reduced when there is no issue on the roads. If there had been an incident then they hadn't removed the speed [limit] quick[ly] enough ”

“ There was also an incident ...so we had to divert ...but only because we were able to check the online map en route and make the decision ourselves rather than there being any information provided on the overhead boards ”

“ ...This issue with leaving signs on is a regular occurrence on [this road] and makes you start to ignore them, a bit of a boy who cried wolf scenario ”

“ ...the various speed limits imposed... wasting more fuel! ”

“ Because of the continuous speed reductions, the traffic kept slowing down and bunching up across all lanes. The short spaces where there were no speed restrictions the road started to clear ”

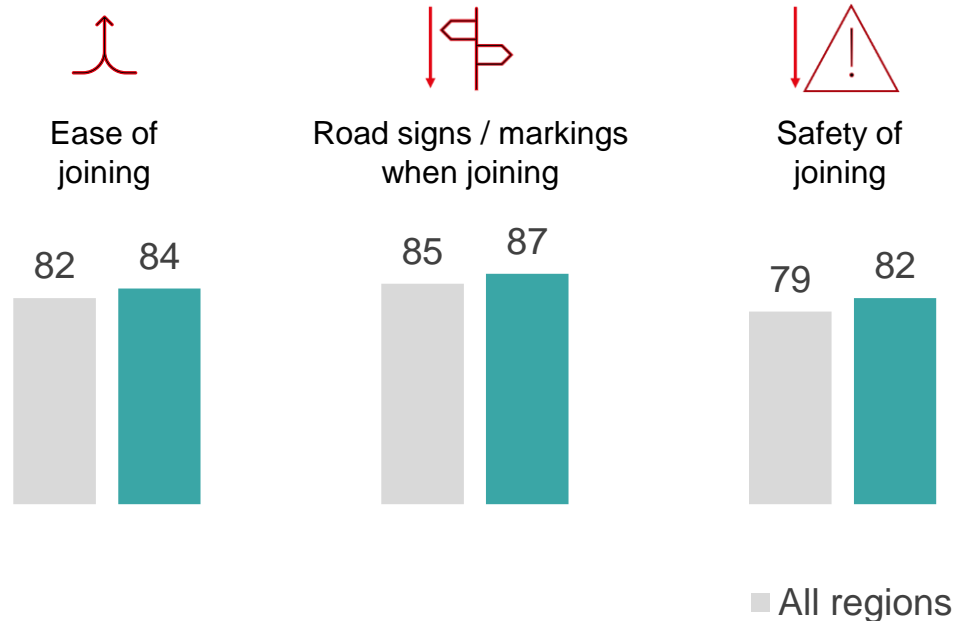
“ The dangerous variable speed limits and lack of hard shoulder ”

“ I was tail-gated by another car whilst travelling at 50mph through the roadwork section ”

# Most users satisfied with joining / leaving SRN; leaving a marginally smoother process. Little regional variation.

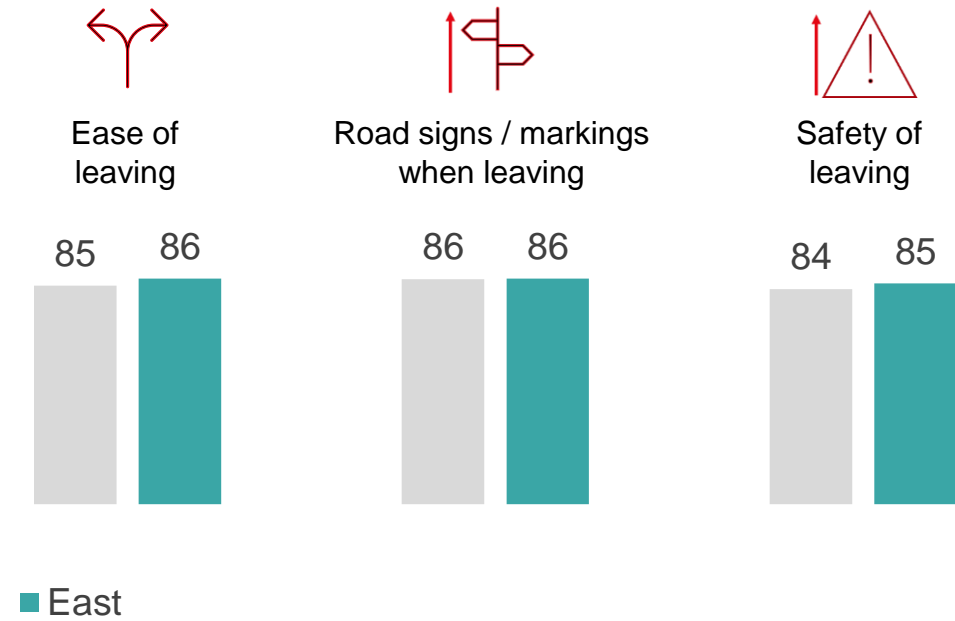
## Rating of joining

% very / fairly satisfied, East vs all-regions average



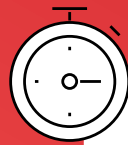
## Rating of leaving

% very / fairly satisfied, East vs all-regions average



Reflecting the overall pattern shown here, both motorways and major A roads in this region perform slightly above the national average for equivalent road types, on these measures

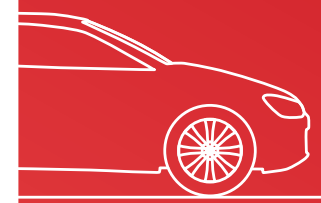
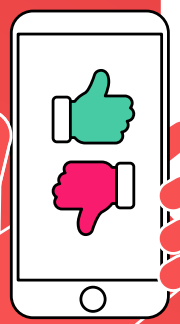
Base: all regions (7,182-7,264), East (1,034-1,046)



## Focus on other topics

Using and sharing the road comfortably  
Some smaller driver groups  
SRN users and smart motorways

Learnings relevant to all regions



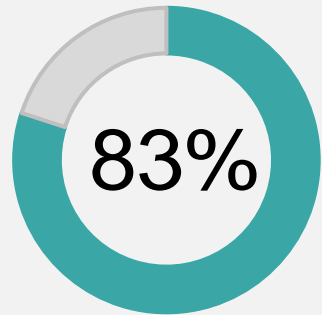


# Safety perception and confidence high overall, but some groups feel less at ease: **nervous, infrequent drivers, smaller commercial/goods drivers, motorcyclists**

## Most users felt safe on the roads

Felt safe when travelling (very/fairly safe)

80% on average across all regions.



While levels of feeling safe are similar for both major A roads and motorways at national level, **safety perception is slightly higher (85%) for motorways in the East.**

Across all regions, we see lower feelings of safety for three key groups

Inevitably, feeling safe is linked to pre-existing confidence:

### Nervous drivers

	Not confident on...
	A roads M'ways
Felt safe %	61 62

These less confident SRN users are more likely to be:

- Older (60+)
- Women – particularly for confidence on motorways
- Less frequent and lower mileage users of SRN

...But conditions and contexts for individual journeys can also make for safety concerns even among confident drivers and/or those who are familiar with SRN roads

### Lighter commercial vehicles\*

Confident: A roads	93	*Vans <3.5t
Confident: M'ways	93	L/HGVs ≤12t
Felt safe	76	

Key factors include:

- Heightened risk sensitivity via profession
  - “ This is a smart motorway...for my job in the fire service I have been called to serious accidents caused by smart motorways ”
- Conditions in specific vehicle context
  - “ ..very noisy, lots of mini potholes. Too aggressive for the van ”
  - “ ...nothing done to counteract the cross winds...no signage ”
- ...and some temporary, unfamiliar users
  - “ Never driven on a motorway in a van ”
- This group also more likely to travel in weekday peaks; and LGVs more likely to travel in poor weather and after dark – all factors contributing to safety.

### Motorcyclists

Confident: A roads	94
Confident: M'ways	84
Felt safe	62

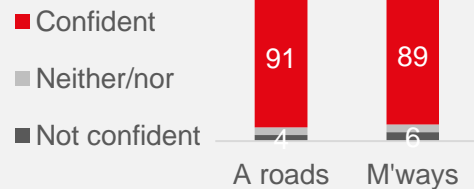
Key issues are:

- Other road users' behaviour, especially in giving enough space
- Road surfaces

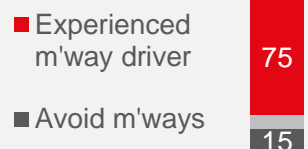
See more on motorcyclists' experiences later in this report.

Findings on this page are at national level unless stated

### Confidence %



### Motorway fluency %

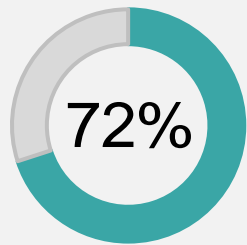


Safety: All (7,313), Nervous on A roads (94), Nervous on m'ways (131), Light commercial (421), Motorcyclists (138). Confidence: All (5,375), Light commercial (421), Motorcyclists (88-90)

# Poor driving is perceived as common, but while many are comfortable with speed (esp. on motorways), few see their own speeding as a risky behaviour

Experienced poor driving behaviour

70% on average across all regions

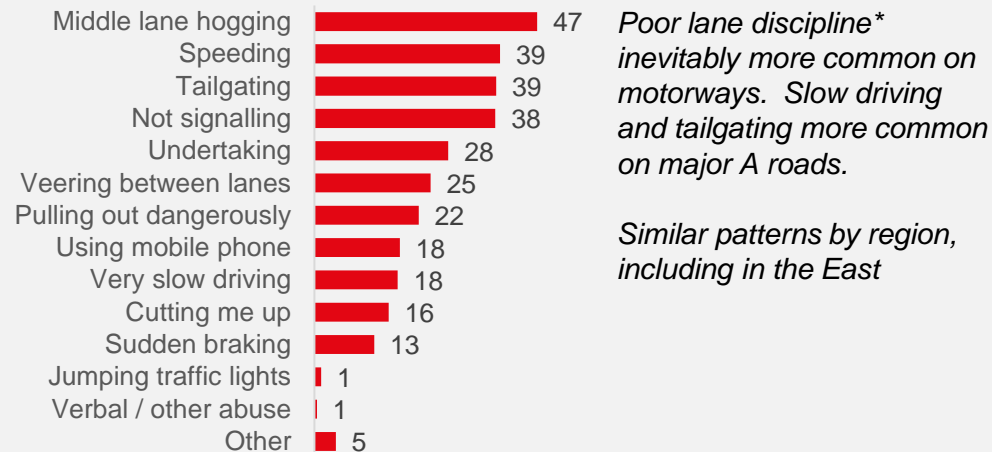


Poor driving by others is more common/noticeable on motorways, at 74%, vs. 63% on major A roads. This pattern is similar across regions with a few variations – but with **perceived poor driving on motorways in the East (78%)** and the Midlands (80%), and on major A roads in the M25 area (71%) in particular

Attitudes to risk and speed %



Types of poor driving seen %



Those willing to drive fast, exceed speed limits and take risks are more likely to be:

- Male
- Under 60
- More frequent drivers

...and are a little more likely to drive cars (rather than vans, lorries, buses), and newer, especially diesel vehicles.

These attitudes are also typically more common in the South East and M25 area

Among those not prepared to take risks:

- 24% are still happy to speed on motorways (vs. 56% of those expressly prepared to take risks)
- 13% speed on major A roads (vs. 43% of acknowledged risk-takers)

Findings on this page are at national level unless stated



Base: all SRN users surveyed Oct '21 – Sep '22 (7,342), East (1,051). Experienced others' poor driving behaviour (4,981), East (728)

\* Middle lane hogging, undertaking and veering between lanes

# Although not in all cases, many attribute others' poor driving behaviour to features or management of the roads themselves

“ Experienced some bad driving, a few cars undertaking ”

“ It is always so busy. Congested. People drive too close to each other and there are road works so the lanes are smaller. ”

“ Very busy. This causes some idiotic driving by impatient drivers. This is not a safe road. ”

“ There were numerous drivers driving in lane 2 when lane 1 was free forcing everything out around them. Poor adherence to variable speed limits ”

“ Loads of people speeding, tailgating, brake checking, all in the fog, dangerous. ”

“ It's too busy, the roundabouts at A5 and Towcester are **confusing for many people and they cut you up because they are in the wrong lane**. There are too many roundabouts ”

“ Hate being tailgated at 50mph with the smart M27 motorway work. Hate how **drivers go manic when they get past 50mph restrictions. When the 'smart' M27 motorway opens I'll use the A27**. Having been shunted in Nov 21 during slow rush hour traffic **would hate to get shunted at speed with removal of hard shoulder**. ”


“ Road works and standard of driving tend to make journeys harder, vehicles under speed and lane hogging, **no one knows how to drive in roadworks** ”

“ The traffic was very slow due to congestion, **where the dual carriage ways came back to one lane, people used the fast lane to push into the queue of waiting traffic... So people drove down the middle section to try and stop this**, as they were just being pushed further back in the queue. ”

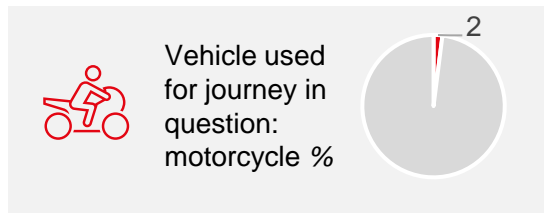
Findings on this page are at national level



# The experience of motorcyclists on the SRN

Findings on this page are at national level 

## Motorcyclists are a relatively small group within the survey

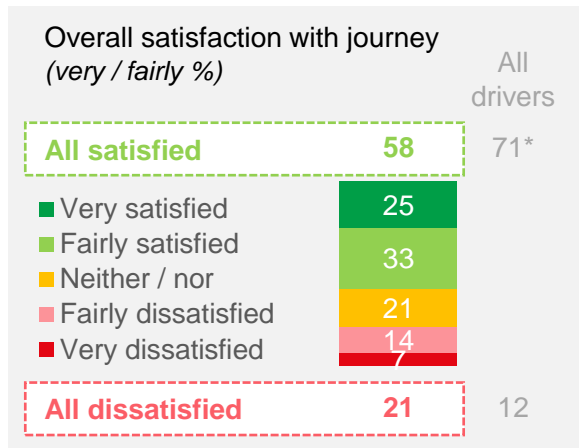


Confident on SRN, and attitude to speed may indicate particular expectation to travel swiftly

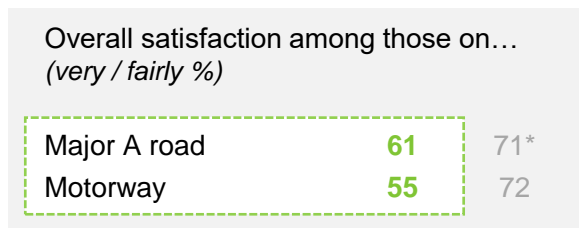
	Agree %	Disagree %
Confident: Major A roads	94	4
Confident: Motorways	84	10
Even slightly exceeding speed limit is less safe	51	34

...and experiencing similar levels of congestion and roadworks to others, but a little more affected by other delays

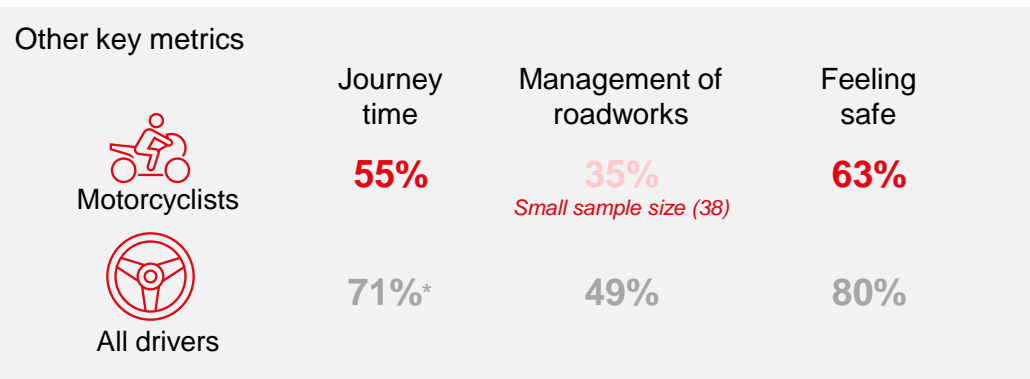
## Notable for having some of the poorest SRN experiences



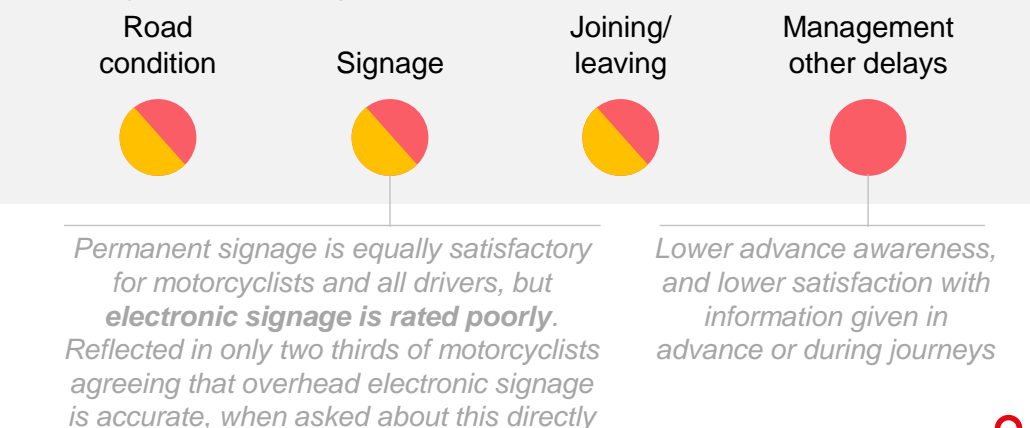
...and are a unique group in that their experience on major A roads is better than on motorways (reflecting their relatively lower confidence on motorways)



## ...which extends across most aspects of their journeys



## Other aspects of SRN experience\*\*



Motorcyclists Apr '21 – Sep '22 (185), using m'ways (79), A roads (106). \*Note: time period used on this page is 18 months to Sep '22, in order to increase sample sizes for motorcyclists.

"All drivers" results shown here use the same period, so are slightly different from annual figures given earlier in this report.

\*\* "Traffic lights" used here indicate how motorcyclists rate the range of measures within each of these topics (e.g. "Road condition" covers surface, lighting, markings, cats eyes, litter), compared to ratings from all drivers. Sample sizes are typically smaller on some of these measures individually, so we are presenting an overview of experience (which also takes into account qualitative feedback via free-text comments in the survey, rather than fully quantified results.) See pg 52 for detail.

# Key reasons for motorcyclists' poorer overall experience: other drivers' presence and behaviour, and feeling a greater impact when things go wrong

## Top reasons given for dissatisfaction:

Key themes in motorcyclists' free-text rationale for overall dissatisfaction

**Volume of traffic**

**Poor road maintenance**

**Others' poor driving**

**Too few lanes**

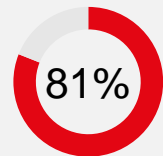
**HGVs / slow vehicles blocking the way**

*Road condition/ maintenance and other road users have relatively higher importance here than for other groups*

*“ Road wasn't too busy, which from a safety point of view is important on a motorbike ”*

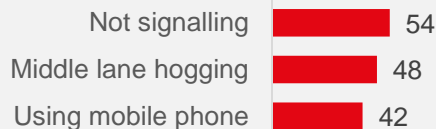
## Virtually all journeys feature concern about other drivers

Experienced poor driving behaviour



Compared to 70% of all drivers

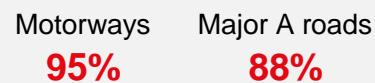
Types of poor driving seen: (top 3, %)



*In particular, not signalling and using mobiles are bigger issues for motorcyclists vs. other drivers*

## ...particularly on motorways

Other road users are my biggest worry on... (% agree)



This is often due to people being **inconsiderate**, but can be a **consequence of road management measures or conditions outside of individual drivers' control**

*“ I feel other vehicles do not give proper space to a motorcycle ”*

*“ The amount of heavy, commercial vehicles, made me feel very wary of my vulnerability ”*

## The impact can feel greater when journeys do not run smoothly



When road surfaces are poor, it really matters

*“ Slippery substance on roundabout resulting in me crashing and causing much damage to my new bike ”*

*“ There are a lot of uneven repairs causing ridges and pot holes ...a hazard to motorcycles ”*



Management of delays (especially when non-roadworks related) is felt to be poorer by motorcyclists\*:

- Less advance knowledge and fewer sources providing information (less access to radio/sat nav than others?)
- Dissatisfaction with any information received, including on electronic signs



And when movement is restricted by traffic controlling measures:

- Frustration felt by all drivers may be amplified in this group with its relatively higher expectation of speed and manoeuvrability
- ...and reduced agency can increase the sense of vulnerability

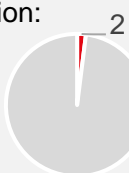
*“ ...no correlation between the speed restriction and conditions at the time...It's even had me doing 40 mph on my scooter at 05:00 when the motorway has been clear and it feels really dangerous. To be stuck doing 40 mph, in the 3rd lane of a 4 lane motorway... at night and with HGV's behind, is really scary and quite often has forced me to leave the motorway. ”*



# The experience of HGV drivers on the SRN: overview

## Another relatively small group within the survey

Vehicle used for journey in question: HGV/ LGV >3.5t %



Almost universally confident on SRN (96%)

Describe themselves as risk averse and unlikely to exceed speed limits.

More likely than other groups to be affected by congestion, roadworks and other delays (likely being unable to find suitable diversions as easily, or travel at another time), and for this to add more time.

These issues are reported more often on major A roads than motorways, among this group.

## Only two thirds of journeys are felt to be satisfactory

Overall satisfaction with journey (very / fairly %)

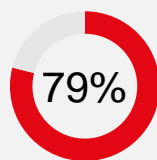


All drivers 71\*

Similar on motorways and major A roads, though overall a little more positive about driving on motorways

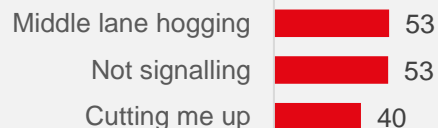
## Most journeys feature poor driving by others

Experienced poor driving behaviour



Particularly felt by drivers of larger HGVs

Types of poor driving seen: (top 3, %)



In particular, not signalling and being cut up are bigger issues here vs. other drivers. Others' mobile phone use also often noted by HGV drivers

## Satisfaction with journey time in particular is below average

Other key metrics



HGV / LGV



All drivers

Journey time

63%

71%\*

Management of roadworks

42%

Small sample size (49)

49%

Feeling safe

81%

80%

Relatively low journey time satisfaction, in the context that arrival time is important in 3/4 these journeys (vs. 53% for all drivers), but that this group is no more likely (or able?) to set off early in mitigation.

Journey times rated notably poorer on major A roads

Key metrics typically lower for lighter (3.5-12t) lorry drivers than >12t HGV drivers – most notably on feeling safe

Other aspects of SRN experience\*

Road condition



Signage



Joining/leaving



Management other delays



Higher advance awareness – due to previous experience – than other driver groups

HGV/LGV drivers Apr '21 – Sep '22 (158), using m'ways (84), A roads (74). \*Note: time period used on this page is 18 months to Sep '22, in order to increase sample sizes for HGV drivers.

"All drivers" results shown here use the same period, so are slightly different from annual figures given earlier in this report.

\* "Traffic lights" used here indicate how HGV/LGV drivers rate the range of measures within each of these topics (e.g. "Road condition" covers surface, lighting, markings, cats eyes, litter), compared to ratings from all drivers. Sample sizes are typically smaller on some of these measures individually, so we are presenting an overview of experience (which also takes into account qualitative feedback via free-text comments in the survey, rather than fully quantified results.). Pg 52 for detail



# Traffic volume, insufficient capacity, and difficulty sharing the road in this context, are common themes when HGV drivers feed back in their own-words

## Top reasons given for dissatisfaction:

Key themes in HGV drivers' free-text rationale for overall dissatisfaction

### Volume of traffic

### Too few lanes / closures, or narrow lanes

### Roadworks

### Others' poor driving

### Road maintenance

Plus some specific issues such as lack of services or stopping places

And more than any other group, HGV drivers observe these issues to be ongoing

*“ Traffic is very heavy for that stretch of single carriageway. ”*

*“ I try to hold lane one where possible to allow other road users to pass, however, there are parts of the [road] that are extremely poor surface quality with hundreds of potholes! This makes steering an HGV tricky! ”*

*“ Roadworks limiting to one lane for no obvious reason and very slow speed limits which change regularly again with no reason ”*

*“ ...dangerous as many road users do not know how to use [smart motorways] correctly...I find myself having to either undertake a vehicle in lane 1 which is going a lot slower or going over to lane 3 just to overtake 1 vehicle which is normally a car not driving to the road layout ”*

*“ Every Friday same story J10 to J8 crawling for no reason ”*

*“ Usual A14.... ”*

## Non-HGV drivers also observe some of the same issues from their different perspective

*“ HGVs hitting their limiter trying overtake HGVs also hitting the limiter ”*

*“ A significant number of lorries were overtaking, despite there being clear “no overtaking” signs, which should have been adhered to in the time I was travelling. This lead to tailbacks in the fast lane as the lorries take significant time to overtake. This added time to my journey. ”*

*“ A HGV did not move out of the inside lane to let me on the A34 so I had to slow down even though it could have moved into the outside lane. ”*

*“ Traffic heavy with HGVs only two-lane motorway and slow progress ”*

*“ For an A road there were an awful lot of lorries slowing everyone down on the single lanes. ”*

*“ Only 2 lane carriageway, should be at least 3 lanes, too many lorries. ”*

*“ Fairly satisfied, other than lorries driving too close to me. ”*

Findings on this page are at national level





# The experience of some other smaller SRN user groups



## Drivers with a disability or long term health condition

### A relatively small group:

- 68% affected in movement
- 28% have mental health / cognitive condition



### More likely than others to...

- Make infrequent, shorter journeys
- Travel off-peak for non-work reasons
- Be retired, and female
- Be a little **less confident on m'ways**

## SRN experience is broadly similar to other users – except perceived safety

### Other key metrics

	Overall satisfaction	Journey time	R'works mngmt	Feeling safe
Disabled	<b>71%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>76%</b>
All drivers*	71%	71%	49%	80%

Poorer perception of safety likely linked to lower confidence. This group is also more sensitive to others' driving behaviour, which contrasts with their own risk-averseness.

Note: this group is typically less forewarned of roadworks: likely due to lower frequency given their knowledge of works (like others) usually comes from previous journeys

### Other aspects of SRN experience\*\*

Road condition	Signage	Joining/leaving	Management other delays

Drivers with disability (449); EV drivers (175). "Traffic lights" used here indicate how these groups rate the range of measures within each of these topics, vs. average. See pg 52 for more detail.

\*Time period used on this page is 18 months to Sep '22, in order to increase sample sizes for these groups; "All drivers" results shown here use the same period, so are slightly different from annual figures given earlier in this report.

\*\*Fuel type was only asked of car drivers. "All drivers" results here are relevant to all car drivers only for direct comparison with EV car drivers.



## Electric car\*\* drivers

### Another small group overall



### More likely than others to...

- Be of working age (and in work), and male
- Travel in weekday peaks, for commuting or business
- ...with **higher frequency and mileage** than others
- Be **confident**: more willing to drive fast, and typically experienced on motorways (though a minority avoid them, more than petrol or diesel drivers)

## While most aspects of SRN experience are similar to other users, EV drivers rate information (both permanent and variable) poorly.

### Other key metrics

	Overall satisfaction	Journey time	R'works mngmt	Feeling safe
EV car drivers	<b>73%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<i>Sample size too small</i>	<b>79%</b>
All car drivers**	72%	70%	49%	81%

Feedback in other research suggests that the impact of when things go wrong is greater, given the potential need to refuel sooner than expected; this is likely influencing attitudes towards signage

### Other aspects of SRN experience\*\*

Road condition	Signage	Joining/leaving	Management other delays
			<i>Sample size too small</i>

# Users' experience and opinion of the operation of smart motorways: snapshot

Findings on this page are at national level



Many take the opportunity in this survey to express **disagreement with the concept, mainly around safety concerns from no hard shoulder**, as well as some frustration with variable speed limits

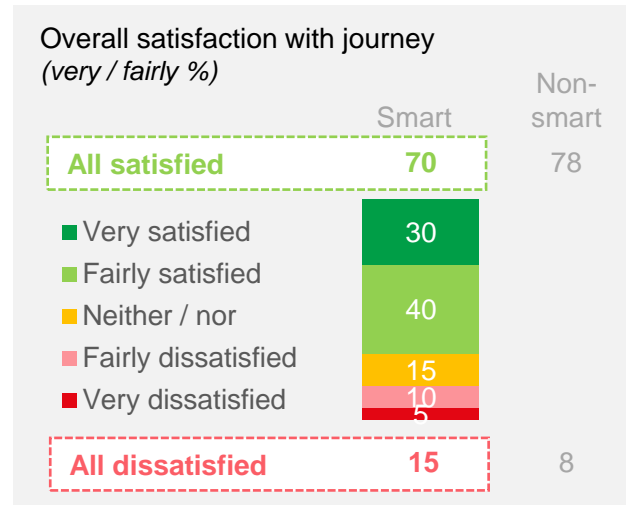
“ I have used the M42 for 40 years and since it has been a smart motorway it has been 4 lanes of stationary traffic during rush hour times. I no longer use the M42 during the rush hour because I cannot be certain that I will reach my destination on time. ”

“ I do not like smart motorways as they are a dangerous arrangement. Currently the M27 is being converted. Once completed I will avoid it. ”

“ ...do not like the smart motorways. They are terrifying if you were to break down ”

“ ...the dangerous and stupid smart road which makes journeys take longer and is more dangerous ”

## Satisfaction is lower overall among those using smart motorways



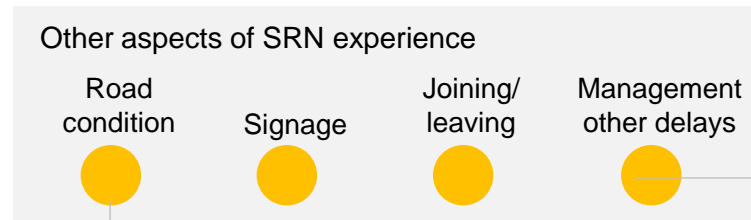
## ...especially for journey times and safety

Other key metrics	Journey time	R'works management	Feeling safe
Smart motorway	<b>67%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>77%</b>
Non-smart motorway	77%*	52%	85%

Journey times more likely to exceed expectations (27% vs 15% for non-smart roads), be affected by heavy traffic / congestion (31% vs. 20%), roadworks (32% vs 23%) and other delays (23% vs 12%)

Others' poor driving – mainly lane discipline – also observed more often on smart motorways

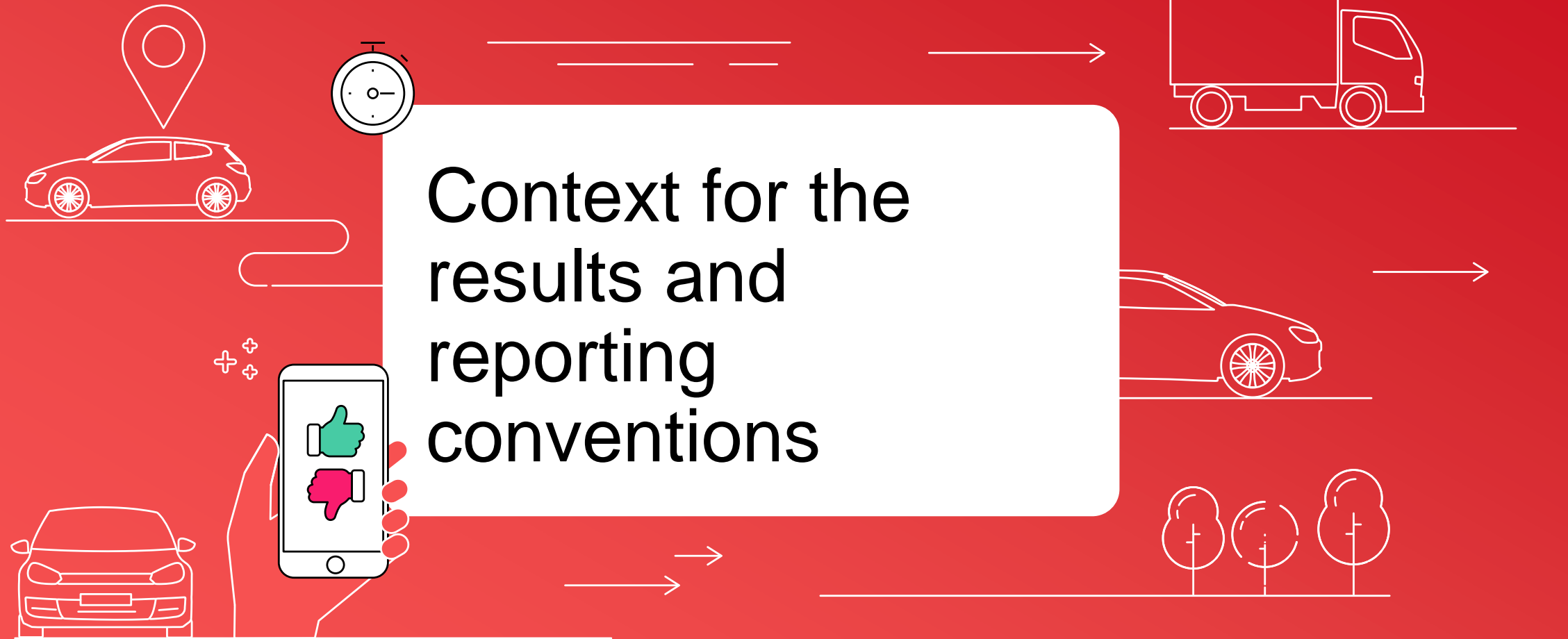
## Despite some vocal complaints, in practice signage is rated similarly to other motorways



Lighting after dark rated better than other motorways, for these more recently upgraded roads

While relatively few drivers (on any road) rate delay management well, smart motorway users are less dissatisfied with information provision. They are typically a little better informed about delays, both in advance and during their journey, with online maps and electronic signage important in this.

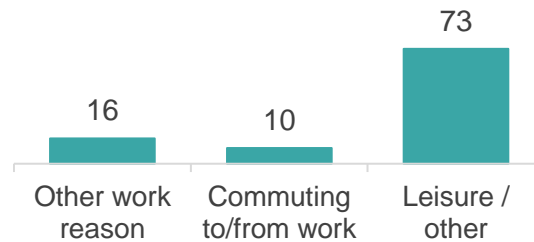
# Context for the results and reporting conventions



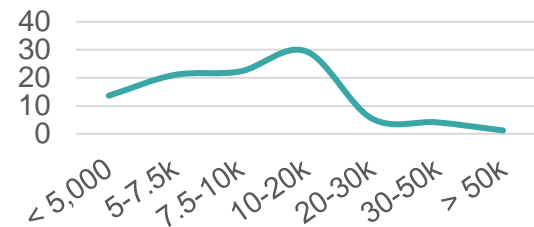
# Users, and how they use the SRN in the East

## Driving context

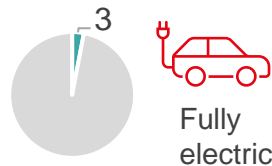
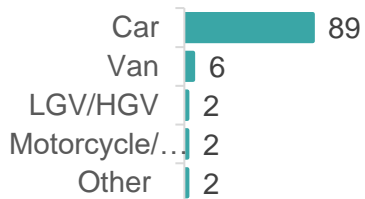
Journey purpose



Annual mileage (total)

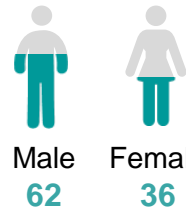


Vehicle type

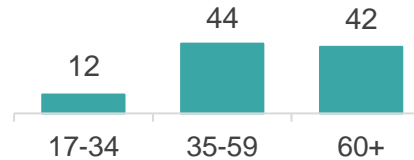


## The traveller(s)

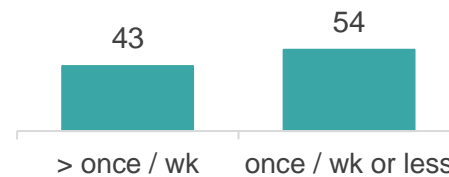
Gender



Age



Frequency on SRN



Any disability

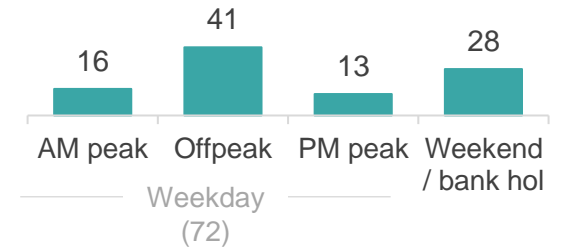


Travelling party



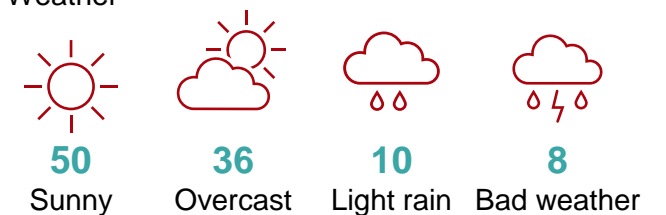
## Environment

Journey time



19% journeys took place (partly) after dark

Weather



Figures shown are for the East; patterns are very similar at all-regions level

Base: all SRN users surveyed, East, Oct '21 – Sep '22 (1,051)

# Some principles in the reporting



## Time periods for reporting

Throughout this report, the majority of results show the feedback for journeys which took place between October 2021 to September 2022.

This time period differs in some isolated places, either where a question was not included on the survey for all of this time, or where a longer period has been included in order to increase the sample size for reporting. These instances are marked on the relevant pages.

## National and regional-level data

Some pages in this report show data at national (England) level, summarising a particular topic where the findings are relevant to all regions.

Findings on this page are at national level



These pages are indicated with this symbol.

In other cases, results are at regional level.



## Satisfaction and other ratings

Where figures are shown for “good”, “poor”, “satisfied” ratings, etc., this is the percentage of users who gave an opinion. I.e. this excludes people for whom it was not relevant at all, and those who answered “don’t know”.










## “Traffic lights”

Some pages in this report use “traffic lights” to summarise how well or poorly journeys on the SRN are rated among a particular group of users, on a particular topic, compared to average.

In some cases this gives an overview of the topic from across several specific measures within a theme, together with qualitative feedback from users on the same themes, in response to open-ended questions. (e.g. “Road condition” covers surface, lighting, markings, cats eyes, litter).

Colours used in these traffic lights therefore take an overview perspective, and constitute a judgement as informed by the survey data. Colours used can be interpreted as follows:

-  Well above average across all relevant measures (and this finding may be supported by notable positive qualitative feedback)
-  Above average across most relevant measures (and may be supported by some positive qualitative feedback)
-  A little above average across some relevant measures (but not all)
-  Largely in line with average (this includes where sample sizes are too small to be confident that the result is genuinely different from average)
-  A little below average across some relevant measures (but not all)
-  Below average across most relevant measures (and may be supported by some negative qualitative feedback)
-  Well below average across all relevant measures (and may be supported by notable negative qualitative feedback)

# Contact

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