



Strategic Roads User Survey

Findings for Yorkshire and the North 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
1,017 for roads in Yorkshire and North East



Results in this report cover 12 months:

October 2021 – September 2022

Key findings: SRN in Yorkshire and the North East

73% Just under three quarters of SRN journeys in Yorkshire and North East are felt to be satisfactory

Similar to the national average of 72%. The region as a whole is also broadly in line with the national average across other key measures.



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



Factors for dissatisfaction here are:

- **Roadworks** – important everywhere but perceived as particularly prevalent here
- **Congestion** – another common cause of dissatisfaction, but more so here and compounded in this region by (perceived) higher prevalence of heavy, slower vehicles, with insufficient road capacity to match
- Other issues including temporary speed restrictions, poor maintenance, and other delays



These issues are felt with greater impact on the region's major A roads



Yorkshire and North East motorways score higher than elsewhere:

- Outperforming other regions on road condition, signage, access/egress
- But room for improvement in lighting and litter, as nationally

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



Safety perceptions high overall, but some feel less at ease: less familiar drivers, smaller 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. Notably, **while others' poor driving is similarly common in this region to elsewhere, it has more impact here, again linked to higher congestion**



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

Issues for National Highways Yorkshire & North East to consider

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

✓ **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

✓ **Finding ways to minimise the impact of congestion**

- Better warnings about common congestion hot spots, especially for less frequent users who are more difficult to reach
- Related to the previous bullet, consider how information would help people avoid the busiest times of day/days of the year – especially in peak leisure seasons
- Consider how behavioural nudges could encourage better driving etiquette and make better use of capacity on routes with fewer lanes than ideal, particularly on non-motorway sections of the A1

✓ **Improving overall environment and experience on the roads, especially around lighting and litter**

Some overall findings

“Key metrics”



Three quarters of SRN journeys in Yorkshire and North East are felt to be satisfactory: broadly in line with national average across key measures

Key metrics
Oct 2021 – Sep 2022



Overall satisfaction

73%

Very satisfied 38%
Fairly satisfied 35%

Journey time

71%

Very satisfied 35%
Fairly satisfied 36%

Management of roadworks

50%

Very satisfied 18%
Fairly satisfied 33%

Feeling safe

81%

Very safe 34%
Fairly safe 48%

England-wide

72%

Very satisfied 34%
Fairly satisfied 38%

71%

Very satisfied 34%
Fairly satisfied 37%

49%

Very satisfied 16%
Fairly satisfied 33%

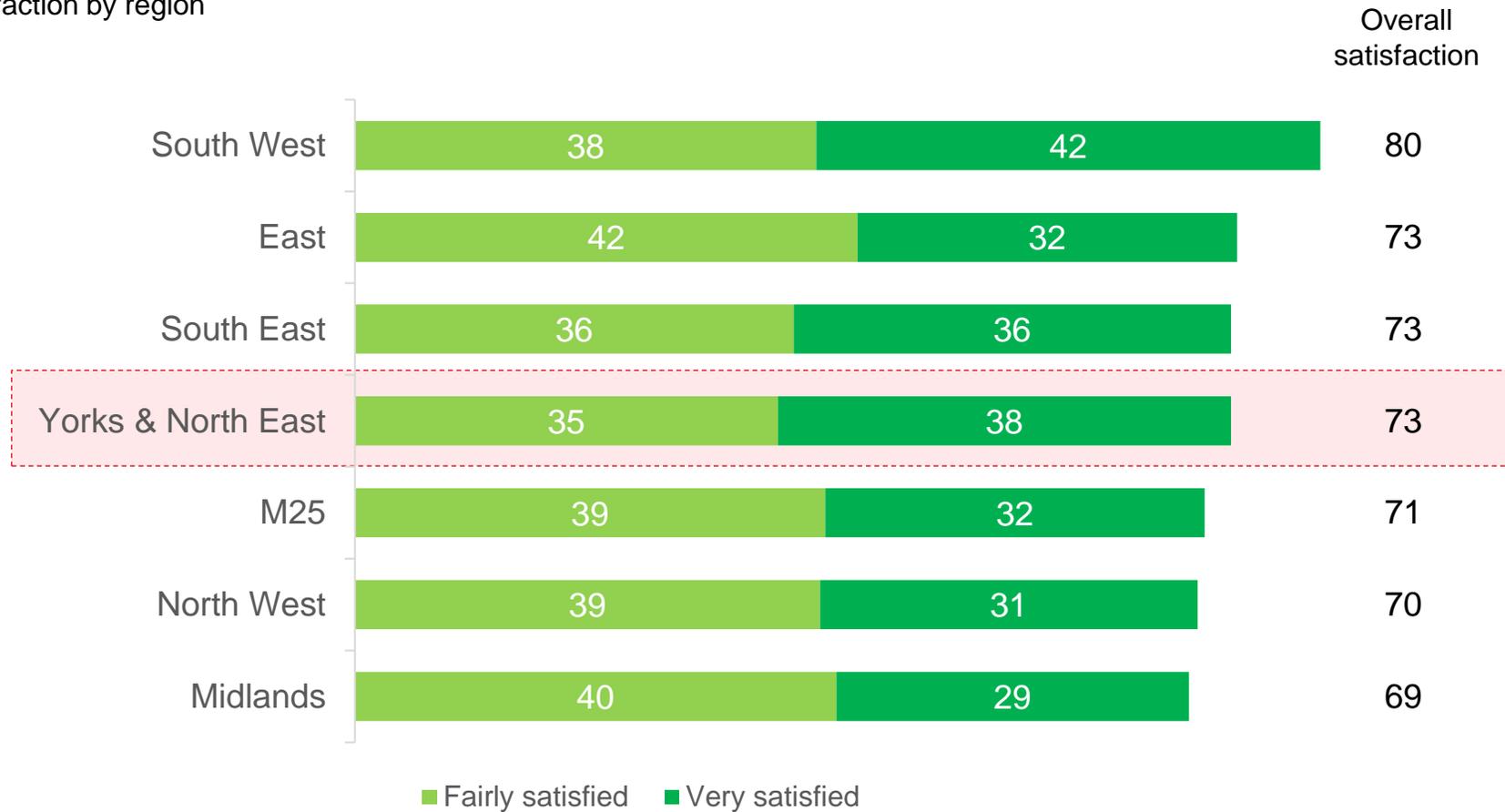
80%

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)
Yorkshire and NE: overall satisfaction (1,014), journey time (1,014), roadworks management (290), feeling safe (1,014)

Yorkshire and North East is mid-table, though has a slightly higher proportion of very satisfied users than in most other regions

Overall satisfaction by region
(% very/fairly)

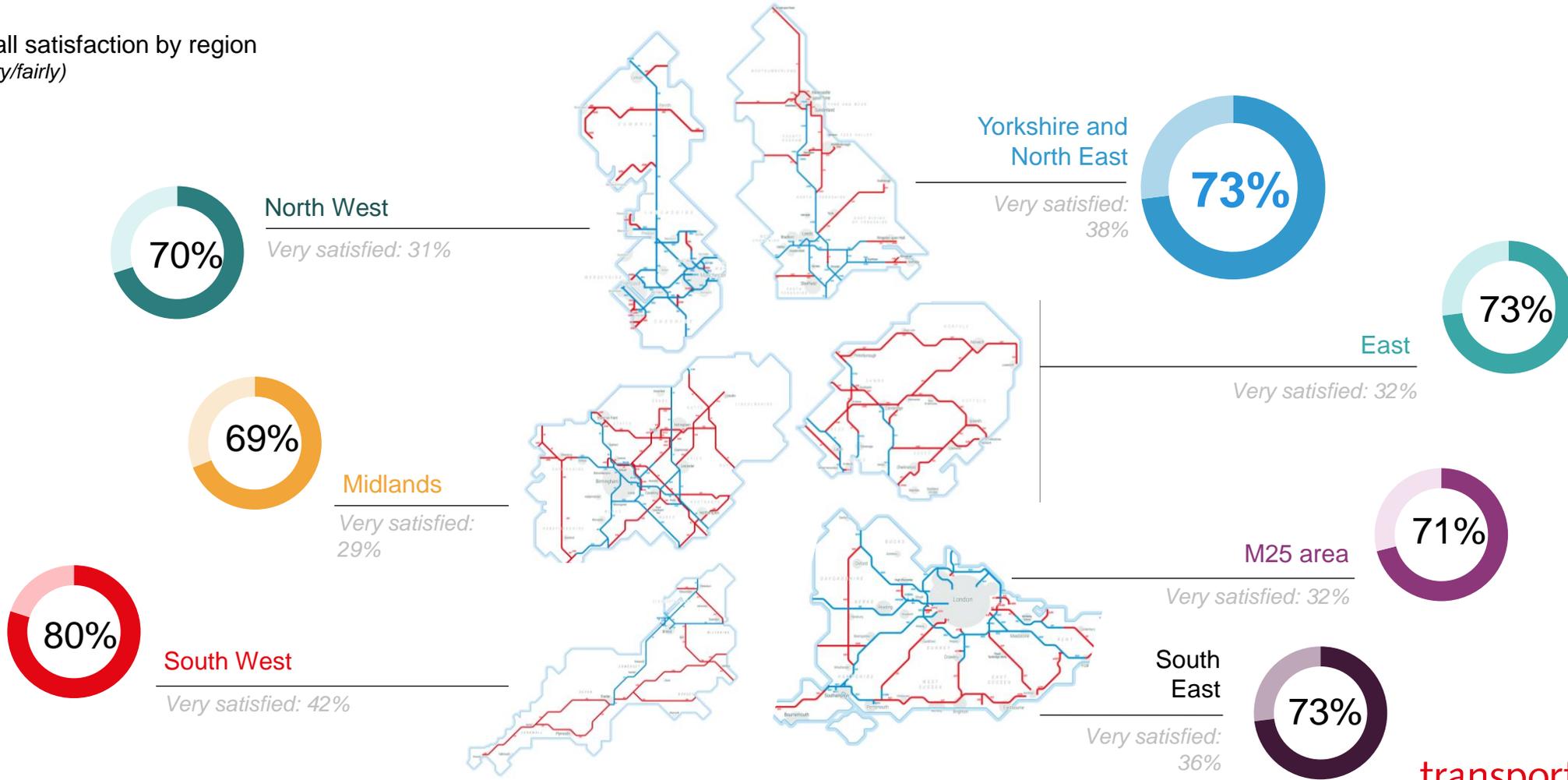


Base: all SRN users surveyed, Oct '21 – Sep '22 (7,322)

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)

Yorkshire and North East is mid-table, though has a slightly higher proportion of very satisfied users than in most other regions

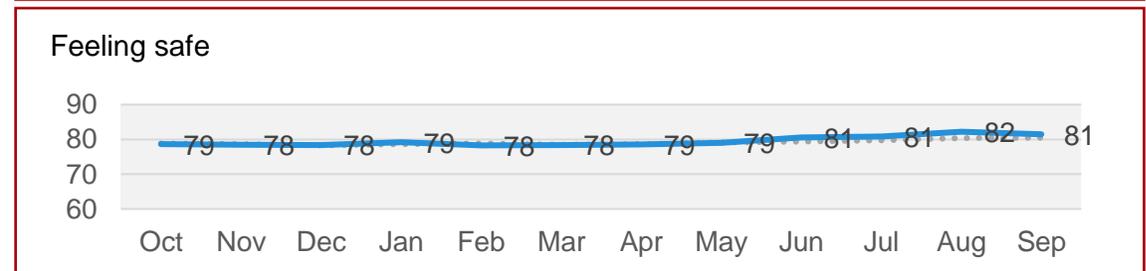
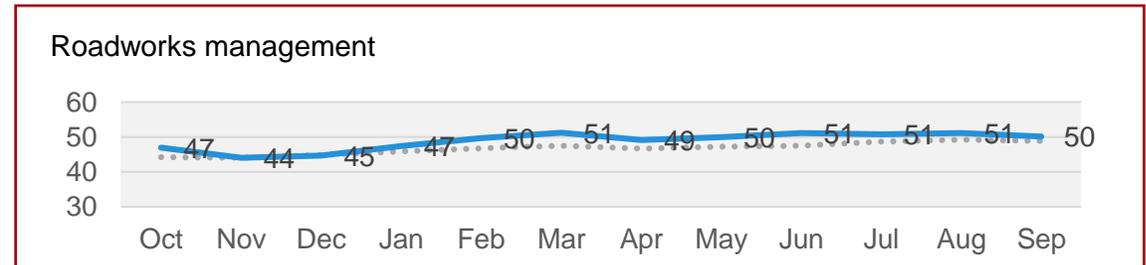
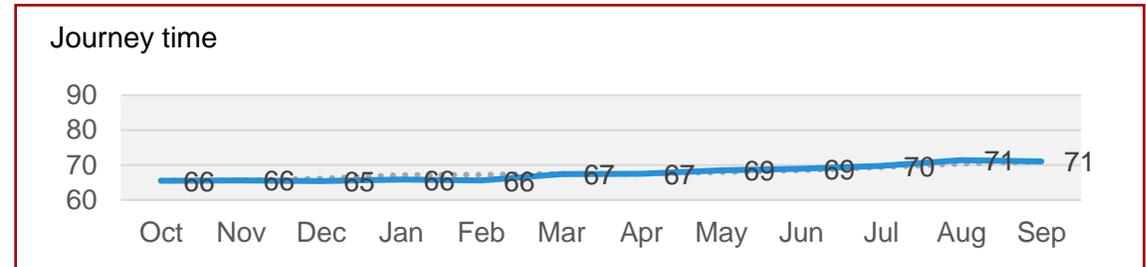
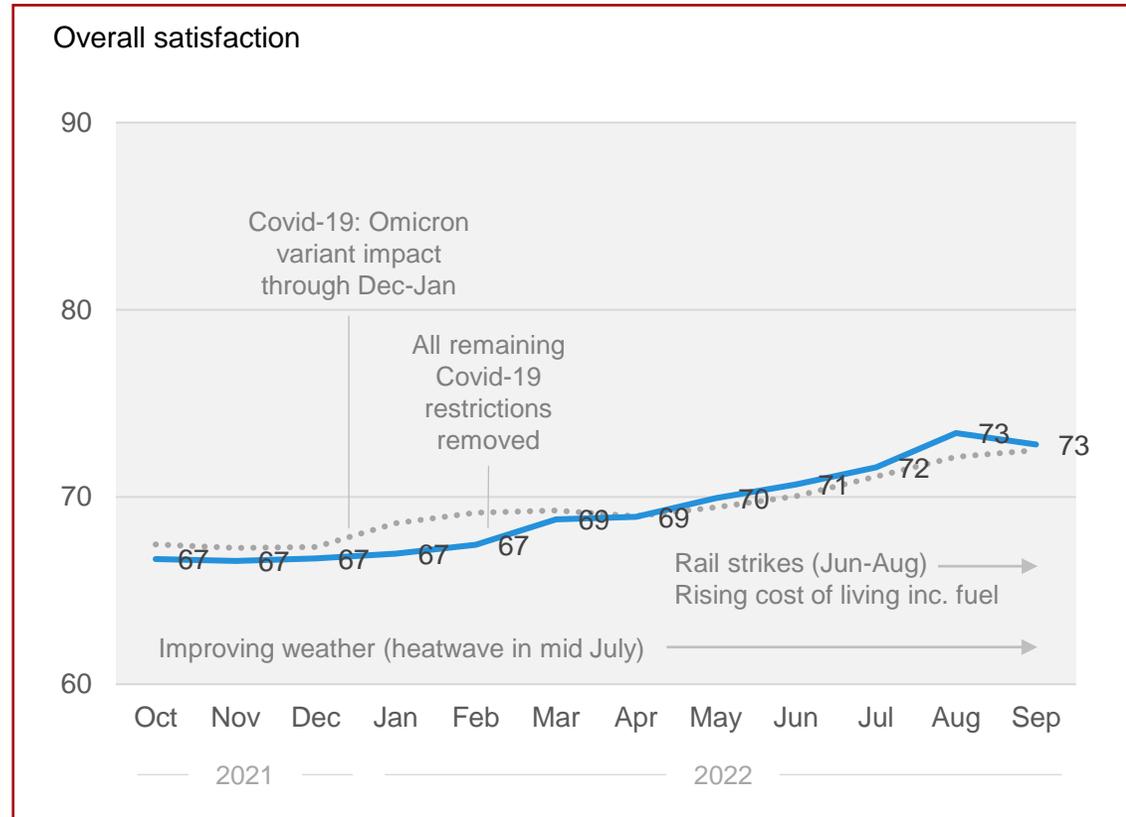
Overall satisfaction by region
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South West (917), East (1,047), South East (1,504), Yorkshire and NE: (1,014), M25 (1,057), North West (1,088), Midlands (1,641)

A turbulent year for travel, but feedback indicates overall journey experience improved, both in Yorkshire and North East and nationally

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

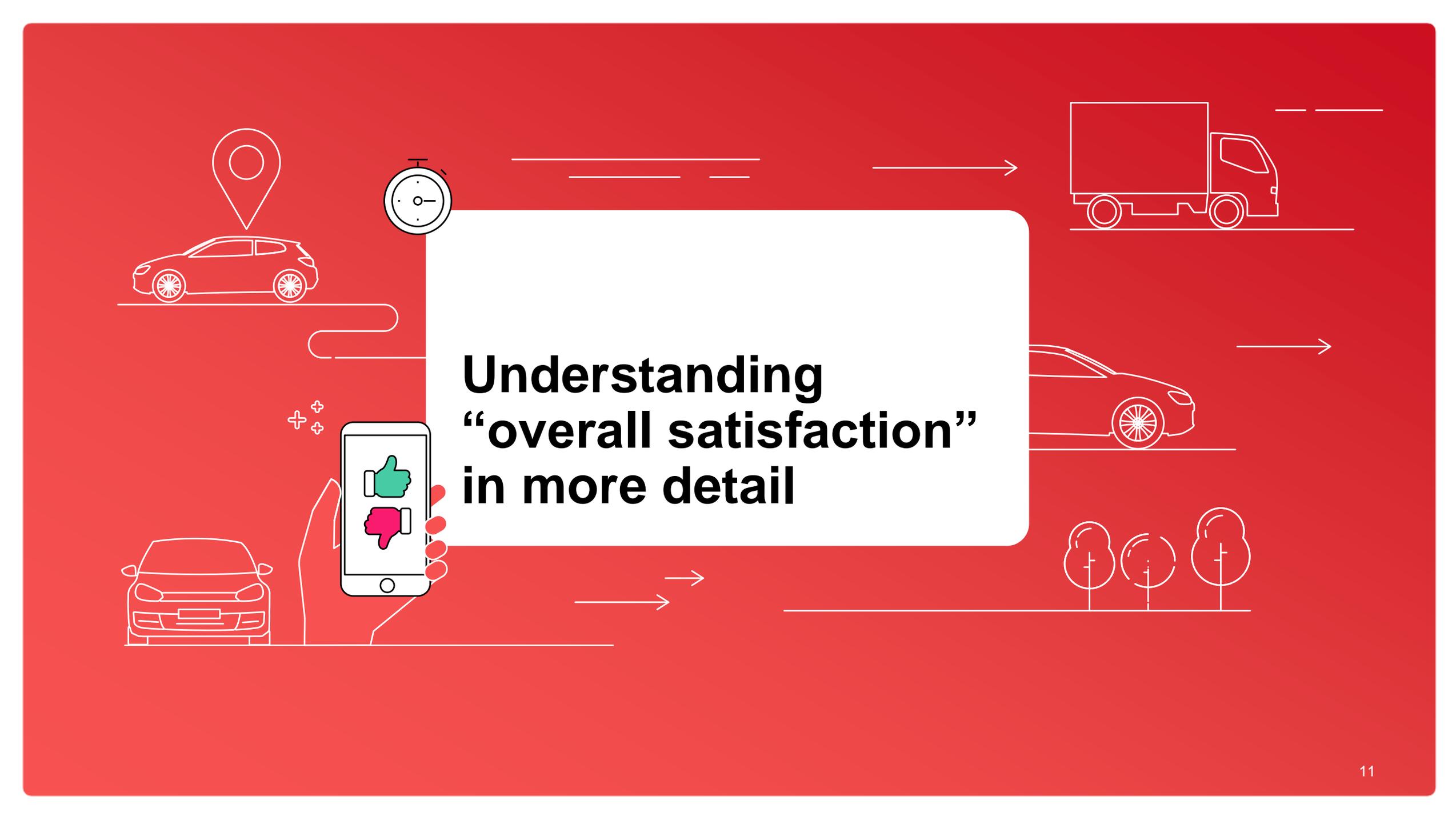


— Yorkshire & North East
- - - All regions

Base: all SRN users surveyed, Oct '21 – Sep '22 (2,844-7,322)

Yorkshire and NE: (352-1,014)

*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.

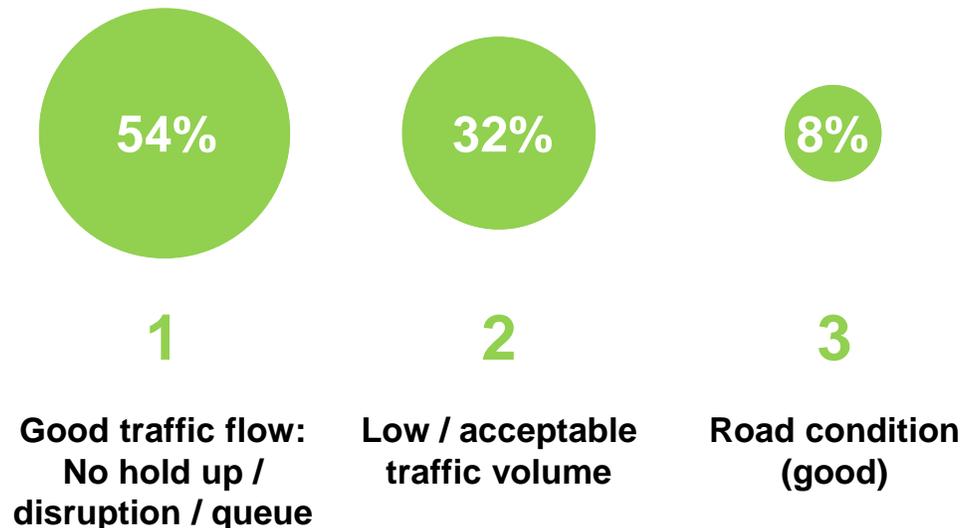


Understanding “overall satisfaction” in more detail

There are three main themes in the reasons users give for satisfactory journeys in Yorkshire and North 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



A minority also mention some other factors, including:

Good signage

Acknowledged benefit from improvement works

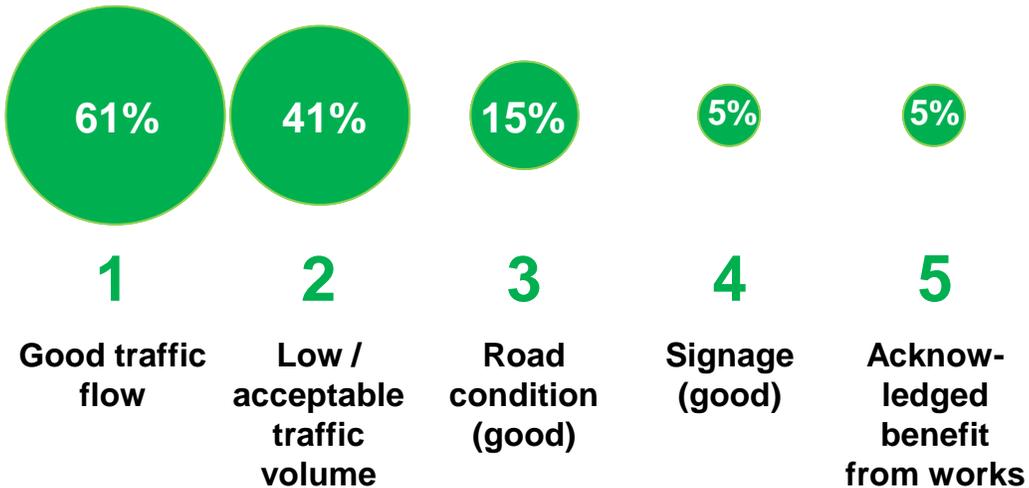
...and some also mention negative factors, which usually explain why they rated their journey as “fairly” rather than “very” satisfactory: see more on this on the next page.

Data shown here is for Yorkshire and North East; patterns are very similar at national level

Base: sample of those giving a rationale for overall satisfaction rating Oct 21-Sep 22 – satisfied, Yorkshire and North East (116), all regions (200)

Ultimately the absence of disruptions, i.e. allowing continuous momentum, makes for **fully satisfactory** rather than simply “ok” journeys

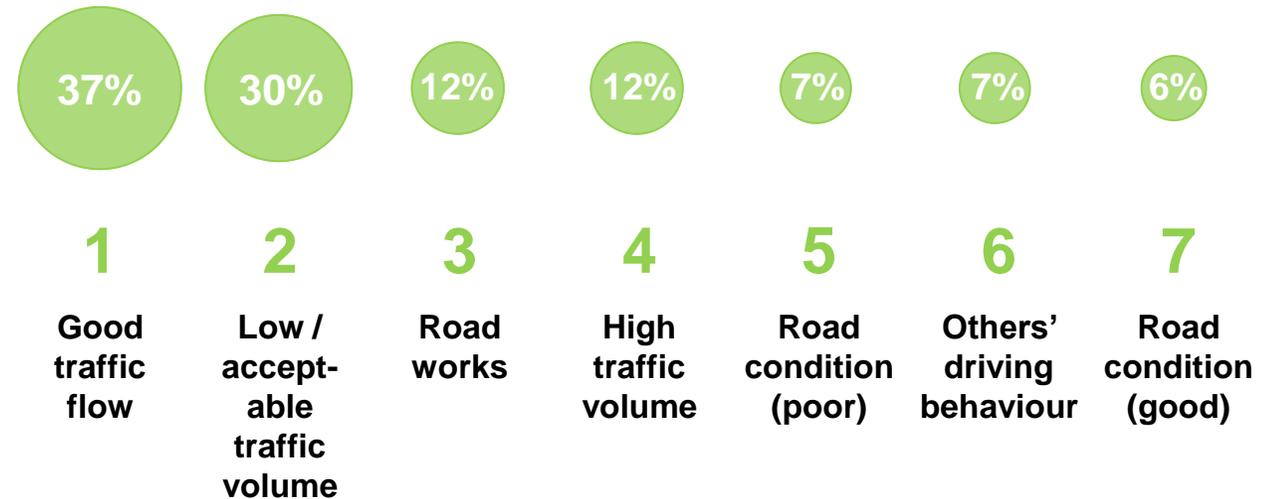
Very satisfied: top reasons
% mentioning topic



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, we should be looking to increase the proportion (currently around a third) who are genuinely – “very” – satisfied

Findings on this page are at national level



Absence of disruption makes for genuinely good journeys: 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 (Yorkshire and North East)

- “ Traffic was busy, but the flow was good and no major problems were encountered ”
- “ The traffic flow had no delays, the roads were free from debris, clearly marked, smooth road surface ”
- “ Roads were clear and well signposted ”
- “ Traffic was free-flowing -- no hold-ups for maintenance work, and no very slow-moving vehicles to restrict flow on the single carriageway sections. The Appleby bypass was fully open after resurfacing work. ”
- “ Very free flowing - especially the new part that has been added to allow drivers to continue without having to stop at traffic lights like they had to in the past.. ”
- “ The motorway was relatively quiet with no traffic jams or incidents ”
- “ Road was well lit, constantly moving traffic, clear signage. ”
- “ Early enough not to be busy on a lovely day ”

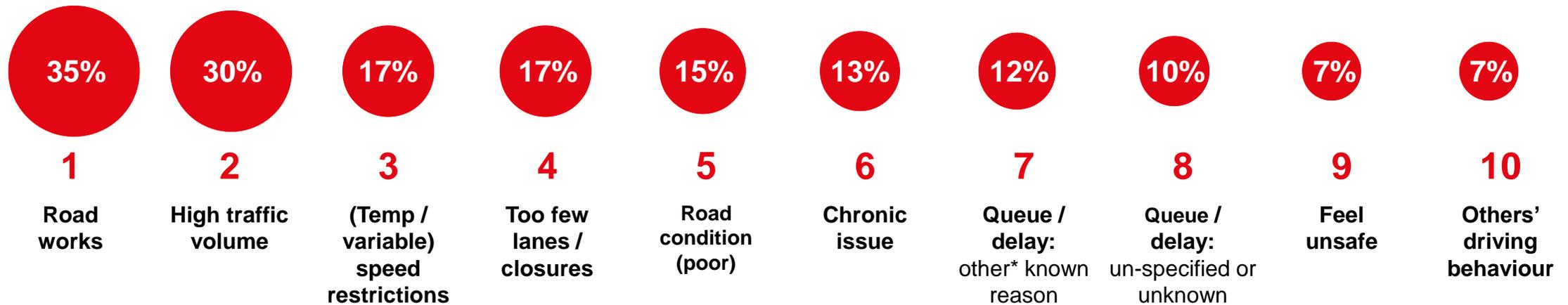
Fairly satisfied: Example comments (Yorkshire and North East)

- “ The majority of the journey was good, one exception was the Ouse bridge which is still been worked on with a 30 mph limit ”
- “ In the main the journey was a smooth one but in some areas the road surface was in need of repair making it bumpy and rough ”
- “ Fewer roadworks & holdups than normal ”
- “ Left over road maintenance reduced speed on a couple of occasions ”
- “ Traffic cones limiting lanes but no works apparently underway. Pot holes are a nightmare particularly in the North East ”
- “ Traffic was moving although some drivers need to learn lane discipline ”

Roadworks and congestion are the most common reasons for dissatisfaction, along with temporary speed restrictions, insufficient lanes and poor road surface – and many are frustrated with ongoing nature of these issues

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)
% mentioning topic



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.

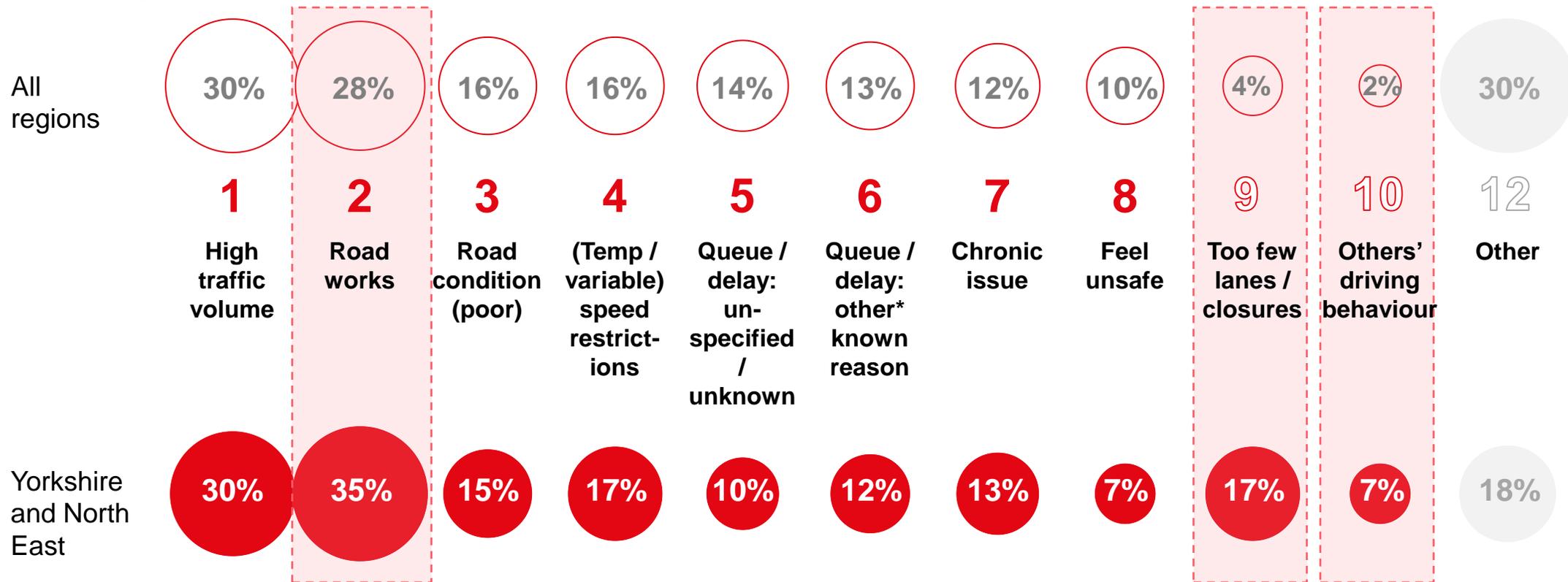
Together with qualitative feedback as here, this suggests that disruptions which can be managed and informed about (like roadworks) can be somewhat tolerated, but congestion and delays, especially for unknown or (perceived) avoidable reasons, can feel unacceptable. Information doesn't solve, but can help to mitigate, these scenarios.

Base: sample of those giving a rationale for overall satisfaction rating Oct 21-Sep 22 – dissatisfied, *Yorkshire and North East* (60)

* 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 15

Compared to elsewhere, roadworks and perception of insufficient lanes are particularly common reasons for dissatisfaction in Yorkshire and North East

Dissatisfaction: top reasons – Yorkshire and North 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), Yorkshire and North East (60)

 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 (Yorkshire and North East)

“ Queueing traffic coming off junction 33 - been queuing to get past this junction now for months ”

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

“ Even though the A616 has just been updated, with traffic lights and a modified roundabout, coming off the roundabout from 2 lanes into 1 is rubbish with the amount of traffic that uses that road. ”

“ Traffic was heavy and it took over 45 minutes to do 8/9 miles without any visible reason for it. ”

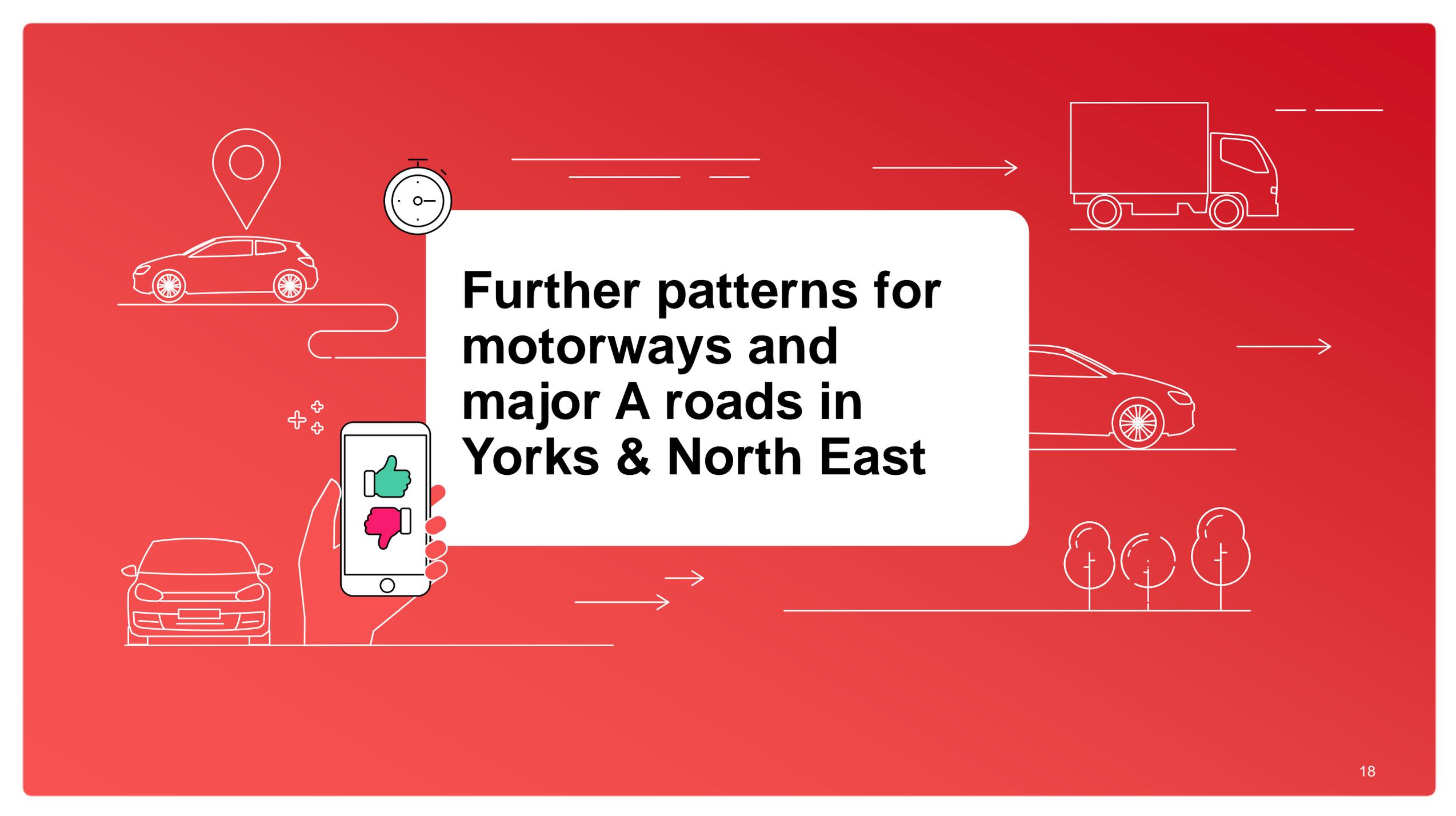
“ Some really bad potholes. Lucky not to damage tyres. Very long road works. ”

“ Road works, road surface is a disgrace the various speed limits imposed on M1 wasting more fuel! Dangerous smart motorway!!! Waste of money!! ”

“ It is a smart motorway and it scares me if I have a breakdown on this section ”

“ Middle lane hoggers and yet more chips on my windscreen ”

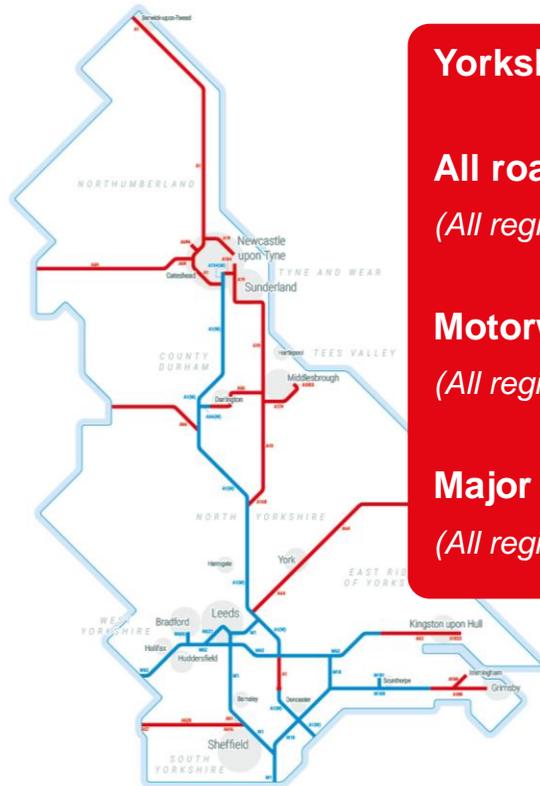
“ Roadworks were horrendous ”



Further patterns for motorways and major A roads in Yorks & North East

There is of course a range of experience within the region. In particular, **Yorkshire and North East's major A roads perform less well than both the region's motorways and the all-region average for major A roads**

Overall satisfaction by road / road type within Yorkshire and North East



Yorkshire & North East	
All roads	73%
<i>(All regions)</i>	<i>72%</i>
Motorways	75%
<i>(All regions)</i>	<i>72%</i>
Major A roads	67%
<i>(All regions)</i>	<i>73%</i>

Overall satisfaction by road*			
M18	83	A1(M)	73
A19	80	M62	70
M1	77	A1	55

*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), Yorkshire and North East (743). All major A Roads: All regions (3,420), Yorkshire and North East (561)

Nationally, the biggest causes of dissatisfaction on motorways are roadworks, congestion and other delays (for various reasons)

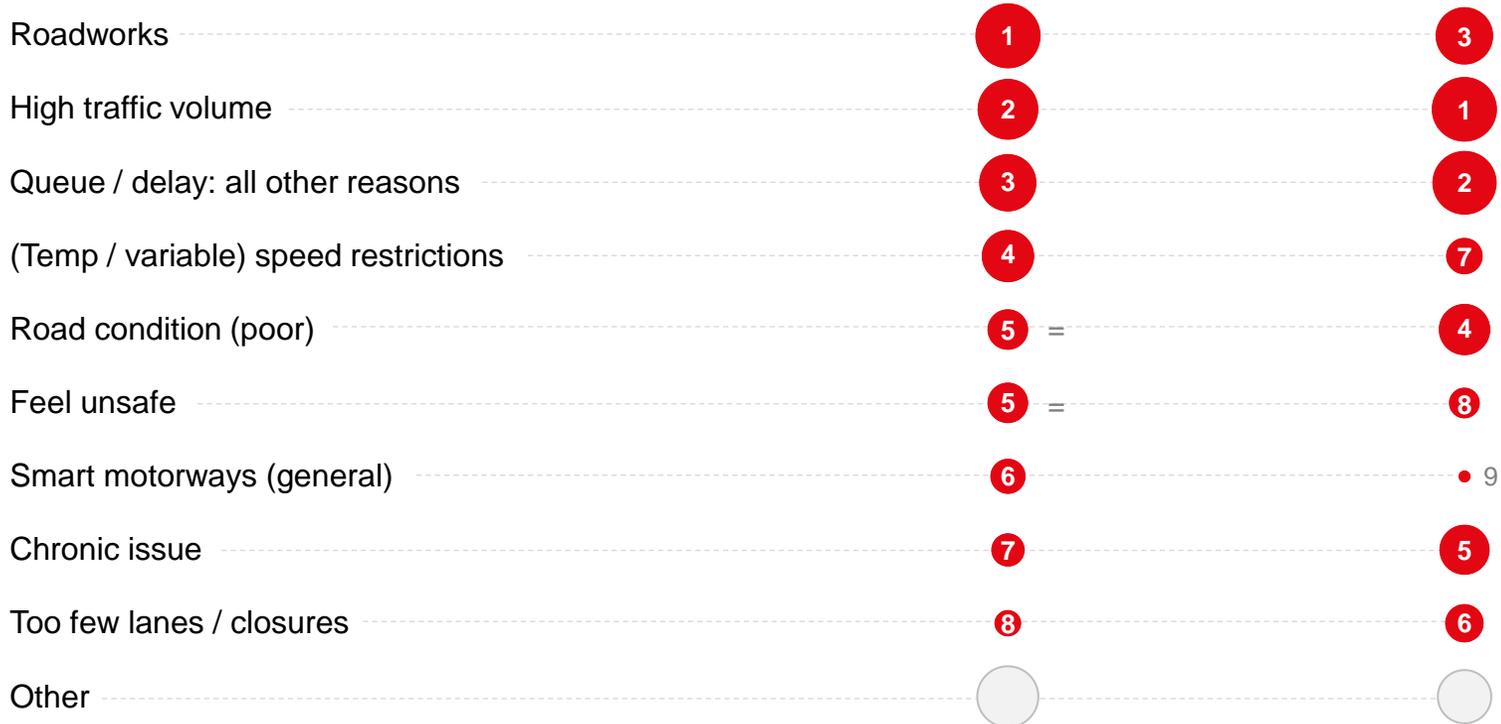
Dissatisfaction: top reasons

(very / fairly dissatisfied)

Bubble size indicates relative frequency of mentions, with rank order shown

Motorways
(all regions)

Major A roads
(all regions)



Findings on this page are at national level 

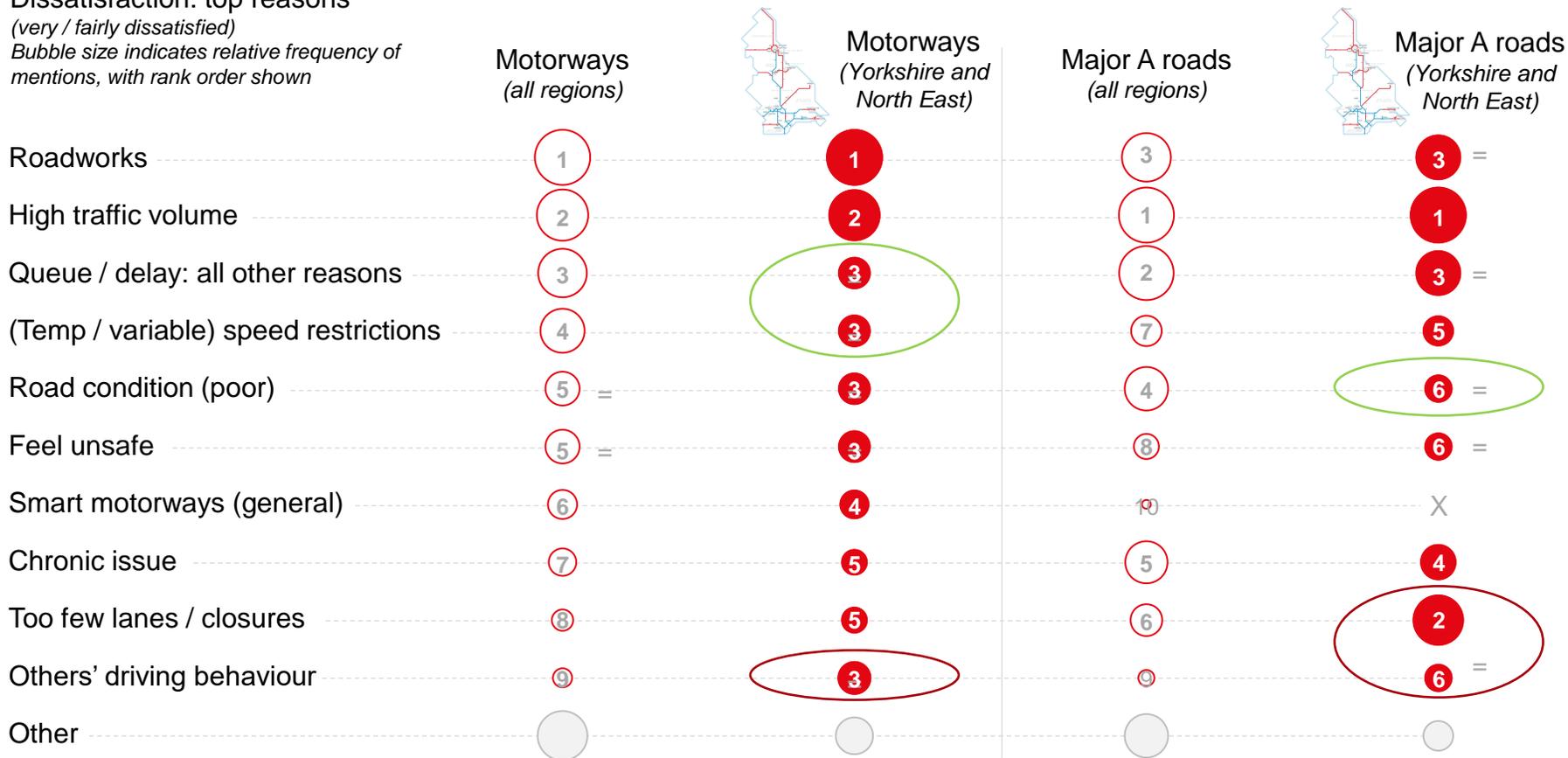
Temporary speed limits, other features of **smart motorways** and **safety** are also important, for having the **potential to cause dissatisfaction on motorways in particular** (more so than on major A roads)

Base: sample of those giving a rationale for overall dissatisfaction rating Oct 21-Sep 22 – motorways (100), A-roads (100)

Common themes coded up from free-text responses

Patterns similar in Yorkshire and North East, but **comments that there are too few lanes are more prevalent here**

Dissatisfaction: top reasons
(very / fairly dissatisfied)
Bubble size indicates relative frequency of mentions, with rank order shown



“ Mostly single lane traffic and held up by slow moving vehicles ”

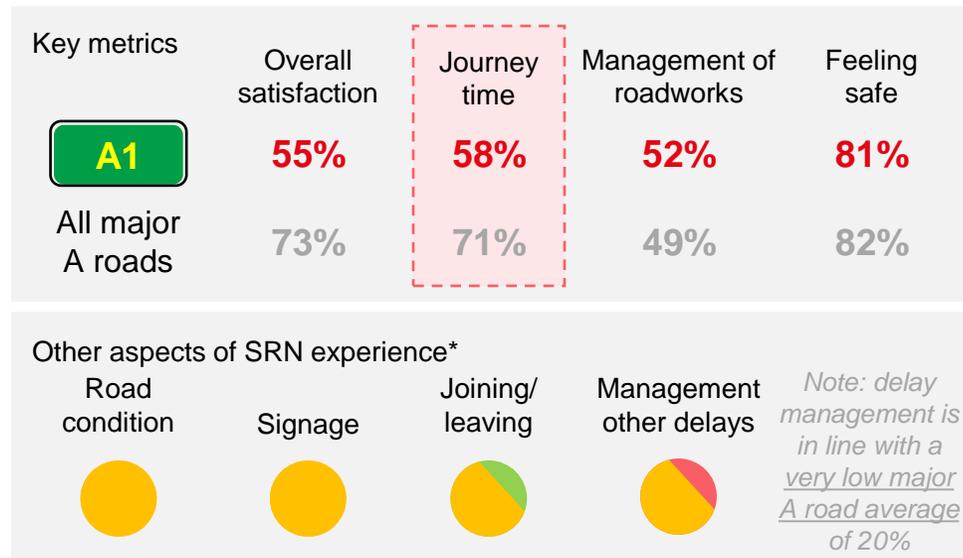
“ The A1 between Berwick upon Tweed and Morpeth... has been for many years completely inadequate for the amount and type of traffic... many parts of it are single carriageway and often vehicles are slower moving, causing ...overtaking in less than favourable places ...dangerous and has been neglected for years ”

“ The A64 goes from dual carriageway to single A road then back to dual carriageway, then back to single A road, causing constant bottlenecks, frustration and very close call potential accidents. ”

Base: sample of those giving a rationale for overall dissatisfaction rating Oct 21-Sep 22 – All regions motorways (100), A-roads (100). Yorkshire and North East motorways (52), A-roads (46) Common themes coded up from free-text responses

The section of the A1 running through Yorkshire & NE epitomises issues we see for major A road journeys generally in this region

A1: lowest level of satisfaction for all (sections of) road measured in the survey, driven by disappointing journey times



Contextual factors



Greater leisure focus compared to major A roads in general, and relative to the region as a whole
Versus average, a larger proportion of users here are retired, travelling for leisure, on weekends/off peak, with relatively low annual mileage

Hold-ups feature heavily in survey responses for the A1



A third of journeys take longer than expected (twice the major A road average)

A1 users in this region are more alert to issues in advance than for A roads in general, and typically set off earlier with more contingency time than elsewhere
but prevalence of these issues is high:



Road works

54%
vs. 23% avg.



Heavy / cong' traffic

41%
vs. 21% avg.



Other delays

25%
vs. 15% avg.



Notably high proportion caused by slow moving vehicles

All of this is reflected in users' comments about reasons for dissatisfaction

Top themes in free-text comments:

- Roadworks
- Heavy traffic
- Slow vehicles including HGVs
- Single / too few lanes

.... And some specific localised issues:

“ There are no windbreaks on theA1 as it enters England until Berwick-upon-Tweed although it is in a very exposed position next to the coast... it feels very unsafe. ”

By contrast, what influences the experience on a better performing major A road here, which might provide learnings?

A19: Relatively friction free, predictable, short journeys

Key metrics*	Overall satisfaction	Journey time	Management of roadworks	Feeling safe
A19	80%	79%	<i>(sample size too small)</i>	83%
All major A roads	73%	71%	49%	82%

Other aspects of SRN experience*	Road condition	Signage	Joining/leaving	Management other delays
				<i>(sample size too small)</i>

Distinctive features in survey responses**

- Many users here are making **predictable, familiar journeys**
- Relatively **easy traffic flow with light traffic** fairly common
- ...an **uncluttered feeling** which is reinforced by good experience in terms of road surfaces, litter, effective signage, etc.
- **Roadworks and other delays relatively rare**, and adding comparatively little time (to already fairly short journeys)
- In addition, users' own-words feedback also included unprompted **appreciation for recent improvement works**
- *(Though note some frustration with Moor Farm roundabout lights specifically)*

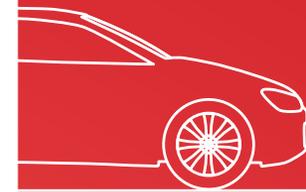
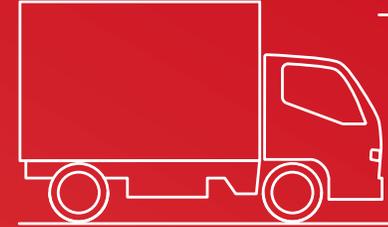
The A19 is clearly different from the A1, so comparisons are not straightforward. However there are potential, transferable learnings as highlighted above.

The different types of journey served by the A19 also highlights the very **different communications needs that users are likely to have on different roads**. Given roadworks and road condition issues are respectively necessary and longer term, in the shorter term can NH consider improved, possibly different communications tactics for the A1 and other major A roads here in Yorkshire and the North East, specifically in light of users' lower familiarity and longer journeys in some cases, for example?

A19 users in Yorkshire and North East (111), Apr '21 – Sep '22

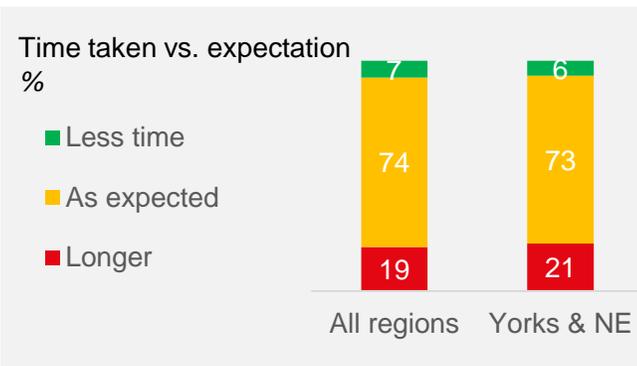
- "Traffic lights" indicate comparisons to ratings for all major A roads. See pg 54 for more detail.
- ** See notes pages below for data behind these points

More detail on:
Journey time



Users' experience of journey times on the SRN in Yorkshire and North East

The majority are satisfied with journey times, which meet expectations in many cases



Base: all SRN users surveyed, Yorkshire and NE, Oct '21 – Sep '22 (1,017)

While motorway journeys in this region are similarly rated to the national average – if not slightly better – only two thirds are satisfied on major A roads



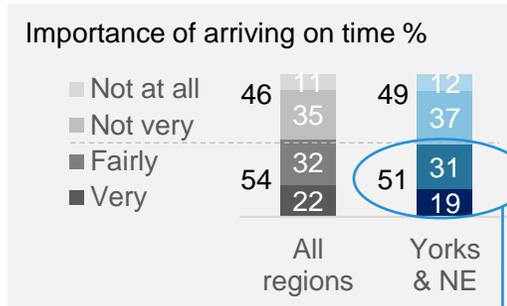
...which are more likely to be delayed than in any other region



As we've already begun to see in earlier pages, this is likely due to:

- More frequent encountering of roadworks on Yorkshire and North East's major A roads compared to elsewhere (36% of major A road journeys affected here, vs 23% avg.)
- More complaints about insufficient number of lanes in this region (in some but not all cases, linked to works)

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 (professional) drivers

59% set off early, allowing 21 mins contingency

(vs. 24 mins on average across all regions)

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?)

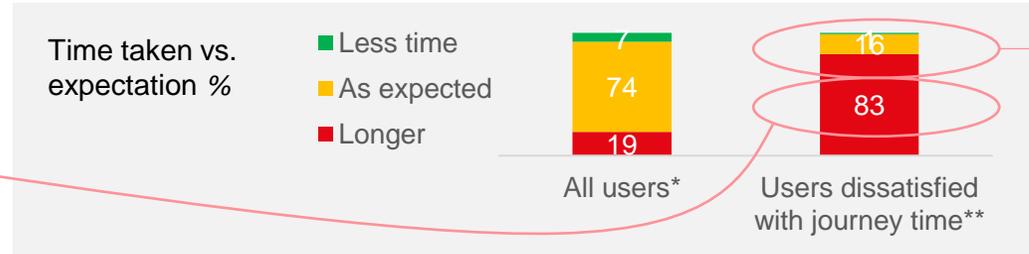
Many people set off earlier if they can, so **advance information on delays is vital.**

Nevertheless, it cannot be assumed that they will or can do this, so **continued pressure is also needed to improve and protect journey times**, particularly on the region's major A roads

What causes dissatisfaction with journey time?

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



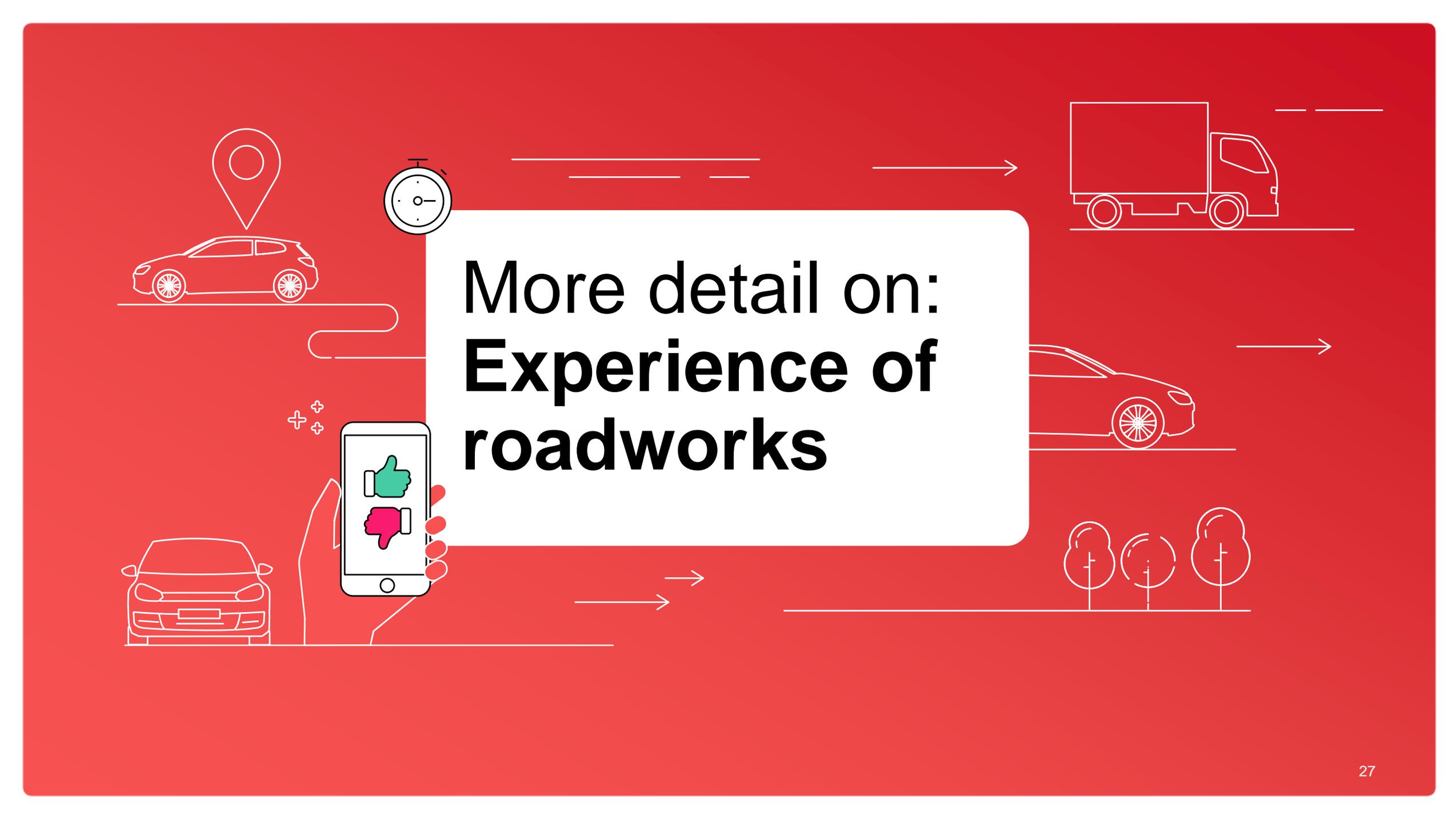
Longer term dissatisfactory road provision

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] ”

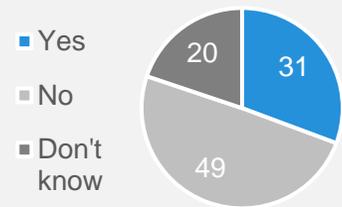


More detail on:
Experience of roadworks

SRN users' experience of roadworks in Yorkshire and North East

A third of journeys in Yorkshire and North East passed through roadworks

Passed through works %



Compares to all-regions average of 25% that passed through roadworks

Noticeable prevalence of roadworks is again especially high on major A roads in this region:

36% of major A road journeys passed through works, vs. 23% on average for major A roads and the highest of all regions

Majority of journeys where roadworks are encountered are delayed by no more than 15 mins

Time added by works %

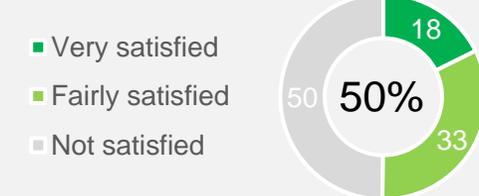


Time added on major A road journeys in this region is in line with average for all major A roads.

Time added on motorway journeys is a little below average

Half of those affected are satisfied with roadworks management

Satisfaction with works management %



Works management on motorways in this region is in line with average.

Management on major A roads perceived to be a little better than average – somewhat compensating for higher incidence here, but it remains the case that only around half of those affected are satisfied.

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

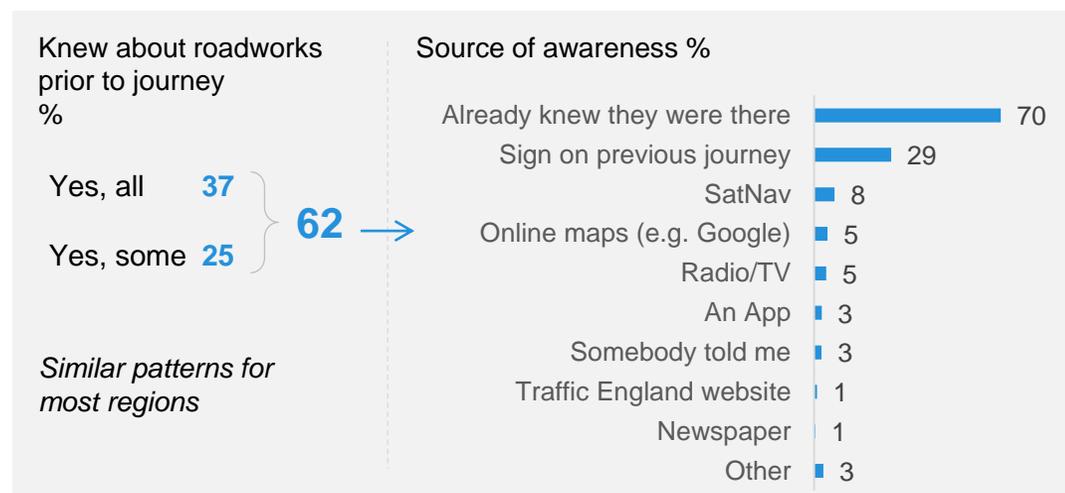
Inevitably it may be difficult to truly satisfy users in the context of a disrupted journey, but other factors in management of works can exacerbate this experience.

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 Yorkshire and North East

Two thirds of those affected were aware of roadworks in advance of the journey, with previous exposure the main source of awareness

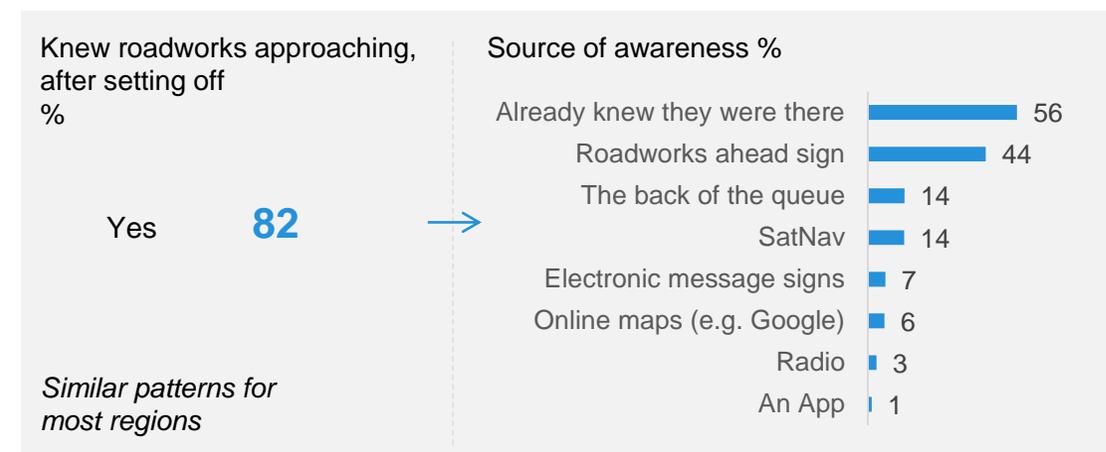


Reflecting this reliance on previous exposure, advance knowledge of roadworks is associated with more frequent usage – especially commuters and professional drivers. **Those making less frequent journeys, typically for leisure, are less informed.**

Likely linked to this, people are less informed when travelling off peak and at weekends, and in sunnier weather or, conversely, after dark.

Can more be done in periods of higher leisure travel to target less-informed groups?
Can more be done around road-side signage visibility, especially in the dark?

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)



Information from any source aids satisfaction here.

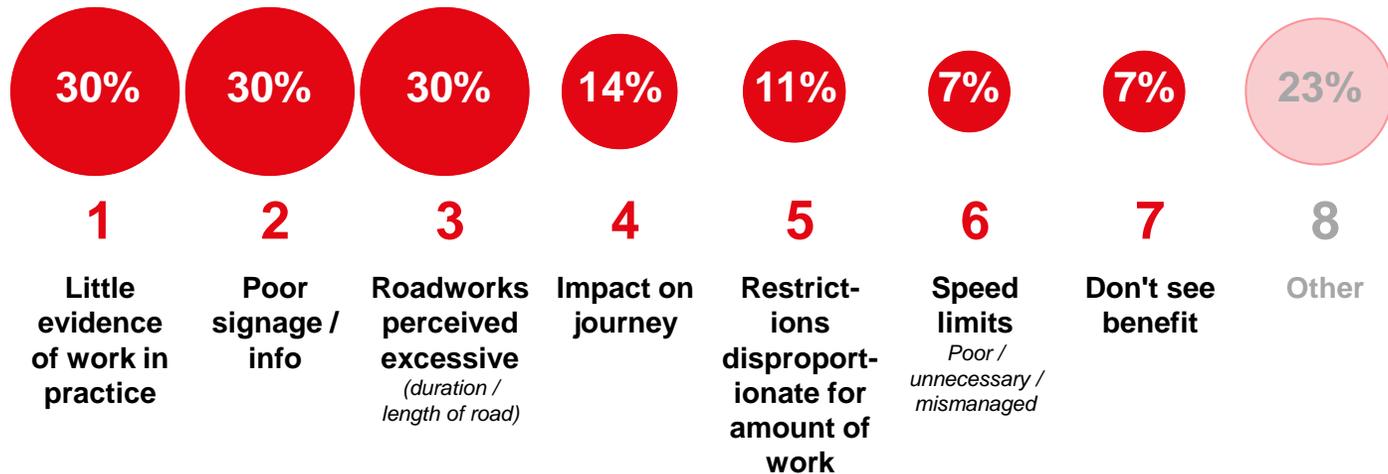
Unsurprisingly, dissatisfaction more likely when roadworks are only known about when already in a queue

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 major A roads and motorways, though with some minor differences.

- 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)

- 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

Analysis here is shown at all-regions level, but **qualitative feedback is similar in Yorkshire and North East**.

On Yorkshire and North East major A roads specifically – where incidence of works is a little higher but seems a little more tolerated – users’ free-text comments suggest that the overall impact of works is a little less than elsewhere.

Nevertheless there are some particular areas for improvement, such as ability to navigate (with adequate signage, lighting and road markings) in the dark

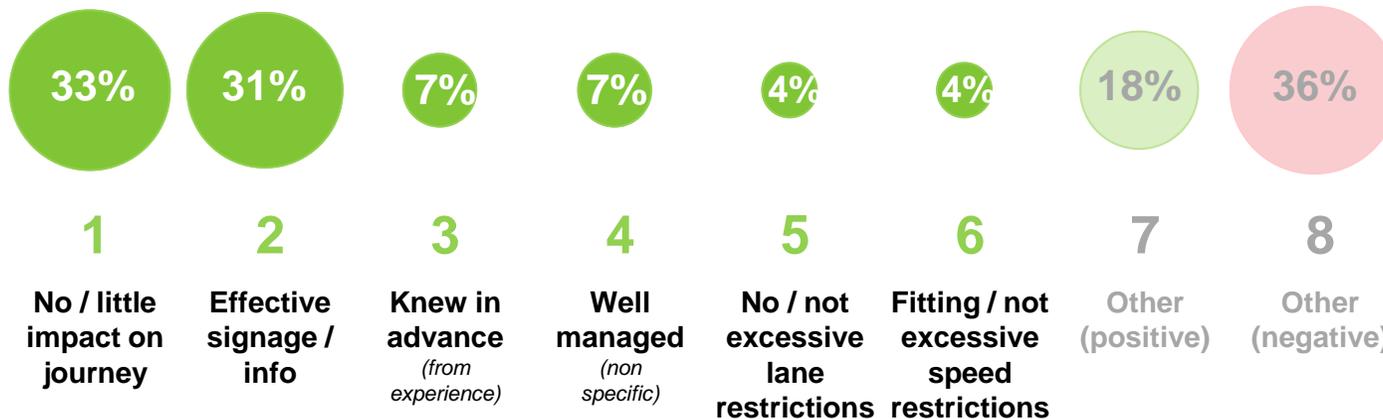
Base: sample of those giving a rationale for dissatisfaction with roadworks Oct 21-Sep 22
All (201), major A roads (100), Motorways (101)

When SRN users are satisfied with roadworks management, it's typically because they are not materially impacted, 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



(Satisfied users still have some negative comments)

Having little impact, and limited lane restrictions are more often mentioned for motorways

Information – especially signage – mentioned more often for major A roads

Similar pattern overall for Yorkshire and North East

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

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

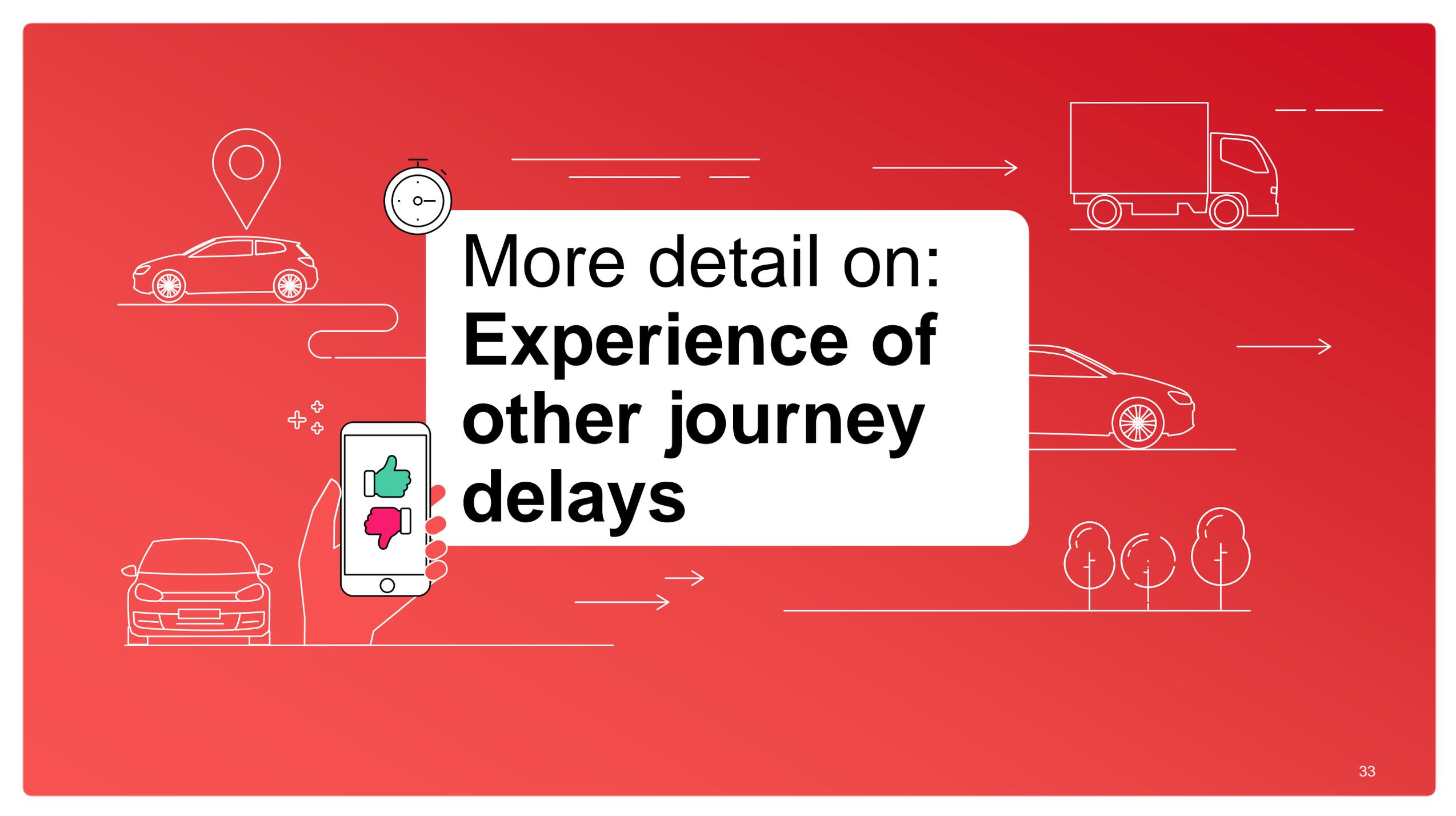
- “ Extensive roadworks and speed restrictions connected to creation of 'smart' motorway; a concept that is fundamentally flawed. ”
- “ Brexit-related roadworks, contraflows and speed restrictions still in place. ...a pain in the backside. One of the worst bits of motorway in the whole country. ”
- “ 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

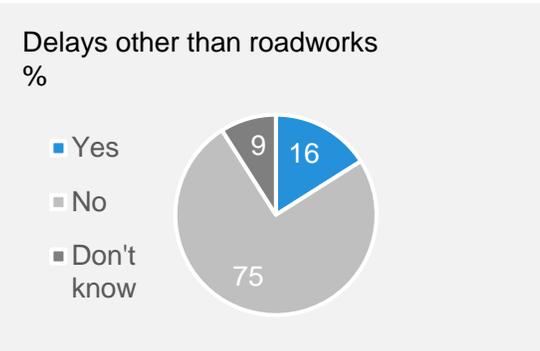
In addition to information to warn about the fact of works taking place, users may benefit from more – or more accessible – information about why works are taking place, along with the rationale for the measures used to manage traffic as they happen



More detail on:
Experience of other journey delays

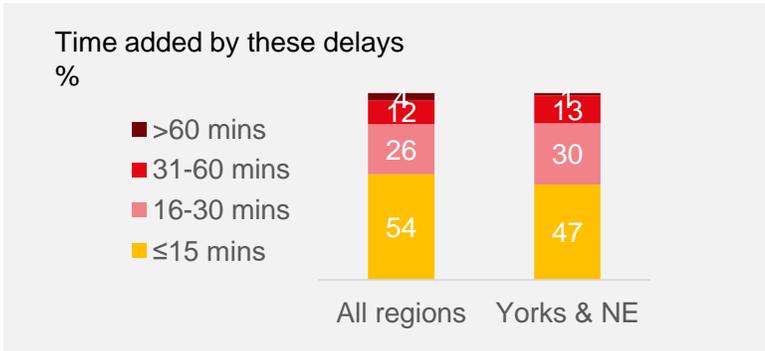
Users' experience of other journey disruption in Yorkshire and North East

Relatively fewer journeys were delayed for other reasons



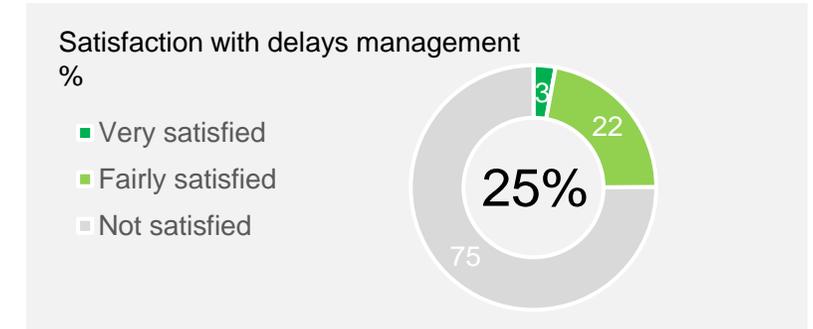
*In line with all-region average
Similar pattern for motorways and major A roads, both at national level and here*

...But these delays are typically longer than for roadworks, and a little longer again in this region

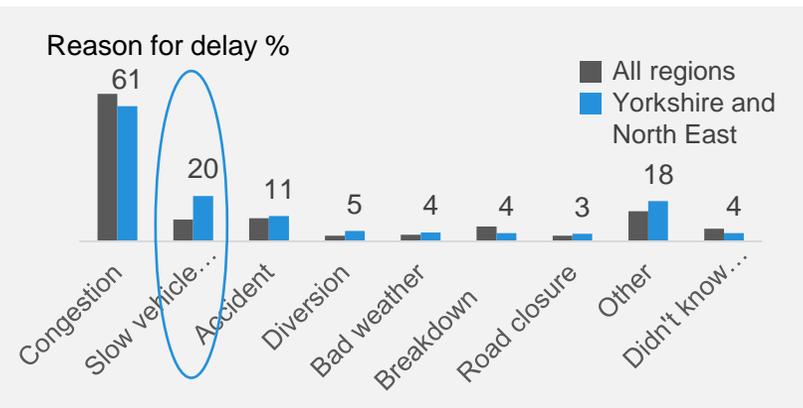


Delays on motorways typically a little longer than on major A roads. A similar pattern in this region specifically, with slightly longer delays than average on both types of road here.

...And only a quarter of those affected by these delays are satisfied with their management



Despite slightly more time being added for delays in this region than elsewhere, satisfaction is in line with the average and dissatisfaction is actually a little lower than all other regions – some suggestion here of a little more tolerance for non-works delays here than elsewhere, though still low overall



*Similar pattern to all-region average, though **slow vehicles is a more common issue here than elsewhere**, as are “other” reasons*

As we have seen, users' comments explaining their overall journey rating also highlighted some frustration with road capacity, especially number of lanes – often with reference to difficulty this causes for overtaking slower vehicles.

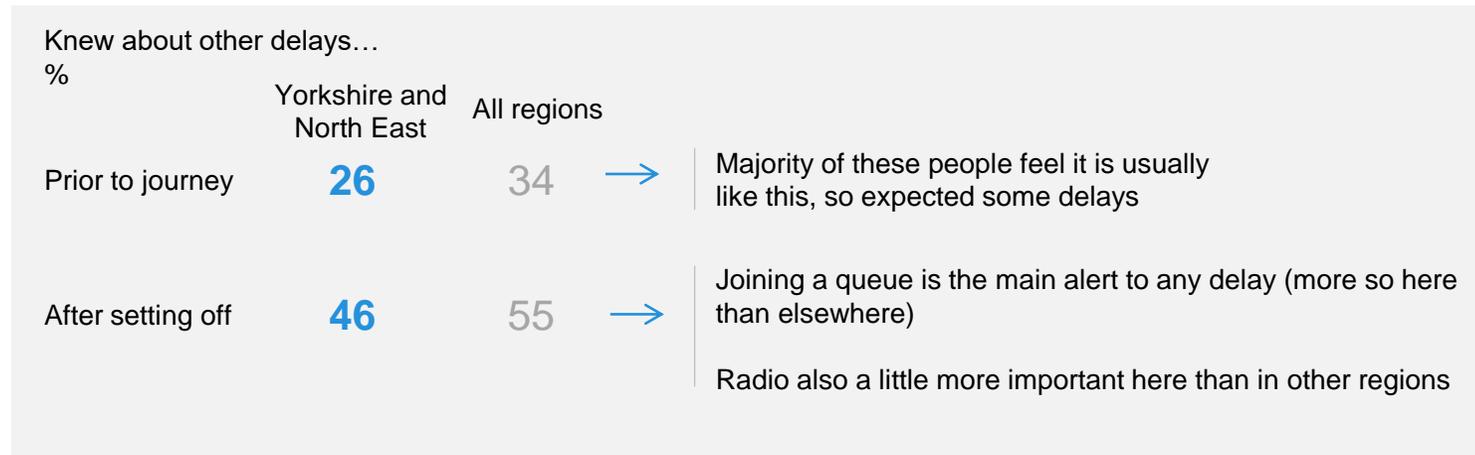
Slow vehicles are an issue on both motorways and major A roads this region, but especially for major A roads, where almost a third of non-roadwork delays are associated with slow vehicles

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

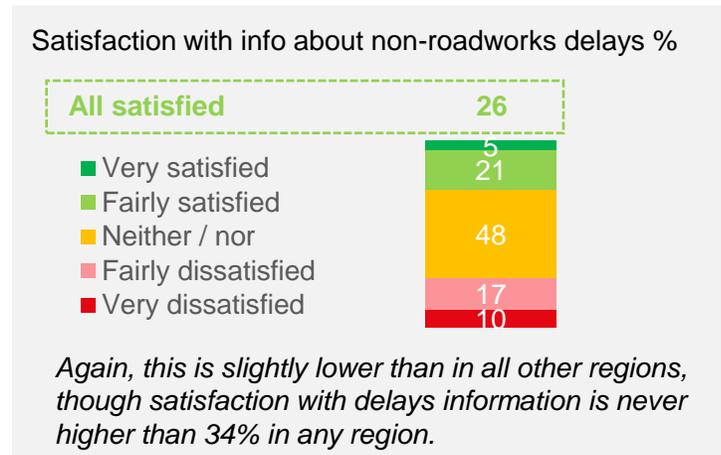
Finding out about other types of delay in Yorkshire and North East

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

Awareness, either in advance of or during journeys, is lower here than in all other regions



...all leading to a low level of satisfaction with delay-related information

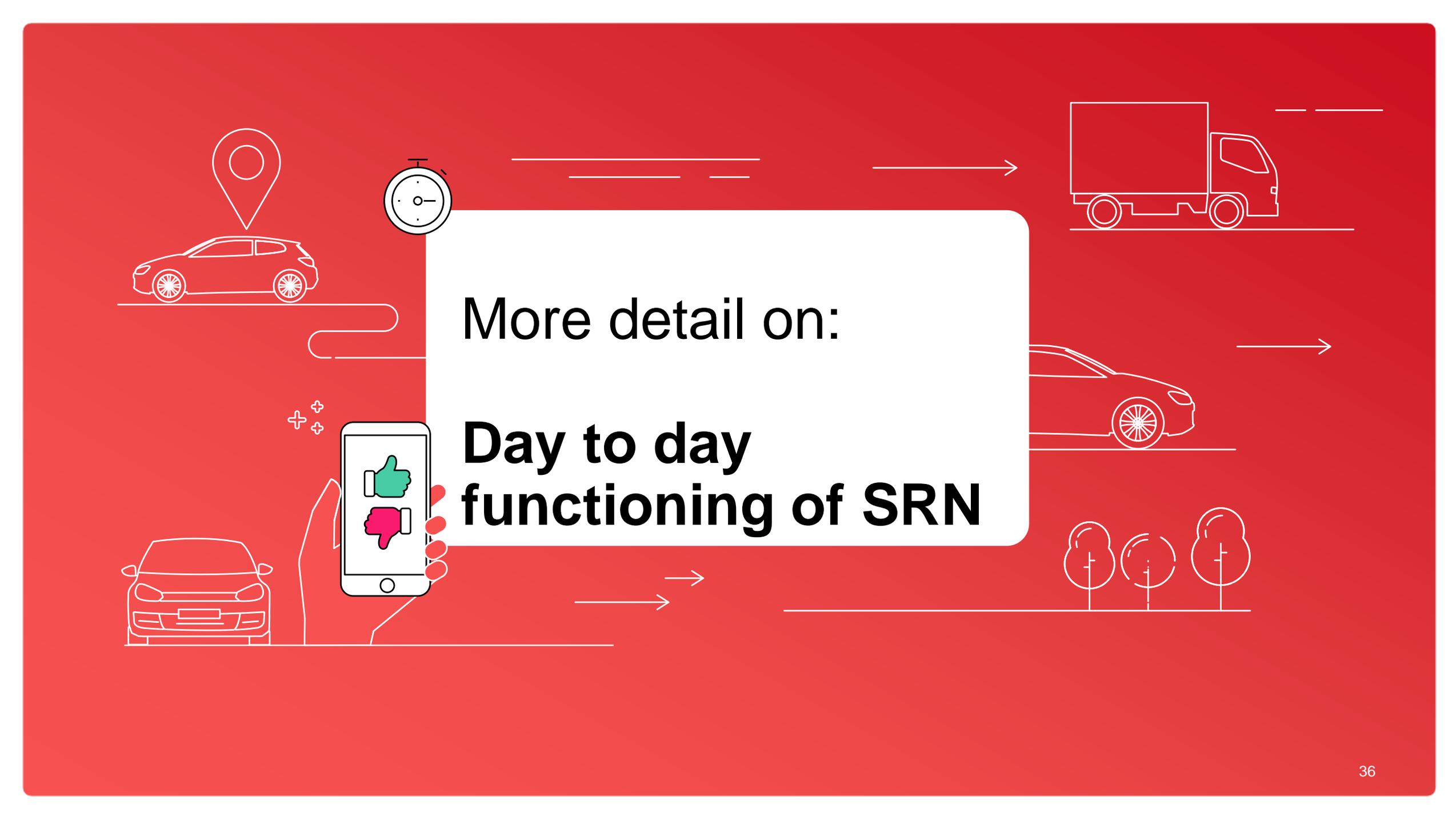


This reflects the typically “ad hoc” reasons for non-roadworks delays in this region – it’s much more difficult to predict and warn drivers about slow vehicles and wide loads ahead

However, are there other ways that these issues can be mitigated for more effectively here? For instance (in the context of other frustrations that drivers have in Yorkshire and the North East about insufficient lane provision or lane management):

- More passing places (with signage in advance to make sure slow vehicle drivers are able to make use of them)
- More encouragement of drivers to respect outside lanes as “overtaking” lanes
- Increased number of lanes where possible

And can even more be made of radio to alert drivers – an intuitive medium given the often very localised and temporary nature of these issues?



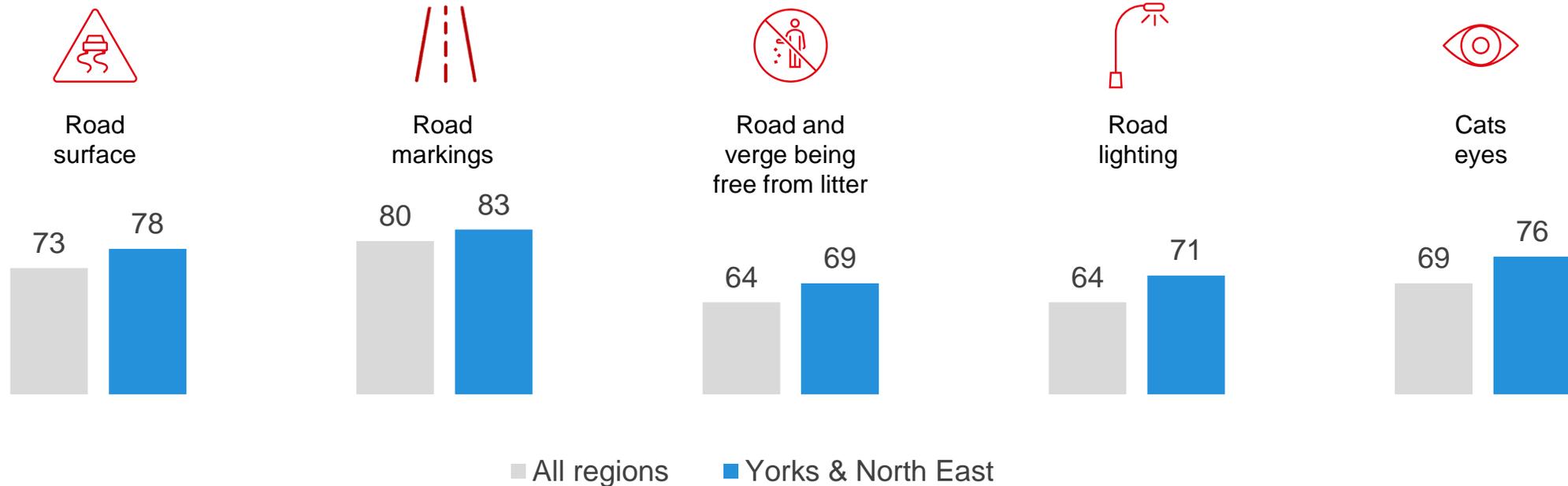
More detail on:

**Day to day
functioning of SRN**

Yorkshire and North East outperforms all other regions on these points, but lighting and litter still don't score particularly well

Rating of road condition

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



Both motorways and major A roads in this region perform a little above the national average for equivalent road types, on these measures

Base: Road surface / marking / litter, all regions (6,212-7,234), Yorkshire and North East (886-1,008)
Lighting / cats eyes, among those travelling after dark, all regions (1,058-1,158), Yorkshire and North East (130-137)

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**

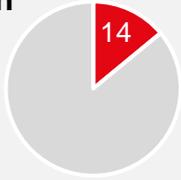
“ Poor lighting over grown road signs making it almost impossible to see directions ”

“ Poorly lit with unclear nearside verges ”

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

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

14% 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. ”

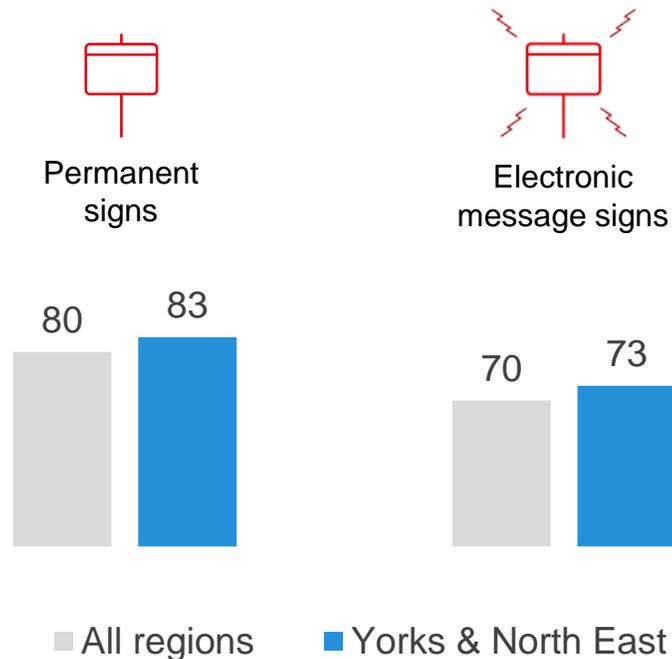
And possibly draws more attention to other evidence of poor maintenance?

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

Yorkshire and North East a little stronger than all other regions for signage

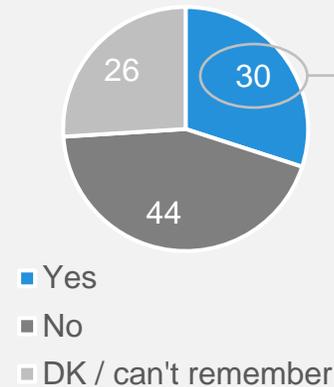
Rating of signage

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



Saw electronic signs

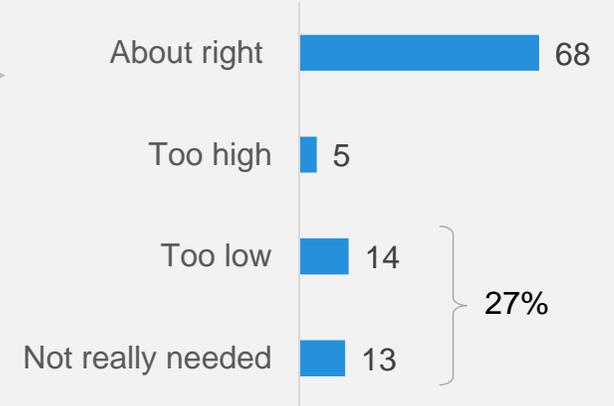
% Yorkshire and North East



Similar pattern across all regions

Appropriateness of electronic speed limits for conditions

% Yorkshire and North East



Similar pattern across all regions

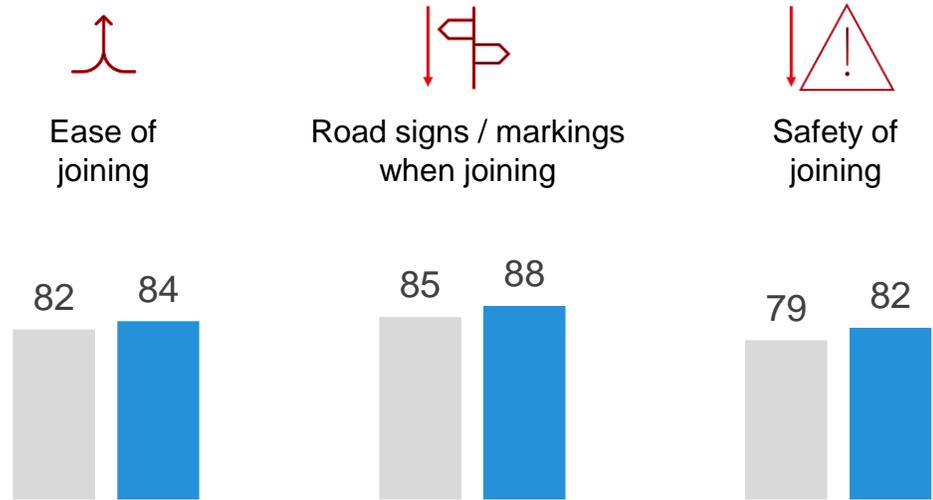
Both motorways and major A roads in this region perform on average, or a little above the national average, for equivalent road types, on these measures

Base: Permanent signs (6,937), Yorkshire and North East (968)
Electronic signs, among those having seen them, all regions (4,906), Yorkshire and North East (723)

Most users satisfied with joining / leaving SRN; leaving a marginally smoother process. Little regional variation but Yorkshire & North East a little above average

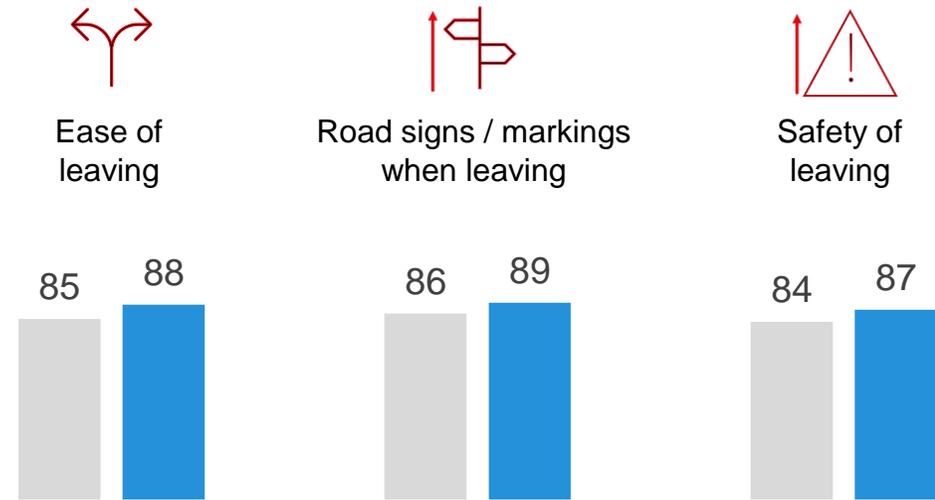
Rating of joining

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



Rating of leaving

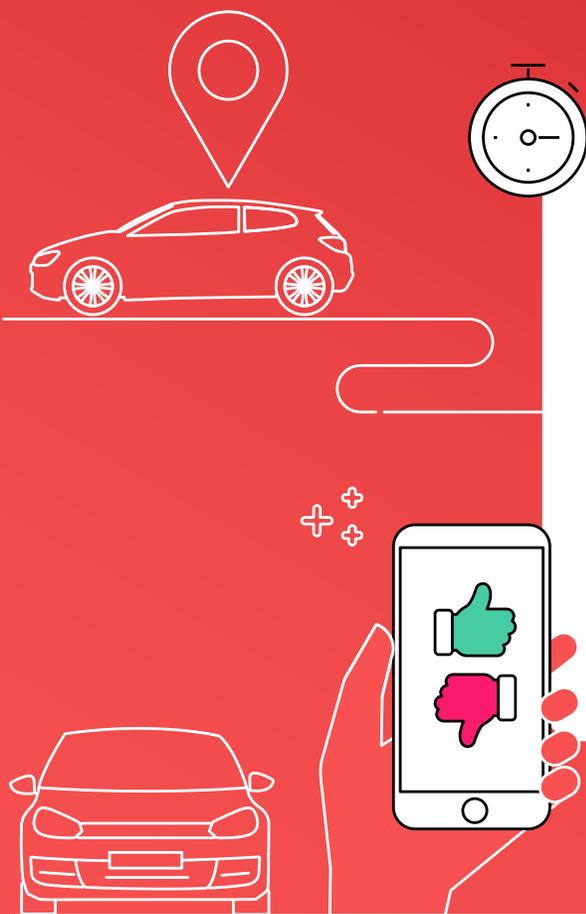
% very / fairly satisfied, Yorkshire and North East vs all-regions average



■ All regions ■ Yorks & North East

Both motorways and major A roads in this region perform on average, or a little above the national average, for equivalent road types, on these measures

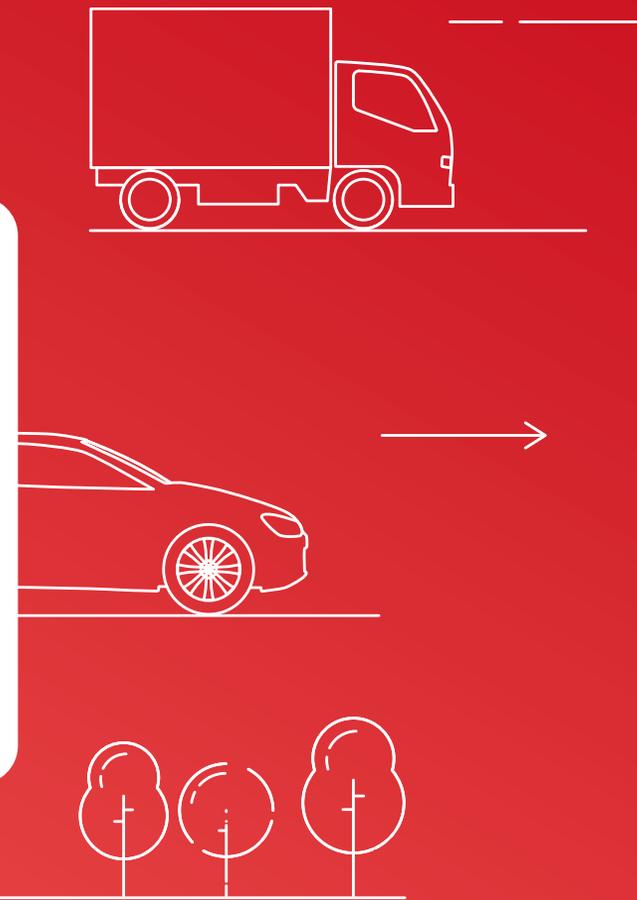
Base: all regions (7,182-7,264), Yorkshire and North East (1,001-1,008)



Focus on other topics

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

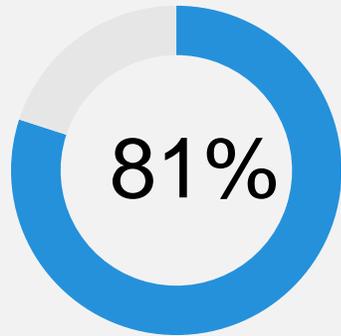
Learnings relevant to all regions



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.

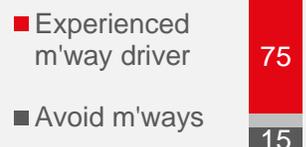
Similar levels of feeling safe for both major A roads and motorways, at national level. Again, this is similar in Yorkshire and North East

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

Confidence %



Motorway fluency %



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

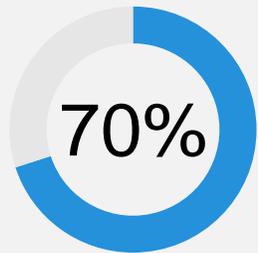
See more on motorcyclists' experiences later in this report.

Findings on this page are at national level unless stated

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



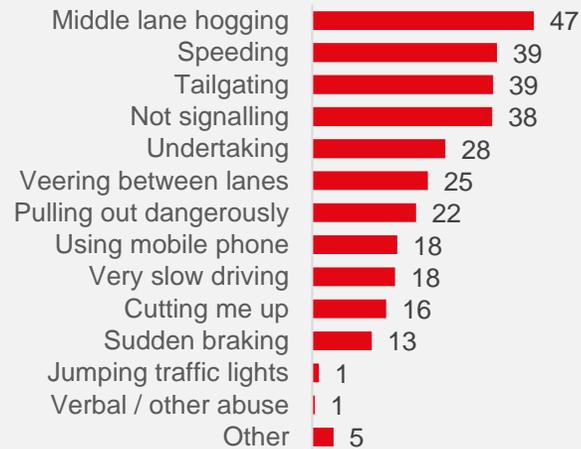
In line with the average across all regions

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 – with perceived poor driving on major A roads in the M25 area, in particular.

Attitudes to risk and speed %



Types of poor driving seen %



Poor lane discipline inevitably more common on motorways. Slow driving and tailgating more common on major A roads.*

*Similar patterns by region, though **perceived incidence of speeding (46%) and phone use (23%) are higher in Yorkshire and North East** than all other regions*

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 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



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. ”

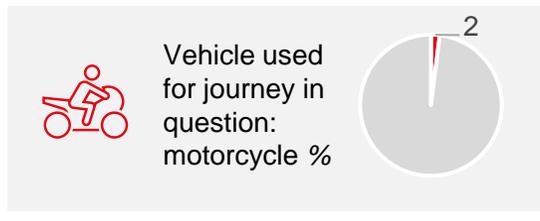
Findings on this page are at national level



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

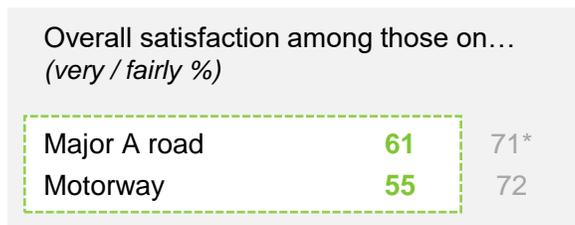
	Agree %	Disagree %
Confident: major A roads	94	4
Confident: Motorways	84	10
Even slightly exceeding speed limit is less safe	51	34

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

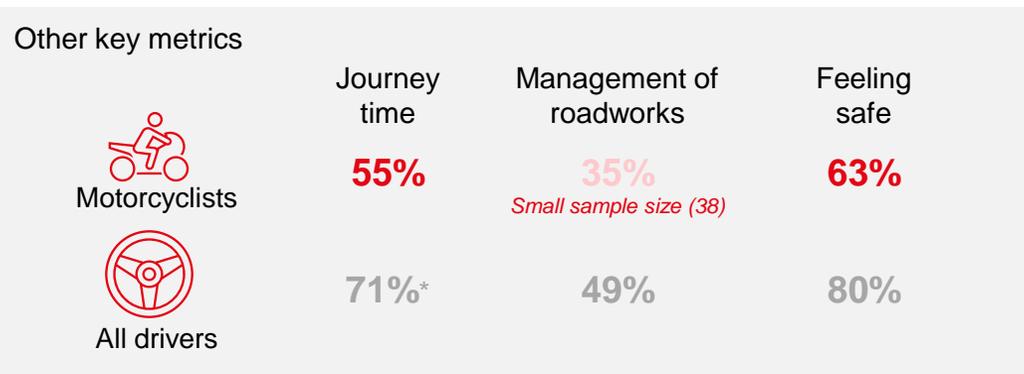
Notable for having some of the poorest SRN experiences



...and are a unique group in that their experience on major A roads is better than on motorways (reflecting 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 54 for more 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 ”

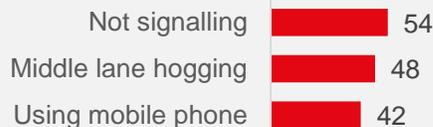
Virtually all journeys feature concern about other drivers

Experienced poor driving behaviour



Compared to 70% of all drivers

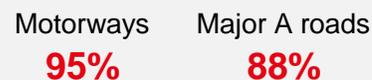
Types of poor driving seen: (top 3, %)



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:

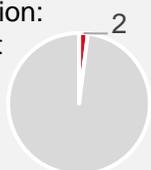
- Frustration felt by all drivers may be amplified in this group with its relatively higher expectation of speed and manoeuvrability
- ...and reduced agency can increase the sense of vulnerability

“ ...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.) See pg 54 for more

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 led 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	71%	70%	46%	76%
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



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	73%	68%	<i>Sample size too small</i>	79%
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 recharge 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>

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 54 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.



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

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

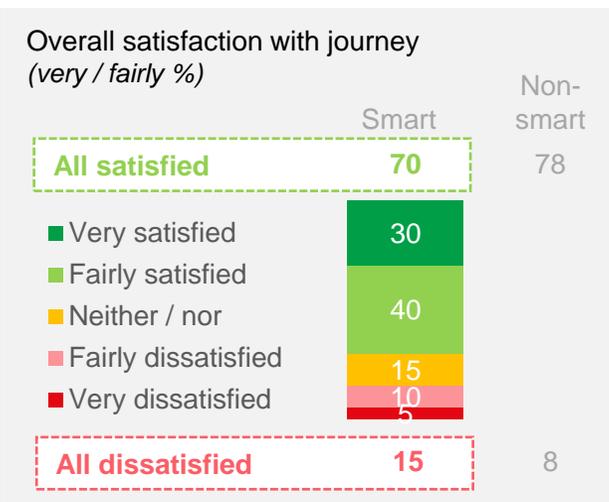
“ I have used the M42 for 40 years and since it has been a smart motorway it has been 4 lanes of stationary traffic during rush hour times. I no longer use the M42 during the rush hour because I cannot be certain that I will reach my destination on time. ”

“ 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



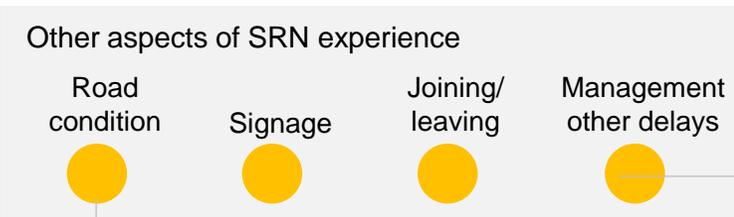
...especially for journey times and safety

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

Journey times more likely to exceed expectations (27% vs 15% for non-smart motorways), 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

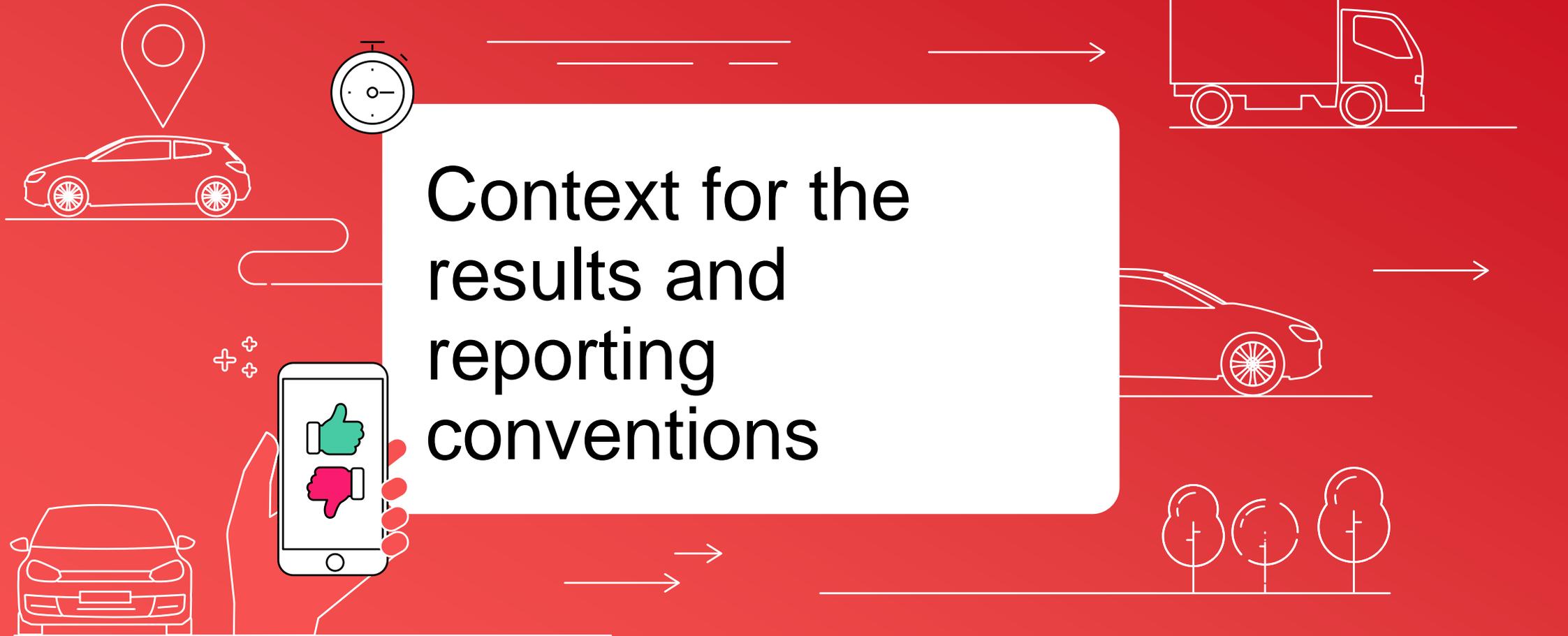
Despite some vocal complaints, in practice signage is rated similarly to other motorways



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.

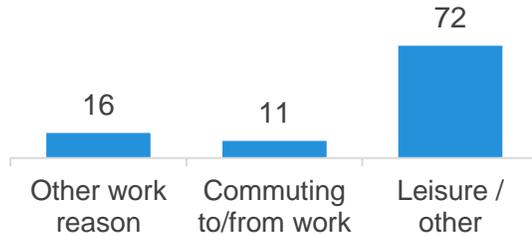
Context for the results and reporting conventions



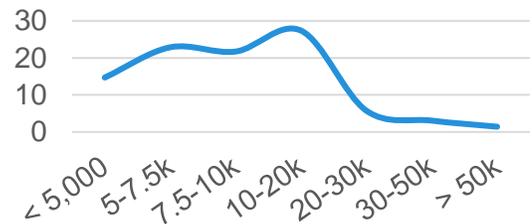
Users, and how they use the SRN in Yorkshire and the North East

Driving context

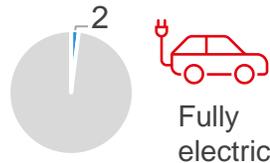
Journey purpose



Annual mileage (total)

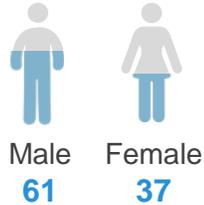


Vehicle type

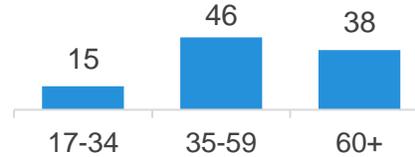


The traveller(s)

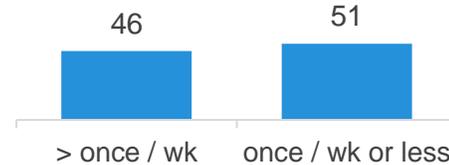
Gender



Age



Frequency on SRN



Any disability

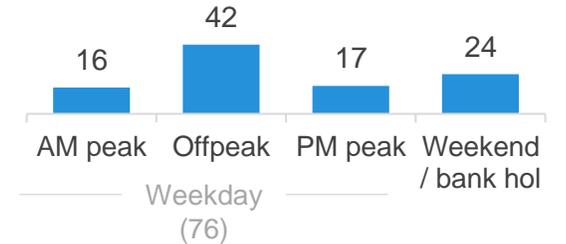


Travelling party



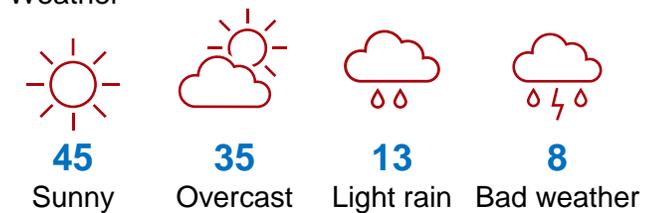
Environment

Journey time



14% journeys took place (partly) after dark

Weather



Figures shown are for Yorkshire and North East; patterns are very similar at all-regions level

Base: all SRN users surveyed, Yorkshire and NE, Oct '21 – Sep '22 (1,017)

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)

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Passengers' Council