

SOUTH MARSTON

Village Travel Survey

Background

A travel survey was carried out across South Marston village during March 2024. The purpose of the survey was to understand what villagers needed in order to make their everyday journeys more sustainable, and was funded by the travel plan at Magdalene Close (the Bellway Homes Vicarage Gardens development).

The survey was available online via the Smart Survey website and advertised with a flyer inserted into the South Marston community magazine as well as village social media sites. The survey had the potential to reach approximately 450 residents. A postcard advertising the survey was posted to the properties in Magdalene Close to encourage a good response from the residents there.

The survey was open from 16th March 2024 until 1st April 2024 and achieved 32 responses; a response rate of 7%. This was 2 respondents fewer than the previous year's survey. The results will be used to inform the actions of Swindon Travel Choices over the next 12 months.

This report outlines a summary of key results, with a segregation of results for the residents of Magdalene Close (Vicarage Gardens). However, there were only a small number of respondents from the Vicarage Gardens development (10% of occupied properties), so their responses may not be representative of the development, and should be treated with caution.

Incentives

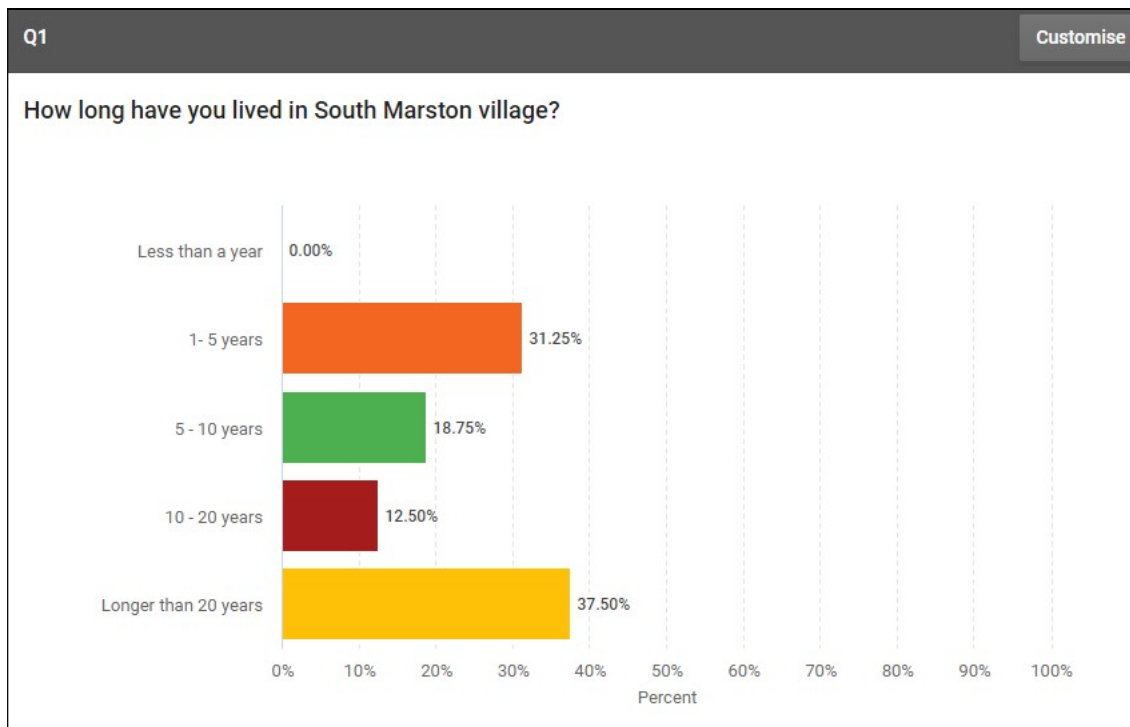
As an incentive to respond to the survey, residents were offered entry into a prize draw to win a £100 Sainsburys gift card. All respondents were entered into the prize draw after the survey closed, and the winner was Angela Newton (pictured below receiving her prize). We announced the winner in the May edition of the South Marston Community magazine, along with headline results.



Results

We wanted to know how long residents had lived in the village, to gauge how many might be new to the area and need assistance getting around.

Table 1 presents the results of Q1 '**How long have you lived in South Marston village?**'



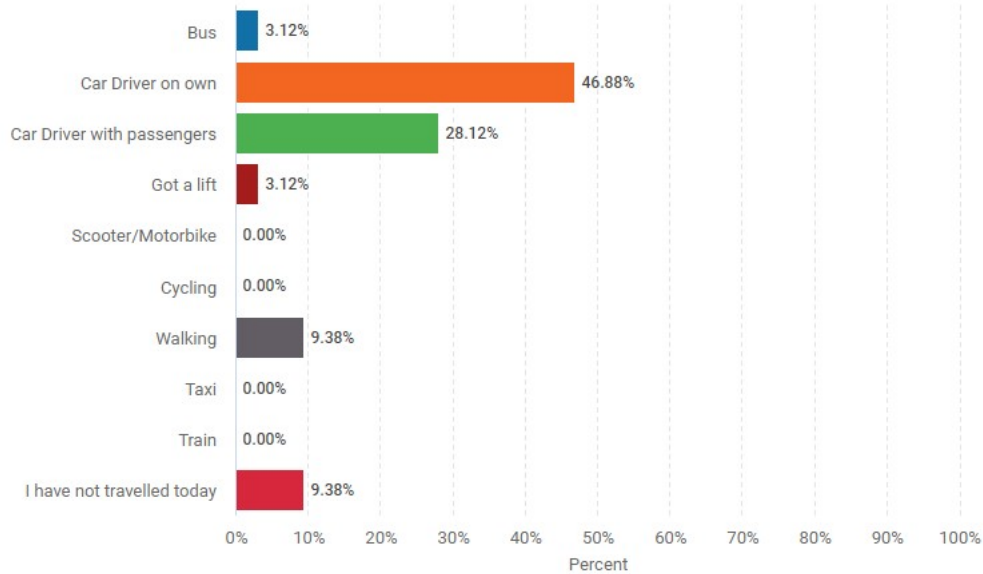
Whilst a significant portion of the village are long term residents (37.5% have lived in the village over 20 years), there are still over 31% that have moved to the village in the previous 5 years.

Travel

Our next question explored the current travel habits of the residents and asked "*If you have left the house today, please tell us how you travelled for the longest* part of your journey (*in miles, not time)*"

The table on page 3 presents the results:

If you have left the house today, please tell us how you travelled for the longest* part of your journey (*in miles, not time) Tick one response only.



Within the travel plan, a high-level target has been set to keep car travel below 73%; a baseline that had come from the 2011 census data for the area. We can see that single occupancy car use was well below that figure, at 46.8%, although if the car sharing drivers are added in, the total does come up to 75%, just above target and over 10 percentage points higher than the previous year.

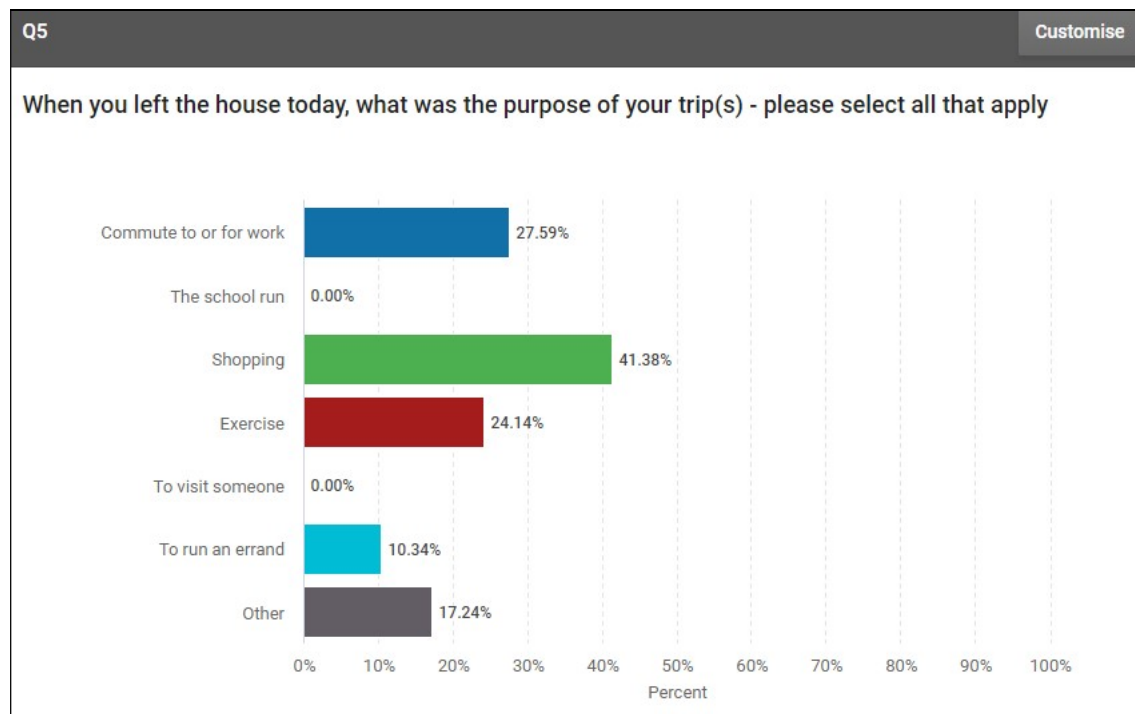
The number of people making walking trips was encouraging at 9.3%, although this was nearly half of that from the previous year. The bad weather through March could account for the preference not to go out on foot. There is room for improvement with more journeys needed by cycle. The village has no bus service, so it is unsurprising to see that bus trips accounted for just 3% of journeys.

A bus service is due to be introduced into the southern end of the village in line with the development of South Marston and Rowborough, so we would expect to see bus modal share increase then.

Journey Purpose

Our next question was asked to all those who indicated that they had left the house today, and explored the purpose for making trips. We asked “When you left the house today, what was the purpose of your trip(s) - please select all that apply.”

The results were as follows;



Just over a quarter of trips were for the commute and it was pleasing to see none were due to the school run. The Easter school holiday period only fell across the final few days that the survey was open so shouldn't have affected those results.

Of the respondents that answered “Exercise”, only 28% had chosen to walk or cycle, with the other 72% indicated that they were car drivers in the previous question, so this implies that they drive to go for a walk, or to the gym etc.

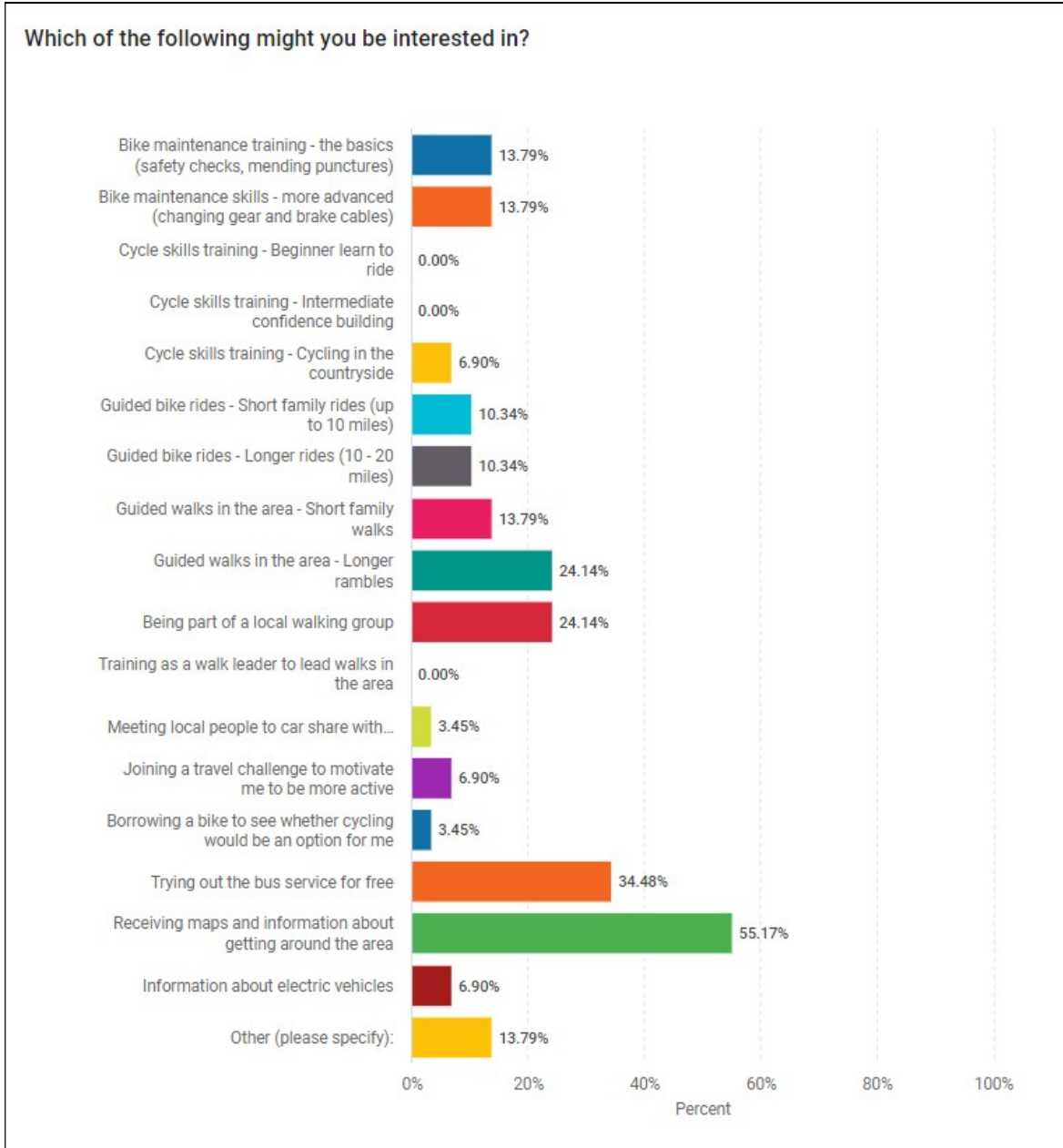
Working from Home

We asked whether people worked from home. Whilst 32% of respondents did not work, only 32% travelled into the workplace, with the remaining 35% working from home all or most of the time (16%) or some of the time (19%).

Interest in travel initiatives

We asked residents which initiatives they might be interested in. The results from this question would inform where the travel plan should direct its resource.

We listed 17 options, and also offered an “other” category for residents to make suggestions. The results were as follows;



Receiving maps and information about getting around was the most popular initiative, with over half the respondents choosing this option. Walking options (guided walks (especially long) and a local walking group) were popular initiatives that a quarter of the residents were interested in, with a desire to try the bus for free.

Actions to come out of this include;

- Do further work to understand what maps residents require and work with the parish to see how these can be delivered
- Put on local taster walks
- Offer free bus taster tickets, and promote the free fortnightly bus service by F & E Harris Memorial Trust.

- Produce local walking magazine to demonstrate a variety of routes in the area

There were 4 suggestions in the “other” category. Three of these related to the lack of bus service, which will be tackled with the expansion of the village under the South Marston and Rowborough development. The 4th showed a desire for a “Car hire share”. This could become more viable with the South Marston and Rowborough development.

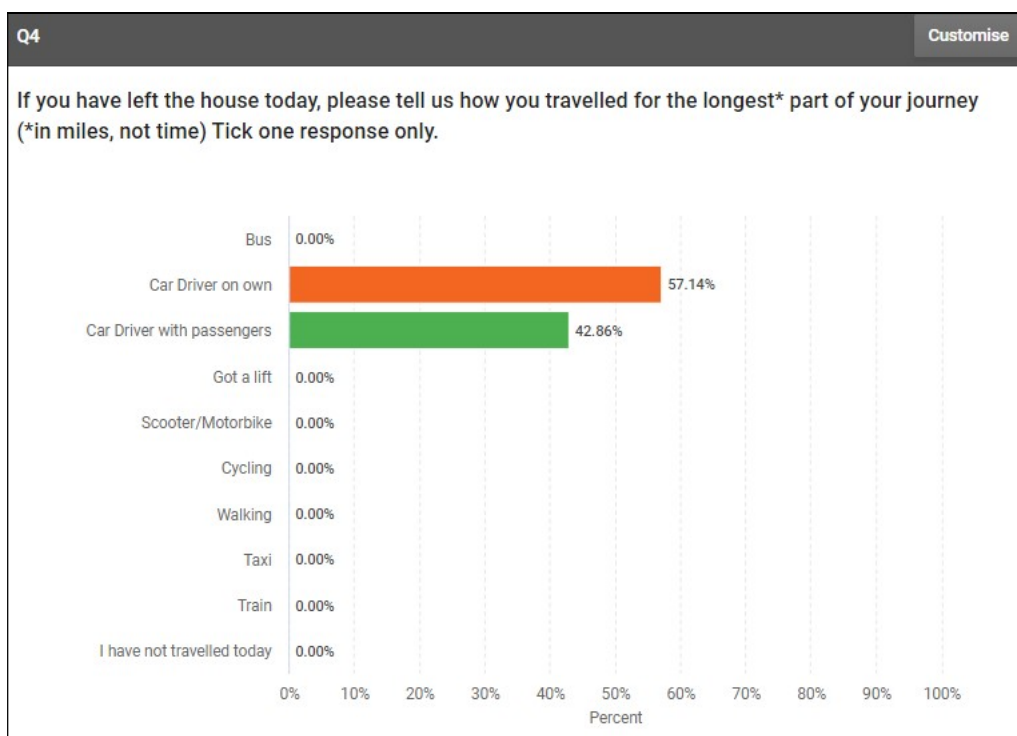
Vicarage Gardens responses only

For the purposes of monitoring the travel plan at Vicarage Gardens, the following answers of those living in Magdalene Close have been extracted from the survey for separate analysis. As indicated earlier, there were only a handful of responses from residents living at Vicarage Gardens, so we can only take their answers with caution and not necessarily view them as representative of the development as a whole.

Q1 – Modal split

Our first question explored the current travel habits of the residents and asked “*If you have left the house today, please tell us how you travelled for the longest* part of your journey (*in miles, not time)*”

The table below presents the results:



Within the travel plan, a high-level target has been set to keep car travel below 73%; a baseline that had come from the 2011 census data for the area. It is encouraging to see that solo car use was below that figure, at 57%, although if the car sharing drivers are added in, the total does come up to 100%. As mentioned earlier, the low response rate does not give an accurate picture of the development as a whole and we may need to add vehicle trip data or manual trip counts in future.

Q2 – Awareness of initiatives

We asked respondents to indicate their awareness of the schemes that are being provided to them by Bellway through the travel plan. The initiatives were listed as:

- Borrow a Bike Scheme

- Free bus taster tickets
- Rail voucher
- Household travel information pack
- Car share scheme

The results were as follows;

The developer at Vicarage Gardens is making a range of travel initiatives available to new residents. Please tell us which ones you are aware of						
Answer Choices	Borrow a bike scheme	Bus taster tickets	Rail voucher	Household travel information pack	Car Share scheme	Response Total
Aware	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	75.00% 3	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	4
Not aware - Tell me more!	16.67% 1	16.67% 1	50.00% 3	16.67% 1	0.00% 0	6
Not aware - Not interested	100.00% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3

We can learn from this table that there is no interest in car sharing, but half of the respondents weren't aware of the rail voucher offer (but would like to know more), with one other wanting to learn more about the borrow a bike scheme, the bus taster tickets, and the household travel information pack.

We will use this information to send personalised information out on the schemes where the respondents have left contact details and indicated that they want to know more.

Q3 – Future activity

We asked residents which initiatives they might be interested in. The results from this question would inform where the travel plan should direct its resource.

We listed 17 options, and also offered an "other" category for residents to make suggestions. The following table shows options that received responses;

Which of the following might you be interested in?	
Answer Choices	Responses
Bike maintenance training - the basics (safety checks, mending punctures)	16.67%
Bike maintenance skills - more advanced (changing gear and brake cables)	0.00%
Cycle skills training - Beginner learn to ride	0.00%
Cycle skills training - Intermediate confidence building	0.00%
Cycle skills training - Cycling in the countryside	16.67%
Guided bike rides - Short family rides (up to 10 miles)	16.67%
Guided bike rides - Longer rides (10 - 20 miles)	0.00%
Guided walks in the area - Short family walks	0.00%
Guided walks in the area - Longer rambles	16.67%
Being part of a local walking group	33.33%
Training as a walk leader to lead walks in the area	0.00%
Meeting local people to car share with for regular journeys (ie commuting / school run / shopping)	0.00%
Joining a travel challenge to motivate me to be more active	33.33%
Borrowing a bike to see whether cycling would be an option for me	16.67%
Trying out the bus service for free	33.33%
Receiving maps and information about getting around the area	50.00%
Information about electric vehicles	0.00%
Other (please specify):	0.00%

The results were slightly different to those across the whole village, with an emphasis on wanting maps, followed by the desire to join a local walking group and joining a travel challenge.

We will use this information to send personalised information out on the schemes where the respondents have left contact details.

The next survey is due to take place in March 2025. It may take the form of an all vehicle traffic count focussing on Vicarage Gardens.