

24 August
2023

26 August rail strikes: pre-strike intentions and information survey



Introduction



Transport Focus asked a representative sample of 2000 people from across Great Britain about the rail strikes due to take place on 26 August 2023.

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

The RMT strikes on 26 August will impact most train companies in England (and cross-border services in Scotland and Wales). There may also be some changes to services on the day after the strikes. In contrast with earlier waves of this survey in 2022, strike action is not impacting Network Rail. This means train companies not directly affected by the strike action can run a

largely normal service on these dates.

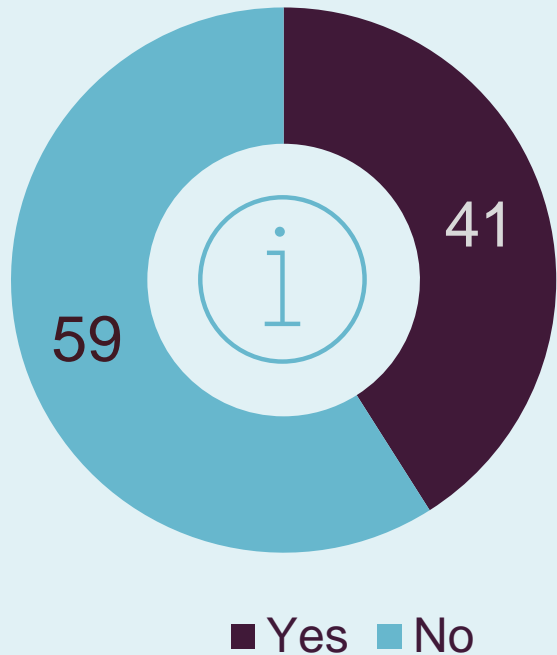
Overall, we obtained responses from around 200 people who said they intend to travel, or now no longer intend to do so because of the strike disruption between 26 August.

While this report is focussed on the strikes on 26 August, we also asked about awareness of an upcoming ASLEF strike on 1 September and a further RMT strike on 2 September.

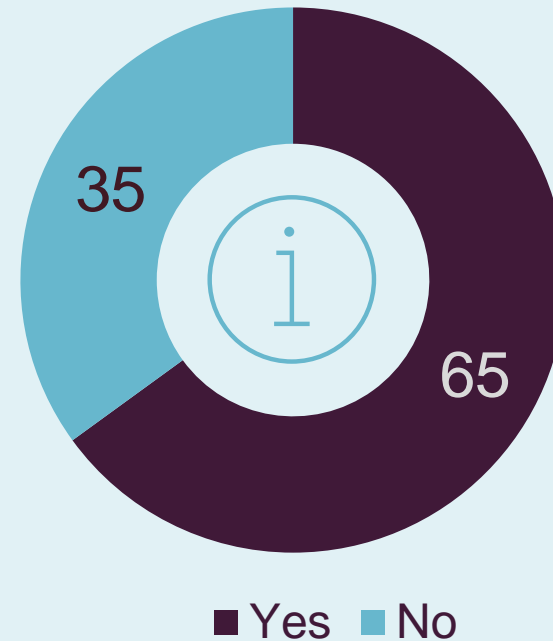
The survey was conducted between 21 and 22 August. Further detail on how we carried out this survey is available on page 14.

Four in ten are aware of strikes on 26 August. Higher at almost two thirds among those who intended to use trains on those days

Awareness among all respondents



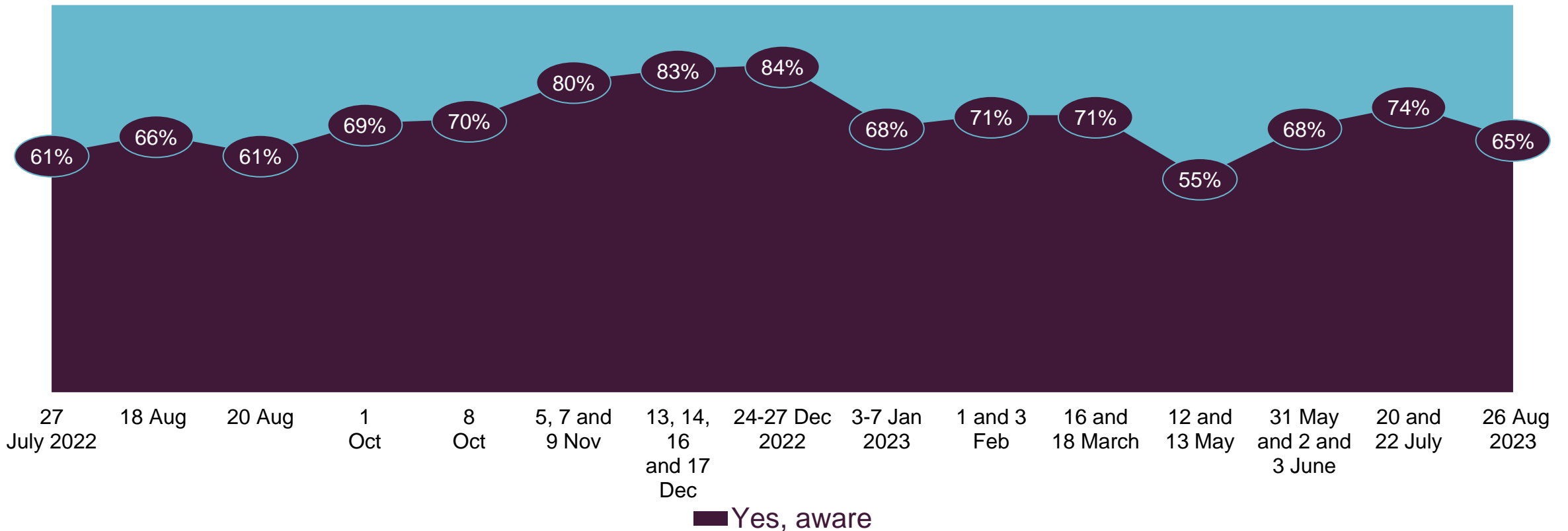
Awareness among those who intended to travel by train on 26 August



Q) Were you aware of the expected strike disruption on the day of the strike (26 August)?

26 August rail strike: pre-strike intentions and information survey. Sample sizes of charts: left 2022; right 202

Awareness of this strike is similar to other strikes



Notes: 1) November 2022 strikes were cancelled after our survey. 2) Strikes from February 2023 have not affected Network Rail.

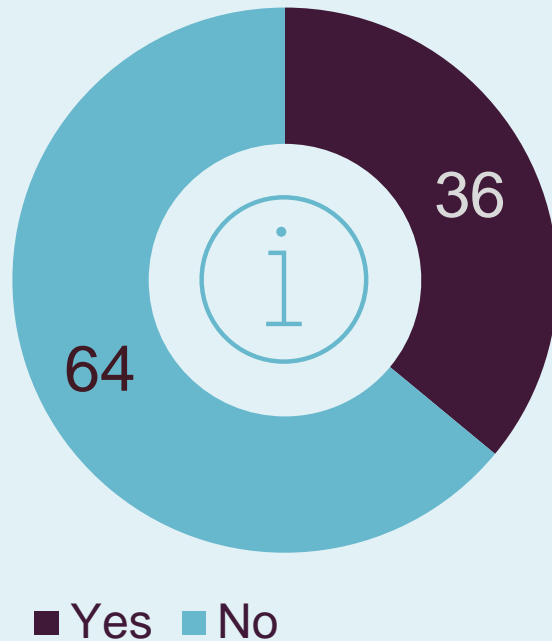
Q) Were you aware of the expected strike disruption on the days of the strikes.

Asked of those who intend or intended to travel on strike days 159, 135, 142, 196, 160, 332, 326, 232, 282, 186, 224, 180, 195, 217, 202.

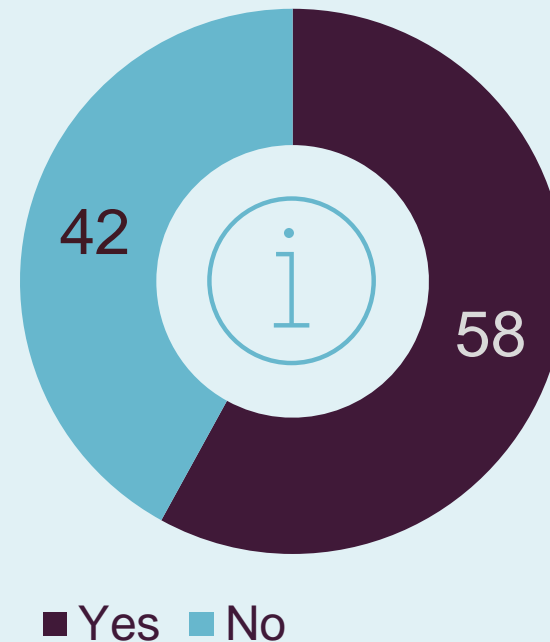
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Just over a third are aware of potential disruption on 27 August. Almost three in five among those intending to travel by train that day

Awareness among all respondents



Awareness among those who intended to travel by train on 27 August

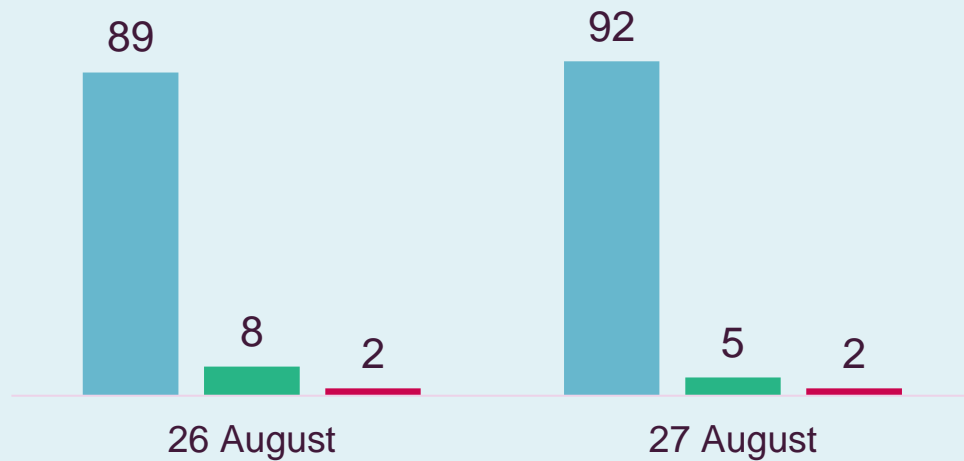


Q) Were you aware of the expected strike disruption on the day following the strike (27 August) when services may be disrupted or reduced?

26 August rail strike: pre-strike intentions and information survey. Sample sizes of charts: left 2022; right 143

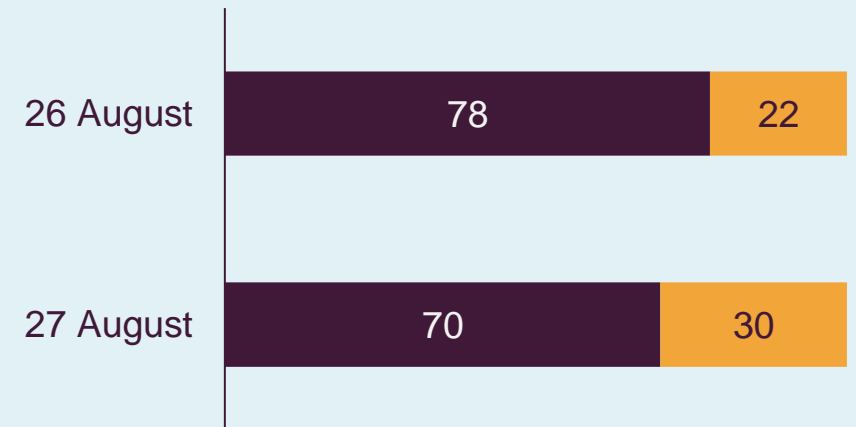
The majority of those who planned to travel by train on the affected days say they will no longer do so

Proportion intending to use train (%)



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

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



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

Q. As far as travelling by train (on dates) which applies for each of these?

Sample size left chart = 2022, sample size right chart 26 August = 202; 27 August = 143

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Examples of what those who decided not to travel by train said



I am planning to travel from London Euston to Crewe on 27 August. I hope my journey will not be affected as the strike is the day before. I dread the possibility of having to make alternative arrangements on a bank holiday weekend.

I won't be able to access my driving DVLA theory test or Saturday parkrun social activity.

I was going to travel by train but will be getting a coach now which will be very full and possibly delayed/effected because of the strikes.



I mainly use train to commute to work, so I will be greatly affected.

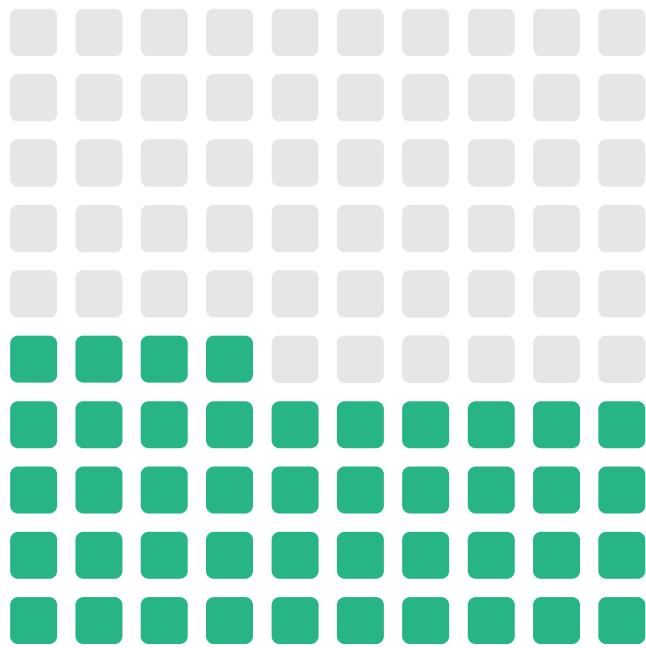
I won't be able to see the family, the only day I can visit them.

Need to travel on the Sunday but will most likely have to get a taxi or bus.

I know the rail strikes would affect me because most train services end up being cancelled. Or if you are fortunate enough to be able to catch a train it will be crazy overcrowded.

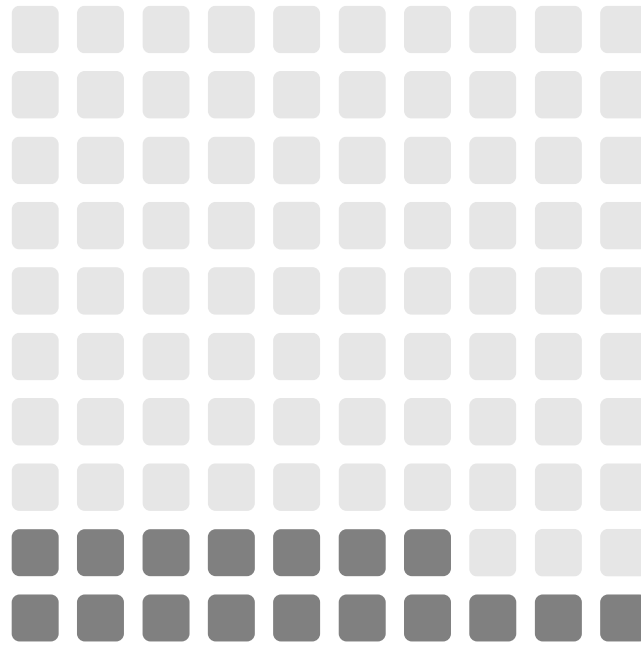
I was planning to stay overnight at a friends on Friday but now won't be able to as I won't be able to get the train back the next day.

Just over four in ten half rated information on the train services which will be running as good



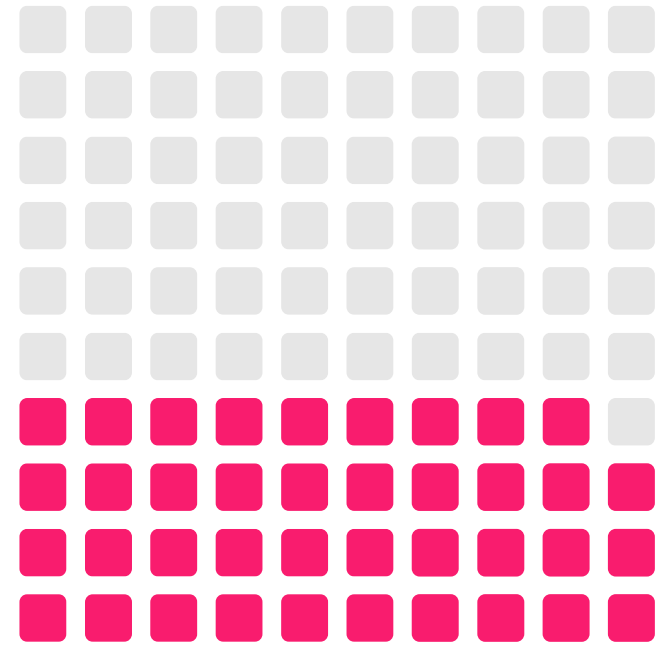
44%

Fairly good or very good



17%

Neither good nor poor



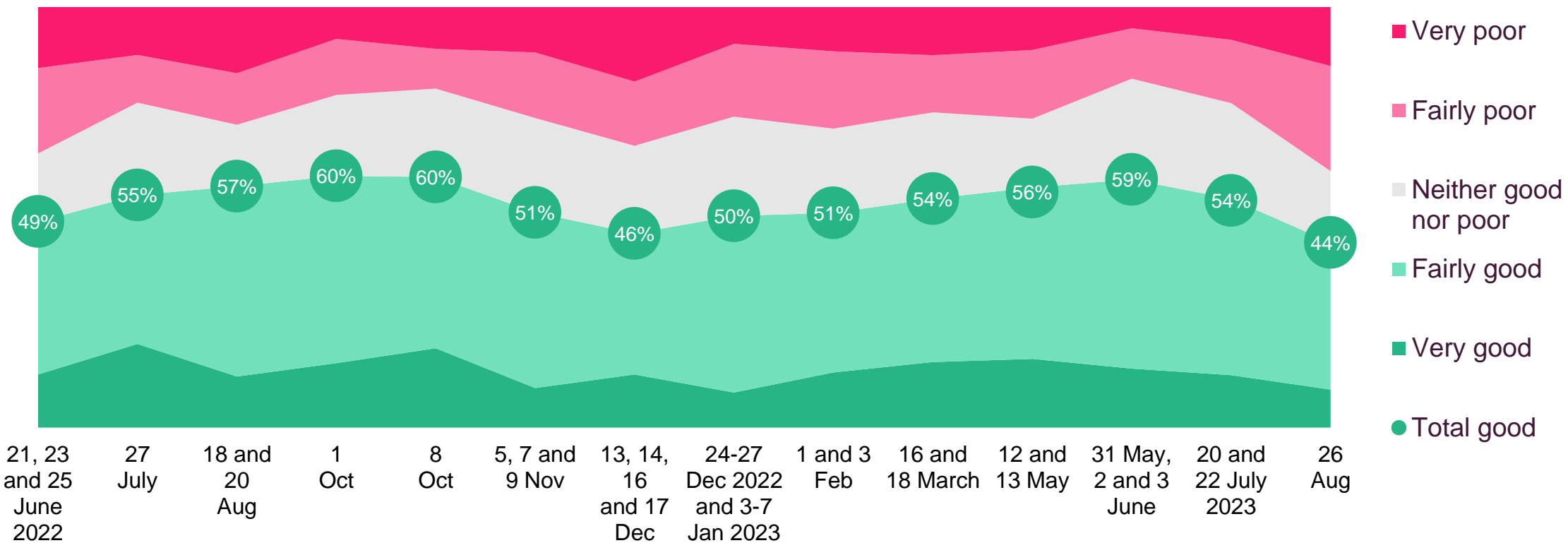
39%

Fairly poor or very poor

Asked of those aware and who intended, or still intend to travel either on strike days or days following when services may be impacted. Q. How do you rate the information available about the strikes in terms of the train services which will and will not be running. Sample size = 159. Results exclude those who said: 'Don't know/Did not look for information'.

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

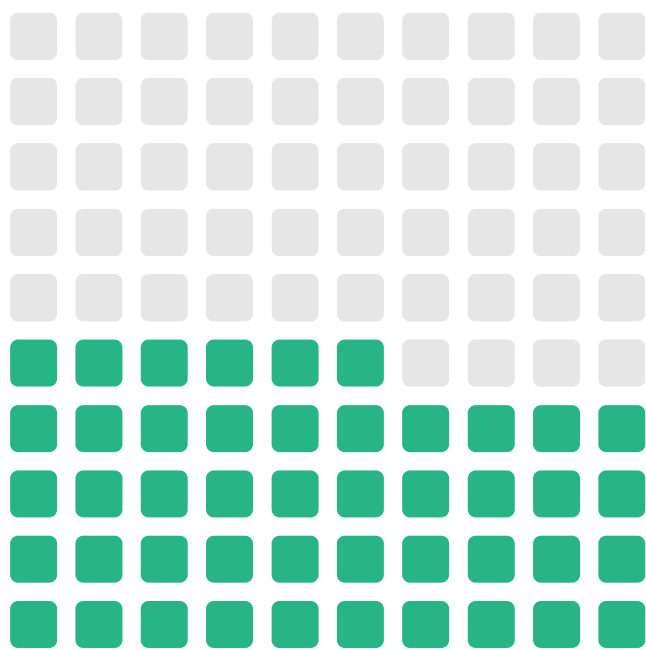


Notes: 1) November 2022 strikes were cancelled after our survey. 2) Strikes from February 2023 have not affected Network Rail.

Asked of those who intend or intended to travel on strike but then did not because of the strike affected days and aware of the strikes. Excludes those who said: 'Don't know/Did not look for information'. Sample sizes from left to right = 273, 134, 160, 204, 141, 242, 289, 339, 165, 193, 117, 158, 187, 159.

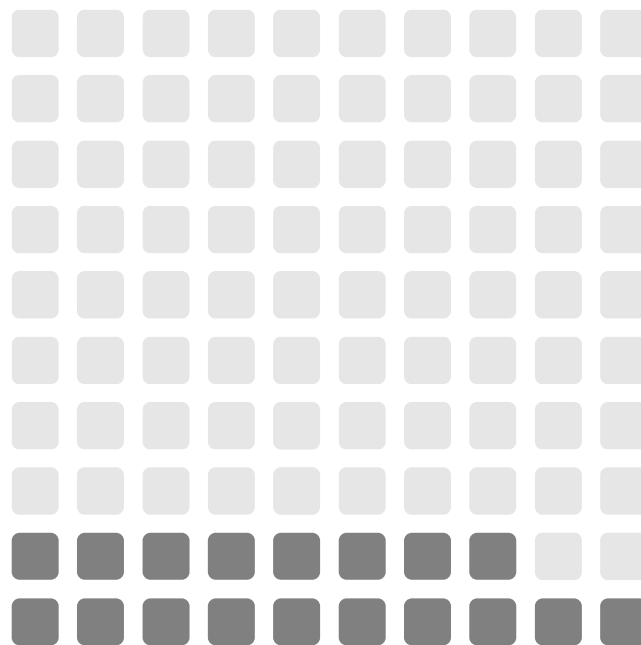
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Almost half rated the information on changing tickets and refunds as good while more than a third rated it as poor



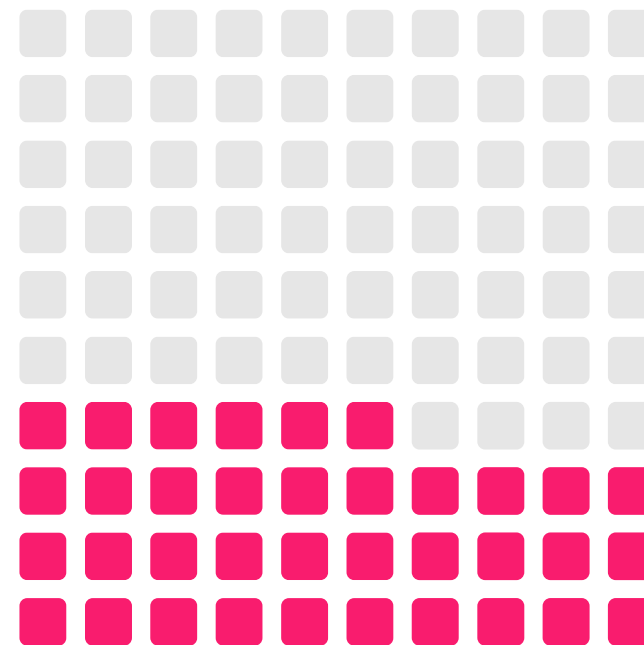
46%

Fairly good or very good



18%

Neither good nor poor



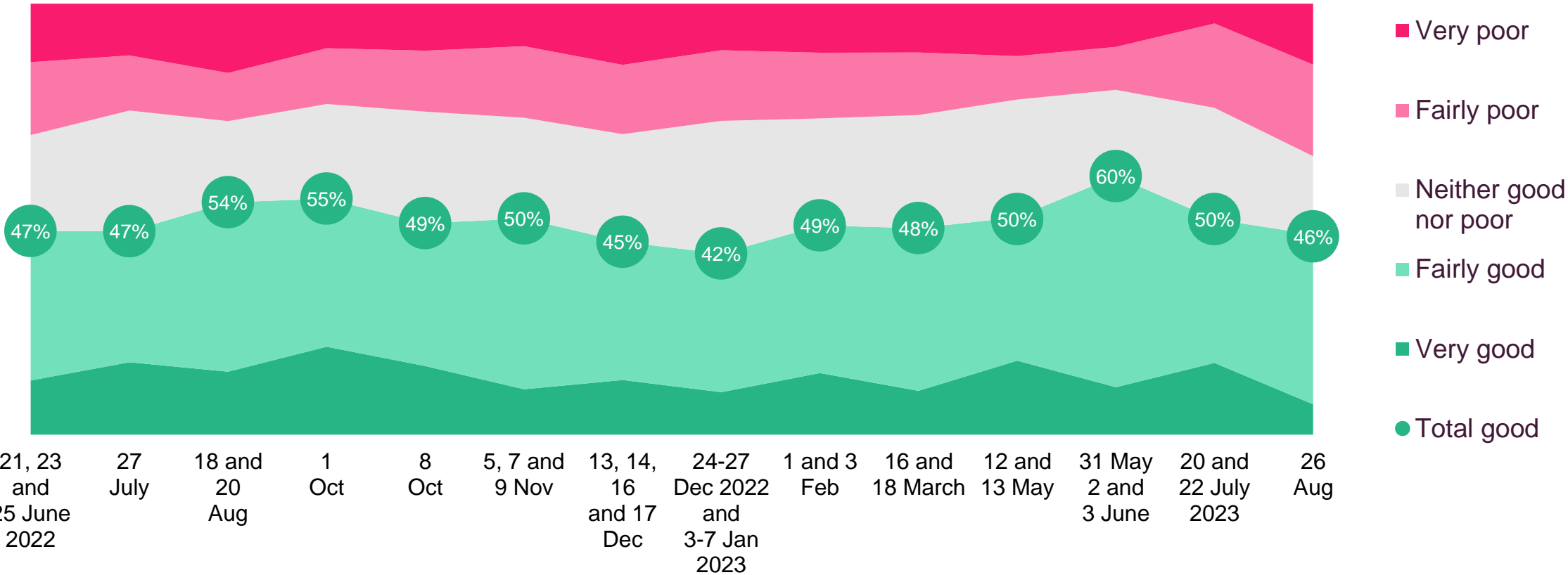
36%

Fairly poor or very poor

Asked of those aware and who intended or still intend to travel either on strike days or days following when services may be impacted. Q. How do you rate the information available about the strikes in terms of: the arrangements for changing your ticket or obtaining a refund if you are no longer travelling due to the strike. Sample size = 141 Results exclude those who said: 'Don't know/Did not look for information'.

26 August rail strike: pre-strike intentions and information survey.

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



Notes: 1) November 2022 strikes were cancelled after our survey. 2) Strikes from February 2023 have not affected Network Rail.

Asked of those who intend or intended to travel on strike but then did not because of the strike affected days and aware of the strikes. Excludes those who said: 'Don't know/Did not look for information'. Sample sizes from left to right = 223, 119, 136, 177, 125, 190, 252, 277, 146, 160, 105, 136, 165, 141.

26 August rail strike: pre-strike intentions and information survey.

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



Definite information about which trains are running at which time when looking ahead.

Make people more aware, and either just strike and not have anything running or have it all running.

Contact from rail company if you have already booked travel, more prominent information on news services.

National rail website could show alternative route.

It comes up clearly when trying to book tickets so I don't think it needs improvement.



We need to know further in advance, not last minute changes. Surely by now companies are used to the strikes and can put on a revised timetable.

Nothing specific. The information is out there to be seen.

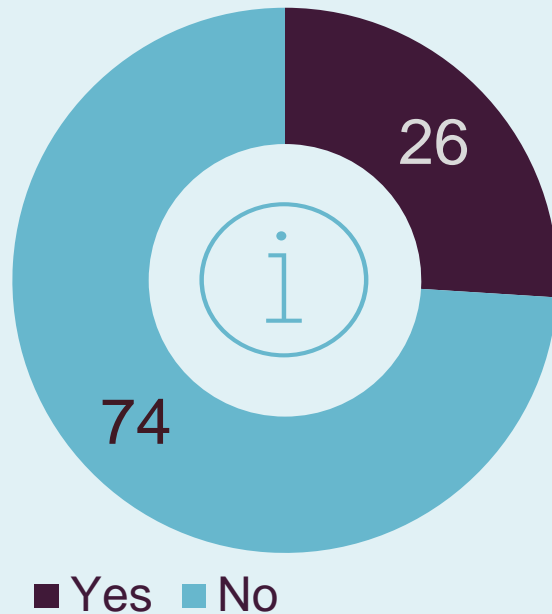
If you have booked tickets - refunds provided immediately.

More advanced information/posters at stations they usually only advertise a few days before the strikes are due but unions only have to give 2 weeks notice to strike so it's probably difficult to get posters printed off so quickly, but I hear about the strike dates on the news quite often.

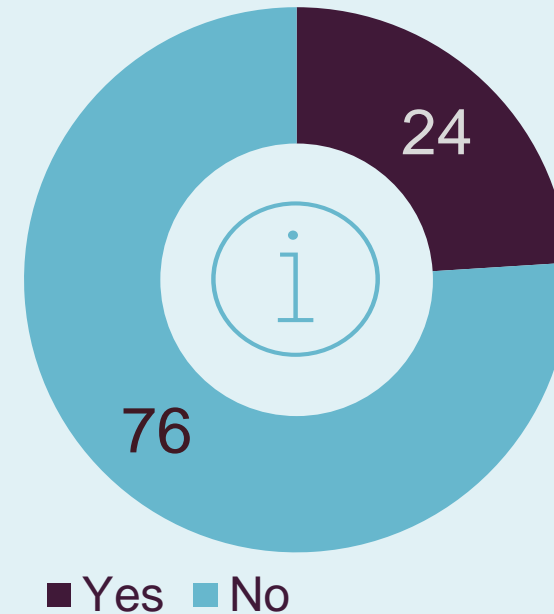
Email updating me about the train line I am travelling with.

Fewer people are currently aware of the strike on 1 and 2 September and the potential for disruption the following day

Awareness of 1 and 2 September strike among all respondents



Awareness of potential disruption on 3 September among all respondents



Q) Were you aware of the expected strike disruption on? i. The days of this these strikes (Friday 1 September and Saturday 2 September); ii. The day following this strike (Sunday 3 September) when services may be disrupted or reduced: Answer options: A= Yes; B = No.

26 August rail strike: pre-strike intentions and information survey. Sample sizes of charts: 2022

Methodology and question text

Transport Focus asked about the 26 August rail strike on Yonder Consulting's omnibus (conducted 21-22 August) which is weighted to be nationally representative of the population of Great Britain. The questions asked are shown below.

Intro statement: Rail strikes are planned for Saturday 26 August. Train services may also be impacted as a result on Sunday 27 August.

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

i. The day of the strike (Saturday 26 August); ii. The days following the strikes (Sunday 27 August) when services may be disrupted or reduced: Answer options: A= Yes; B = No.

Q2) As far as travelling by train, which applies for each of these days? (please do not count journeys you might make on London Underground):

i. Travelling on the strike day (Saturday 26 August); ii. The day following the strike (Sunday 27 August): Answer options: A) Had no plans to travel by train on any of those days; B) Intended to travel by train on one (or more) of those days but won't be doing so now; C) Still planning to travel by train on one (or more) of those days.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Intro statement: Rail strikes are also planned for the following Friday 1 September and Saturday 2 September and train services may also be impacted as a result on Sunday 3 September.

Q5) Were you aware of the expected strike disruption on?

i. The days of these strikes (Friday 1 September and Saturday 2 September); ii. The day following this strike (Sunday 3 September) when services may be disrupted or reduced: Answer options: A= Yes; B = No

Contact Transport Focus

Any enquiries about this report should be addressed to:

Jordan Sargeant

Senior policy adviser

Jordan.sargeant@transportfocus.org.uk

Transport Focus

Albany House

94 – 98 Petty France

London

SW1H 9EA

www.transportfocus.org.uk

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

We work to make a difference for all transport users.

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