



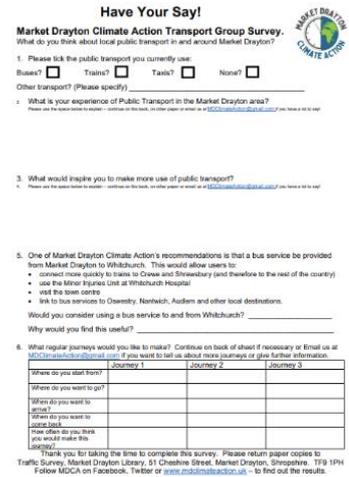
Responses to Transport Survey

December 2022

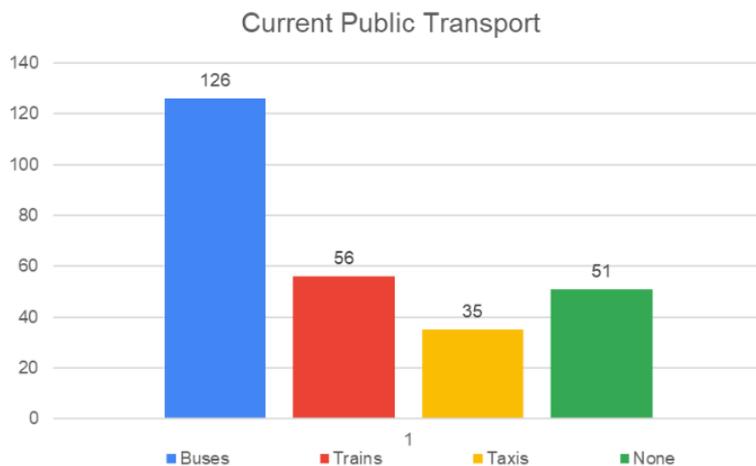
Market Drayton Climate Action's Transport Sub-Committee drew up a plan to address some of the major issues with public transport in the Market Drayton area, which prevent people getting out of their cars and reducing their carbon footprint. This was published on The Market Drayton Climate Action website and passed to local politicians as part of our lobbying. [transport-recommendations-mdca-1.pdf \(wordpress.com\)](https://www.marketdraytonclimateaction.org.uk/transport-recommendations-mdca-1.pdf)

We devised a survey to test whether our ideas, drawn from anecdotal evidence and personal observations, really correlated with the public view.

The survey was disseminated online through the website and in paper form, largely through Market Drayton Library. The survey started in July 2022 and was due to finish at the end of September. However, we were asked to leave it open for a further month because of public interest. It was duly closed at the end of October (when we ran out of paper copies!) There were a total of 195 responses: 80 online and 115 on paper.



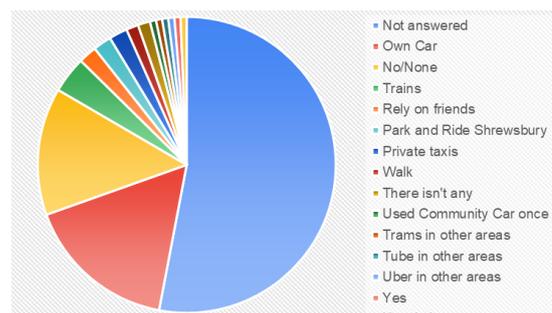
Question 1 asked what public transport people currently use.



128 respondents currently use buses, 56 use trains and 35 use taxis. However 51 (26%) said they use no public transport at all. It is perhaps more surprising, given the state of public transport in Market Drayton, that 74% of our respondents did use public transport!

The second part of question 1 asked what other transport people used. Maybe the question was not clear as 80 people left this blank (blue). However 25 (red) said they used their own car, 21 (yellow) said No or None and other answers were:

- 6 trains
- 3 rely on friends
- 3 use the park and ride in Shrewsbury



- 3 *private taxis*
- 2 *walk*
- 2 *“There isn’t any”*
- 1 *used the community car once*
- 1 *trams in other areas*
- 1 *tube in other areas*
- 1 *Uber in other areas*
- 1 *‘Yes’*
- 1 *hospital transport.*

Question 2 asked people for their experiences of public transport in the Market Drayton area.

Our only surprise was that three people found good things to say! Generally replies were very similar. Fundamentally Market Drayton is not well served – as many respondents pointed out, the existing bus services are being cut and, for a town of our size, the existing services are woefully inadequate. Many respondents had stories to tell, and a few pointed out the way that the inadequate transport impacts on opportunities in the area and limits the life chances of young people. We hope to publish some of these stories in a blog on the MDCA website.

Question 3 asked what would inspire people to make more use of public transport.

The responses suggested that fundamentally people want regular, more reliable transport that takes them to more destinations. A lot of people want to be able to travel in the evenings and on Sundays. There is interest in trains, from people wanting to travel to various local railway stations but also from people who remember the journeys and activities that were possible when Market Drayton had its own railway station.

People want local services to be much more extensive – both around the town and also connecting Market Drayton with its local villages. Two respondents suggested they did not need public transport because they use their cars; however, one of those conceded that they might need public transport when they were old. What was sad is the number of people who feel *“marooned”* or *“trapped”* by the current lack of public transport.

Question 4 asked about the MDCA Transport Sub Committee recommendation that there be a bus service between Market Drayton and Whitchurch.

The response gave an overwhelming mandate to continue to push for this service as an overwhelming majority – 137 *Yes*, 31 *t*, 18 *Maybe* and 11 did not answer the question.

When asked why they would find a bus to Whitchurch useful, 39 wanted to use the trains or the station, 23 to use minor injuries unit at Whitchurch Hospital, 41 to visit the town centre for shopping and 23 wanted to take advantage of Whitchurch’s transport links to other towns. There were some other more random responses, e.g. *Can’t always use a car, I would prefer to go to Crewe or Nantwich, maybe in 10 years time, Can they be wheelchair friendly? My son lives there, a good day out and I live in Nantwich!*

Question 5 invited people to dream – and share the journeys they would like to make if they could (‘What regular journeys would you like to make?’)

It became very obvious that people want to travel from their homes in local villages into Market Drayton and back again.

People were keen to:

- access hospitals and health care, so journeys to hospitals were popular.
- travel to train stations and airports to be able to travel further afield.
- visit larger towns in our area by public transport; Chester, Crewe, Hanley, Keele, Nantwich, Newcastle, Oswestry, Shrewsbury, Stafford, Stoke, Stone, Telford, Trentham and Nantwich were all mentioned.
- travel nationally and visit large towns and cities further afield mentioning Bristol, Coventry, Liverpool, London, Manchester and York.

The most popular time for journeys is in the morning, returning in the afternoon, but a very significant number of people would like to travel in the evening and at night.

Conclusions

People want better public transport.

Quotes from the survey responses – *“I feel marooned in Market Drayton.”* *“Trapped in Market Drayton.”* *“We need LINKS!”*

The only form of public transport currently available is buses. Market Drayton has very few buses and they are diminishing, and people worry about trusting them.

The taxi service is poor – there is no Uber and very limited use of other possibilities like the patient car and North Salop Wheelers.

We were impressed by the range of uses people have for public transport from people wanting to just go for a day out, people wanting to visit relatives and friends, people commuting for education (to schools and colleges) and for work, people accessing hospital appointments and visiting doctors and dentists, people shopping and going on personal errands.

The lack of public transport makes people feel marooned and trapped and also restricts their daily lives in a very wide variety of ways.

We currently have no Sunday Service and no evening services. The fact that existing services are being cut is a source of anxiety – we were told stories of people having to get relatives to rescue them after buses were cancelled and their reluctance to repeat the experience.

This suggests that local people want buses and would use them.

People want to connect to train stations.

Lots of people would like to be able to use trains for faster and further travel – e.g. connections to airports, etc. Also people remember the things they could do when they had trains – e.g. travel from Nantwich, young people travelling into Market Drayton from Adderley for a night out. Parents felt their children were safe travelling on the train, unlike when walking or cycling along busy roads or teenagers driving.

The idea of traveling to local stations by public transport was very popular. 73% wanted a bus to Whitchurch but other stations mentioned were Stoke on Trent, Crewe, Stafford and Shrewsbury.

The bus to Whitchurch is a popular idea.

The Whitchurch Express is a popular idea. 78% of respondents were in favour ('Yes' and 'Maybe') 16% said No – giving a variety reasons mostly practical and personal, e.g. *"I live in Nantwich/Hinstock," "I use my car," "I only go to the tip in Whitchurch."* There was no major opposition to the idea.

People have a lot of reasons to travel to Whitchurch.

People cited a variety of reasons for travelling to Whitchurch.

The Transport Sub-Committee recommended this believing that people from Market Drayton would be able to access the nearest train station, the minor injuries unit which has X-Ray facilities and some recuperation beds, visit the town which has a variety of shops and restaurants, and access Whitchurch's bus network which is much more extensive than Market Drayton's.

In return – although not covered by the survey – Whitchurch people might want to travel to Market Drayton, for example to access the sports centre as their swimming pool is closed for foreseeable future, to visit the Festival Centre, to access the variety of shops and restaurants available in Market Drayton, and especially the market on Wednesdays.

A number of survey respondents said they had friends and relatives living in Whitchurch. This arrangement offers a win-win solution to the people of both towns.

The town bus is popular but needs reform.

The respondents who used the town service like it and liked having a bus around town.

However, they commented that it did not run on Sundays or in the evenings and they would like to be able to visit the town in their leisure time. They also commented that it does not serve the whole of Market Drayton – especially now that the new housing estates have been built. Also the main roads out of Market Drayton are covered by only the 64 which goes every other hour in the morning and hourly in the afternoon. People also commented that the timetable was difficult to understand.

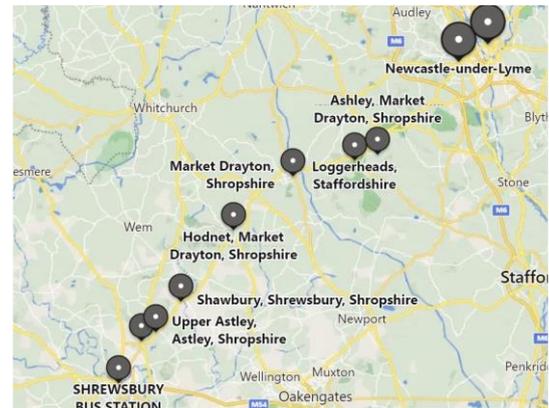
In a previous Traffic Forum meeting, the manager of Macdonald's spoke about how he had difficulty recruiting staff and getting staff to and from work because of the lack of public transport to the Muller Roundabout. This suggests that Muller must also be suffering similar issues. Palethorpes have gone as far as hiring their own buses over a few weeks last year.

People in Market Drayton want to be connected to the outside world.

The current buses can take passengers from Stoke to Shrewsbury, via Market Drayton and various villages on the way. The service has been cut to every two hours. Although only a few respondents mentioned it in the survey, many people have talked to members of the Transport Sub-Committee about how they no longer trust the service and are no longer comfortable using it because of the infrequent buses and regular cancellations.

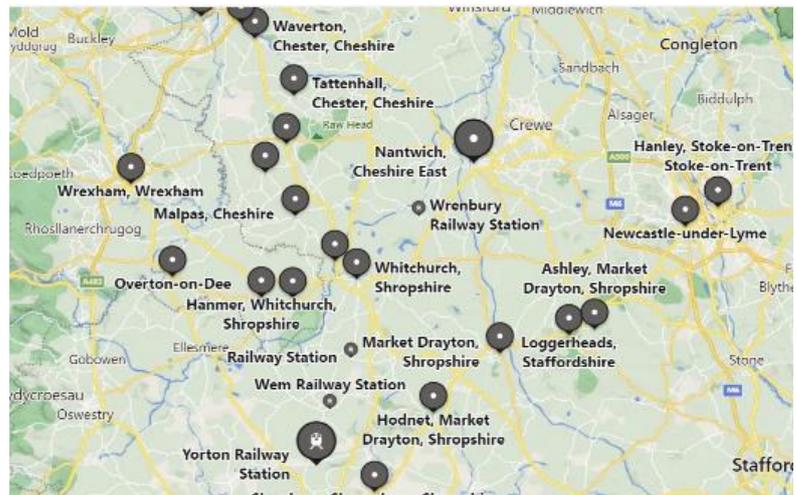
Current connections for Market Drayton – on the existing 64 and 164 bus services

The current bus service connects 10 settlements.



Just adding a bus to Whitchurch adds at least 18 other possible destinations.

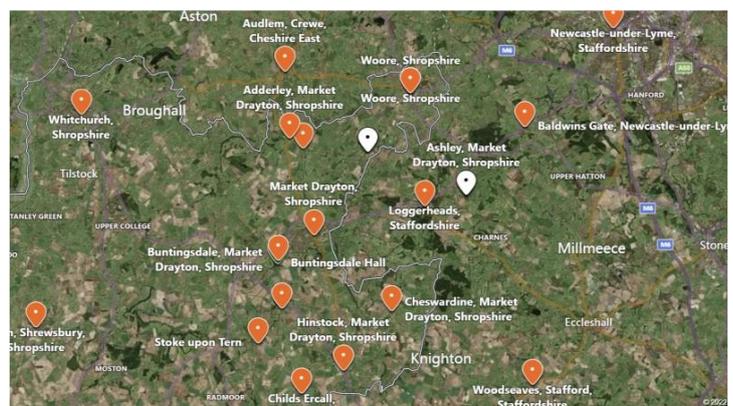
Adding services to the other local villages could open up a world of possibilities for the people of Market Drayton.



People need local services to connect local villages to each other and to Market Drayton.

The last bus from Adderley left in 1979! Other local villages are similarly cut off with no public transport available at all, including quite big settlements like Woore and Hinstock.

The pins mark the places suggested as local destinations – places where people point out that they can't access public transport because there is none and their only way of getting to Market Drayton is by car. The local villages need bus services which pick people up where they live and take them to Market Drayton to visit the town or to undertake the next step of their journey.



Unless the village is on the 64 route, most of the farms, hamlets and villages around Market Drayton are cut off. People can only travel by car or cycle and walk down dangerous roads where tractors and lorries often take up all the available space – there are some places where it is impossible to get into the verge quickly.

Summary

1. People are very much in favour of public transport but there is now a huge mistrust of the bus service due to unreliability and very limited timings.
2. People on the whole would like to go to the nearest town – Whitchurch – which is only a relatively short distance away and therefore should be cheaper than going to Shrewsbury. They want all the facilities that Whitchurch has to offer which are not available in Market Drayton – rail station, buses going to other destinations, minor injuries hospital and other shops.
3. People want to connect to the rail network to enable trips further afield.
4. The town bus service is excellent but needs re-routing to cover new estates and also the main routes which are used by the 64 – now only two-hourly.
5. The surrounding villages are completely cut off from bus services unless on the route of the 64.