

30 November
2023

2-8 December 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 between Saturday 2 December and Friday 8 December 2023.

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

The ASLEF strikes 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.

Strikes will impact East Midlands Railway and LNER on Saturday 2 December; Avanti West Coast, Chiltern, Great Northern, Thameslink, and West Midlands Trains on Sunday 3 December; c2c and Greater Anglia on Tuesday 5 December; Southeastern, Southern/Gatwick Express, South Western

Railway and Island Line on Wednesday 6 December; CrossCountry and Great Western Railway on Thursday 7 December; Northern and TransPennine Express on Friday 8 December.

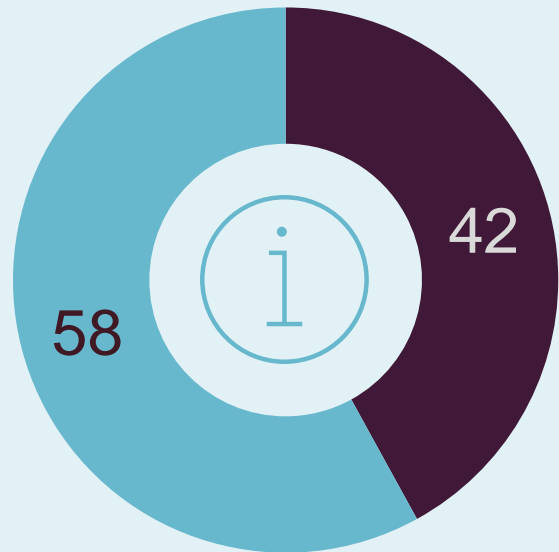
This is a different and more complicated strike pattern to previous strikes. Questions asked have been made as comparable as possible to the previous versions, however this should be kept in mind when interpreting results in the report.

Overall, we obtained responses from around 350 people who said they intend to travel, or now no longer intend to do so because of the strike disruption.

The survey was conducted on 27 and 28 November. Further detail on how we carried out this survey is available on page 12.

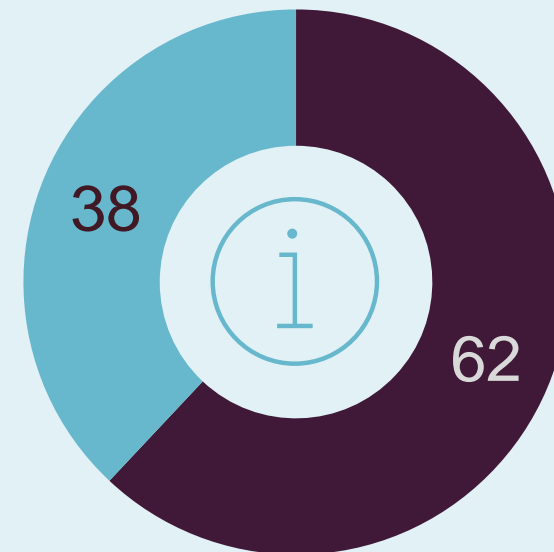
Four in ten are aware of strikes between 2 December and 8 December. Higher among those who plan/planned to use the train on strike days at six in ten.

Awareness among all respondents



■ Yes ■ No

Awareness among those plan/planned to travel on any strike day between 2 and 8 December



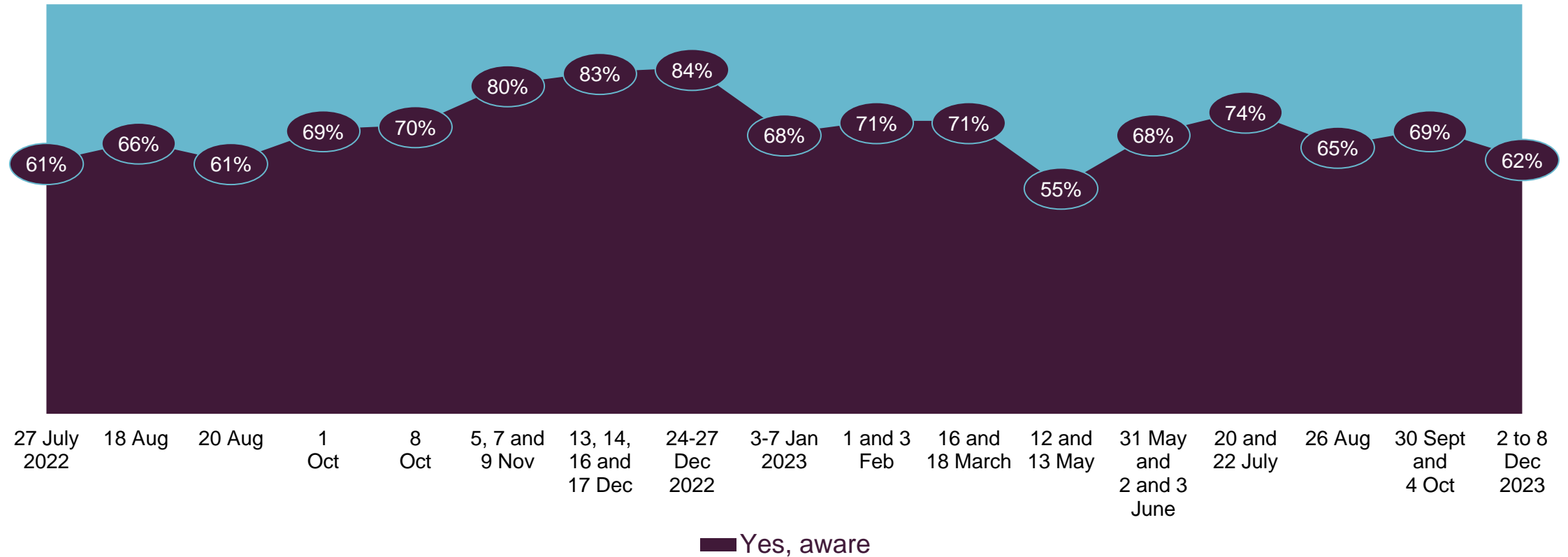
■ Yes ■ No

Rail strikes are planned between Saturday 2 December and Friday 8 December. Different train companies are affected on each of these days (table showing TOCs and their strike dates). Were you aware of These strikes

2 - 8 December rail strikes: pre-strike intentions and information survey. Sample sizes of charts: left 2049; right 299

Awareness of this strike is lower than recent strikes

Among those who plan/planned to travel on strike days



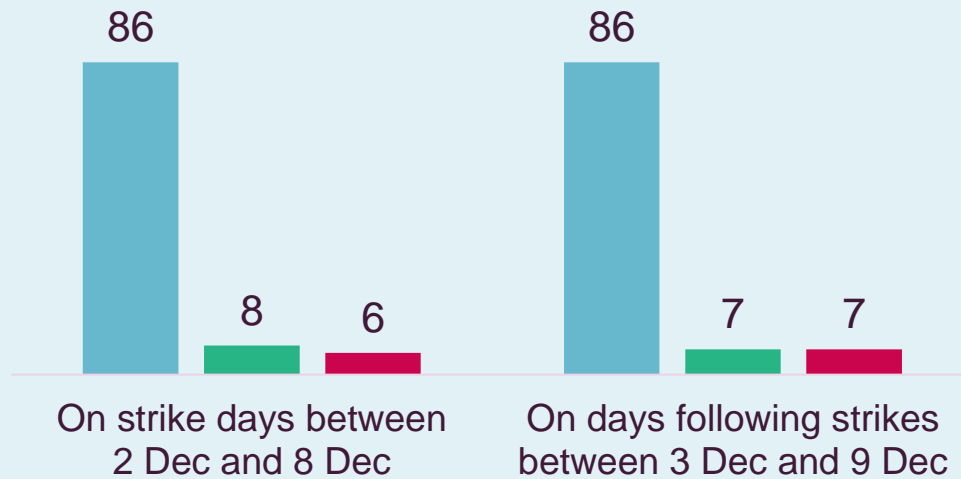
Notes: 1) November 2022 strikes were cancelled after our survey. 2) Strikes from February 2023 have not affected Network Rail.

Q) Rail strikes are planned between Saturday 2 December and Friday 8 December. Were you aware of These strikes

2 - 8 December rail strikes: pre-strike intentions and information survey. Base sizes: 159, 135, 142, 196, 160, 332, 326, 232, 282, 186, 224, 180, 195, 217, 202, 236, 299.

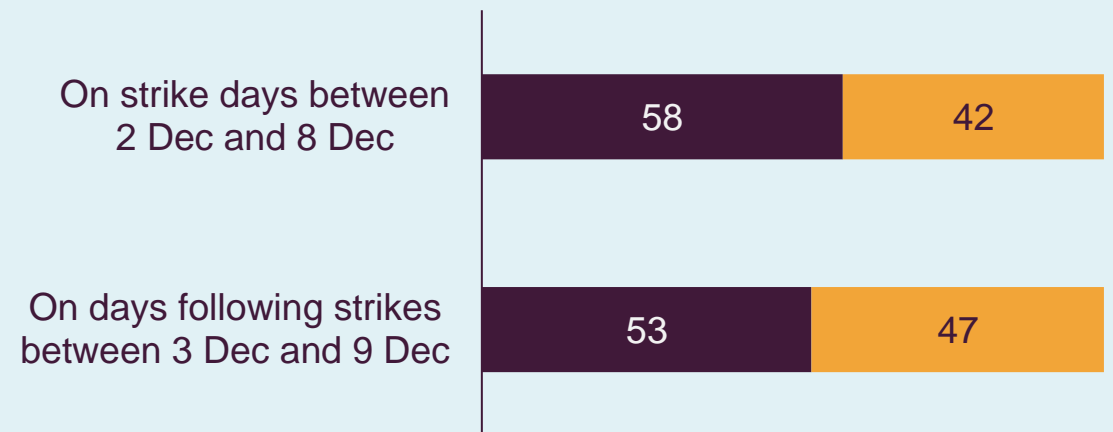
Of those who planned to travel by train on strike days, four in ten still intend to use the train, more than in recent strikes

Proportion intending to use train (%)



- Had no plans to travel on any of these days
- Intended to travel on one or more of these days but won't be doing so now
- Still planning to travel on one or more of these days

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



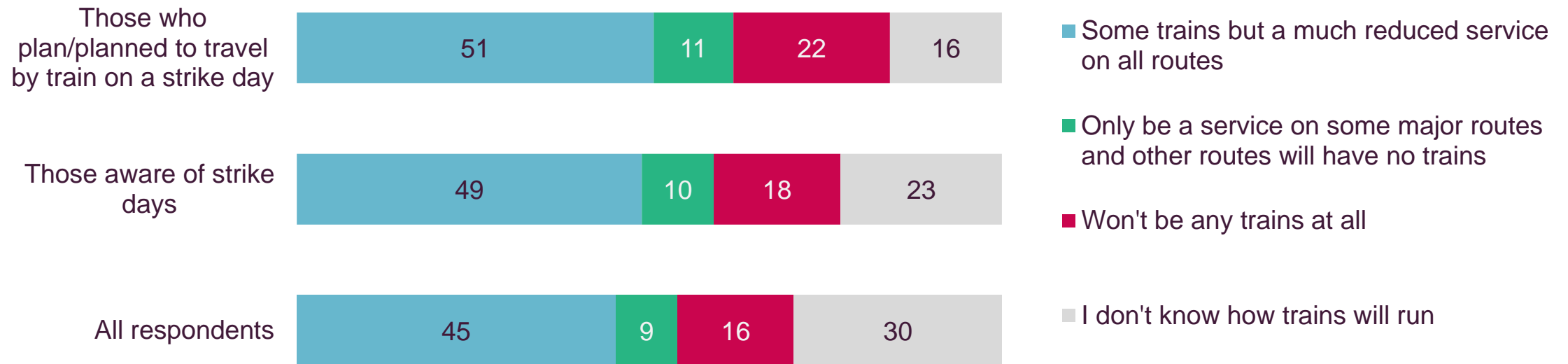
- Intended to use the train but not doing so now
- Still planning to use the train

Q) We are interested in how your travel plans might be affected by these strikes. First, a reminder of the strike dates for each train company (table showing TOC and their strike dates): Thinking about your travel by train - which one of these applies to you.....i. Travelling on any train company on the day it has its strike; ii. Travelling on any train company on the day that follows its strike (when services may be reduced or disrupted).

Sample size left chart = 2049, sample size right chart: strike days = 299; days following strikes = 290.
2 to 8 December rail strikes: pre-strike intentions and information survey.

Half those who plan/planned to travel on a strike day think some trains will operate on all routes

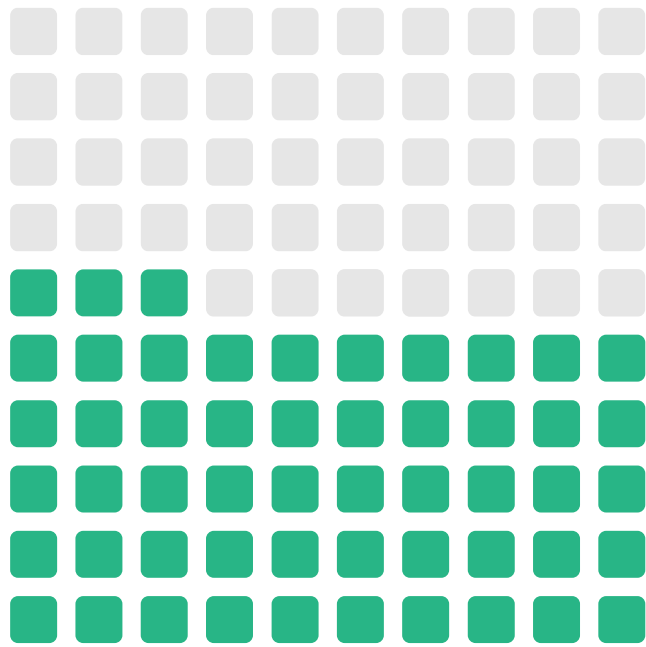
Level of service believed train companies will provide on their strike days, among....



On the days where there is strike action for a train company, which of these do you think describes the service it will provide? i. There will not be any trains at all; ii. there will be some trains but a much-reduced service on all routes with that train company; iii. there will only be a service on some major routes and other routes will have no trains; vi. I don't know how trains will run.

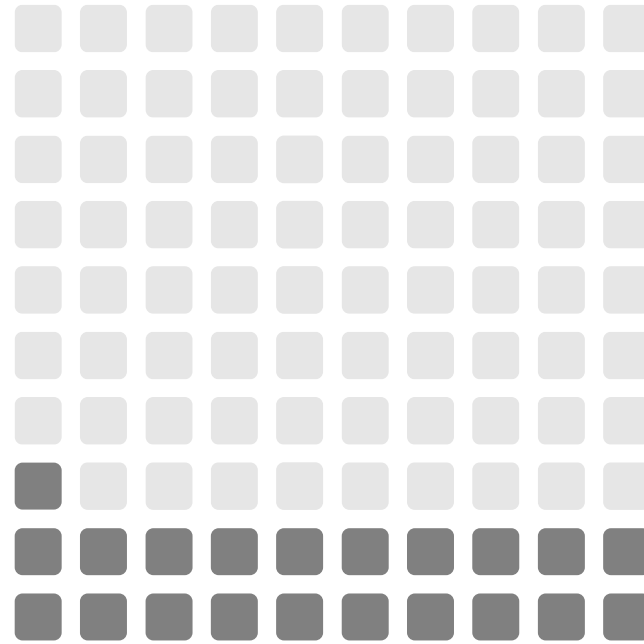
2 - 8 December rail strikes: pre-strike intentions and information survey. Base sizes categories top to bottom: 2049, 873, 299

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



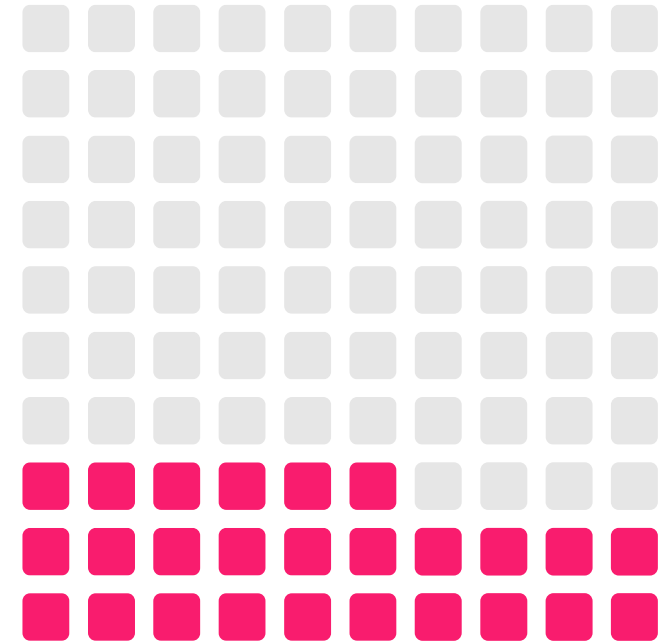
53%

Fairly good or very good



21%

Neither good nor poor



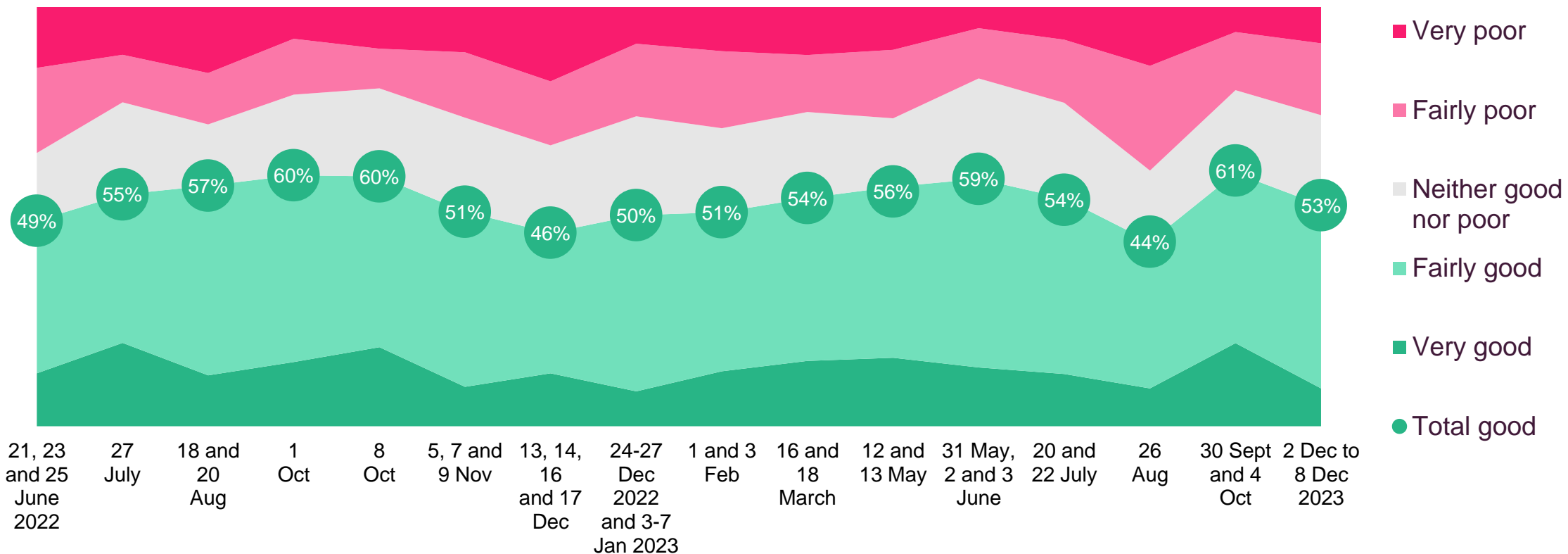
26%

Fairly poor or very poor

Asked of those aware and who intended, or still intend to travel either on strike days or days following when services may be impacted. Q. How do you rate the information available about the strikes in terms of the train services which will and will not be running. Sample size = 234. Results exclude those who said: 'Don't know/Did not look for information'.

2 to 8 December rail strikes: pre-strike intentions and information survey.

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

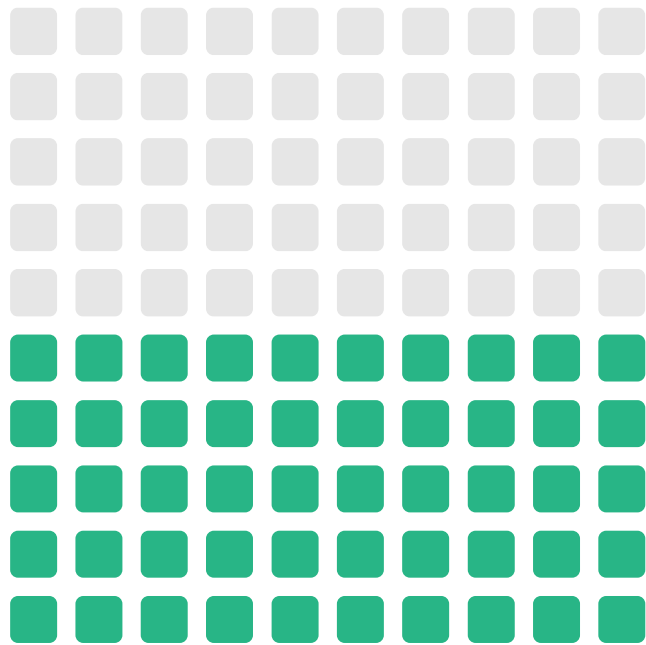


Notes: 1) November 2022 strikes were cancelled after our survey. 2) Strikes from February 2023 have not affected Network Rail.

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, 205, 234.

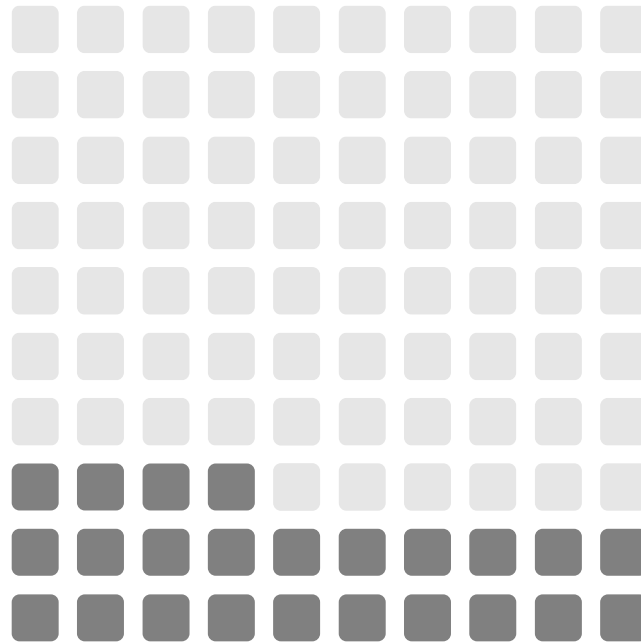
2 - 8 December rail strikes: pre-strike intentions and information survey.

Half rated the information on changing tickets and refunds as good while a quarter rated it as poor



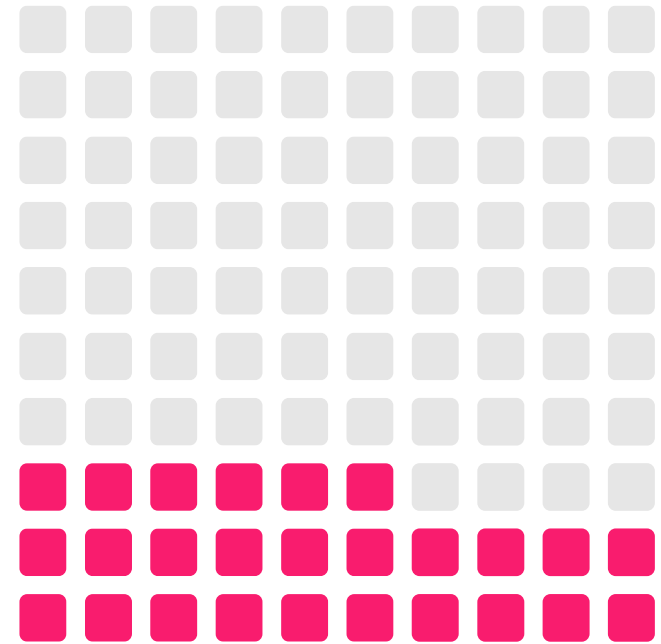
50%

Fairly good or very good



24%

Neither good nor poor



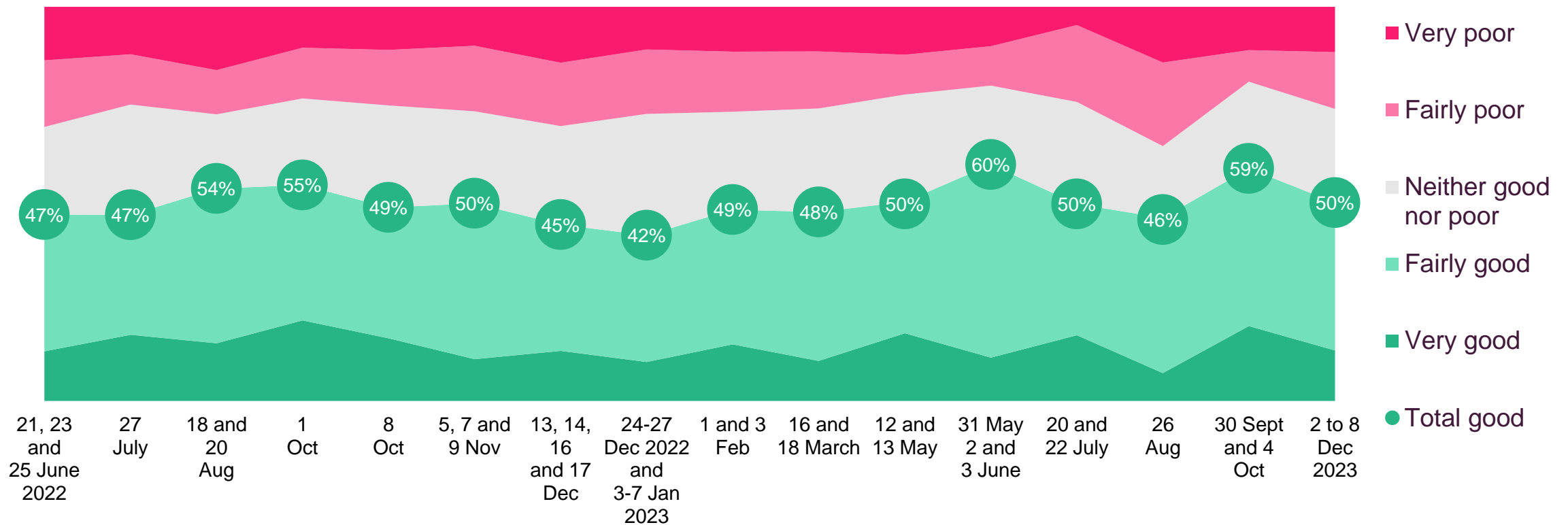
26%

Fairly poor or very poor

Asked of those aware and who intended or still intend to travel either on strike days or days following when services may be impacted. Q. How do you rate the information available about the strikes in terms of: the arrangements for changing your ticket or obtaining a refund if you are no longer travelling due to the strike. Sample size = 206. Results exclude those who said: 'Don't know/Did not look for information'.

2 to 8 December rail strikes: 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, 181, 206.

2 - 8 December rail strikes: pre-strike intentions and information survey.

Examples of comments about how information available can be improved



"Advertise these on social media platforms."

"I've always found the information to be very good if you know where to look."

"Exact information of what is running and what isn't."

"Information should be provided on the apps used to sell train tickets (Trainline)."

"More banners on websites to remind people."

"A more national information campaign."



"Be quantitative in the number of trains affected."

"It could be easier to get refunds - for those with season tickets - rail companies could e-mail link for refund."

"When buying a ticket it should say exactly what is available, and if you've already bought a ticket it should automatically refund you if the journey isn't available."

"The information regarding using your travel ticket another day or obtaining a refund are available direct from the Train company or people could access this information from a ticket office so I can't think of a way to improve this information."

Methodology and question text

Transport Focus asked about the 2 Dec to 8 Dec rail strikes on Yonder Consulting's omnibus (conducted 27-28 November) 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 between Saturday 2 December and Friday 8 December. Different train companies are affected on each of these days (table showing TOC and strike dates). Train services may also be impacted on the day after each of these strikes

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

- i. These strikes;
- ii. That services may be disrupted or reduced the day after these strikes.

Q2) We are interested in how your travel plans might be affected by these strikes. First, a reminder of the strike dates for each train company (repeat showing of table of TOC and strike dates). Thinking about your travel by train - which one of these applies to you:

- i. Travelling on any train company on the day it has its strike;
- ii. Travelling on any train company on the day that follows its strike (when services may be reduced or disrupted): Answer options: A) Had no plans to travel on any of these days; B) Intended to travel on one or more of these days but won't be doing so now; C) Still planning to travel on one or more of these days.

Q2a. On the days where there is strike action for a train company, which of these do you think describes the service it will provide?

- i. There will not be any trains at all
- ii. There will be some trains but a much reduced service on all routes with that train company
- iii. There will only be a service on some major routes and other routes will have no trains
- iv. I don't know how trains will run

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]

Contact Transport Focus

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Transport Focus is the operating name of the Passengers' Council

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

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

We work to make a difference for all transport users.

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