Department for Transport

British Social Attitudes Survey 2015: Public attitudes towards transport

This statistical release is part of a series of surveys measuring people's attitudes towards transport since 1996. This report covers attitudes in 2015, except where charts show a series of years.

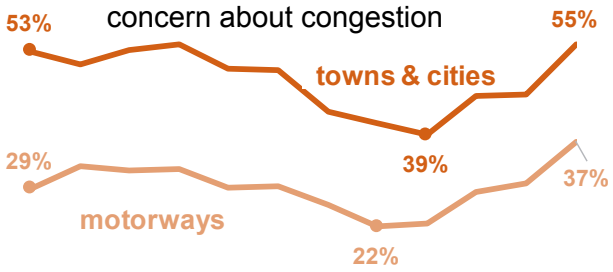
Current travel behaviours in aviation

- Of the quarter of the population in the highest income group, 27% made at least 3 flights per year in 2015, (compared with 7% in the lowest quarter). This fell from 36% in 2014.
- The proportion of the highest quarter making no flights increased from 25% in 2014, to to 40% in 2015.

Congestion and road building

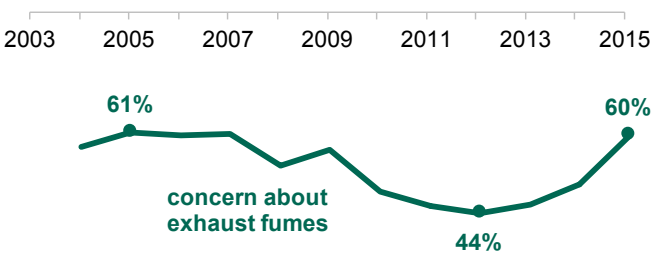
Concern about congestion is rising:

- in towns and cities, from a low of 39% in 2012 to 55% in 2015;
- on motorways, from a low of 22% in 2011 to 37% in 2015



Transport and the environment

- 74% of respondents say they are willing, when next buying a car, to buy one with lower CO_2 emissions.
- Concerns about exhaust fumes in towns and cities have risen, from a low of 44% in 2012, to 60% in 2015.



About these statistics

The British Social Attitudes Survey is conducted by NatCen Social Research and contains questions on attitudes towards transport sponsored by the Department for Transport. It is a representative survey of adults aged 18 and over in Great Britain, collecting data through a combination of face-to-face interviews and self-completion questionnaires. The data for this report was collected in 2015.

Road safety

- Whilst 90% of respondents agreed that use of hand-held mobiles while driving is dangerous, 48% agree that *all* mobiles, including hands-free sets, are dangerous, and 39% agree that even hands-free sets should be banned.
- Nearly half of respondents think that speed cameras are mostly there to make money, and a third said that there are too many of them, but agreement with these statements has decreased to the lowest point in the last decade.

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Contents

Main results

Behaviours and willingness to change

- For journeys of less than two miles travelled by car, 44% of respondents said they could just as easily walk, cycle (39%), and take the bus (31%).
- Men were more likely to say that they could switch to cycling for short journeys made by car, as did respondents with access to a bicycle.
- In 2015, 64% of respondents agreed that it is too dangerous for them to cycle on the road, the same level as in 2014.
- Women, non-cyclists and older age groups showed higher levels of concerns over roads being too dangerous to cycle on.

Transport and the environment

- In 2015, 82% of respondents believed that climate change is taking place and is, at least partly, a result of human actions. This figure is the highest since it was asked in 2011.
- Respondents who travelled by plane at least three times in the last 12 months were more likely to agree that people should be able to travel by plane as much as they like, even if this harms the environment and even if new terminals or runways are needed to meet the demand.
- Nearly three quarters of respondents (74%) agreed that, the next time they buy a car, they would be willing to buy one with lower CO_2 emissions.

Congestion, road building and fumes

- In 2015, concerns about congestion on motorways have risen since its low point in 2011. Nearly 4 in 10 (37%) of respondents considered congestion on motorways to be a serious problem.
- Men were more likely than women to consider motorway congestion to be a problem (41% compared with 34% of women).
- Drivers were more likely to agree that traffic in towns and cities is a problem (58%) than non-drivers (47%). Concern has risen each year since 2012.
- Concerns about exhaust fumes in towns have increased steadily since 2012; 60% of respondents in 2015 considered exhaust fumes to be a serious problem.

Road safety

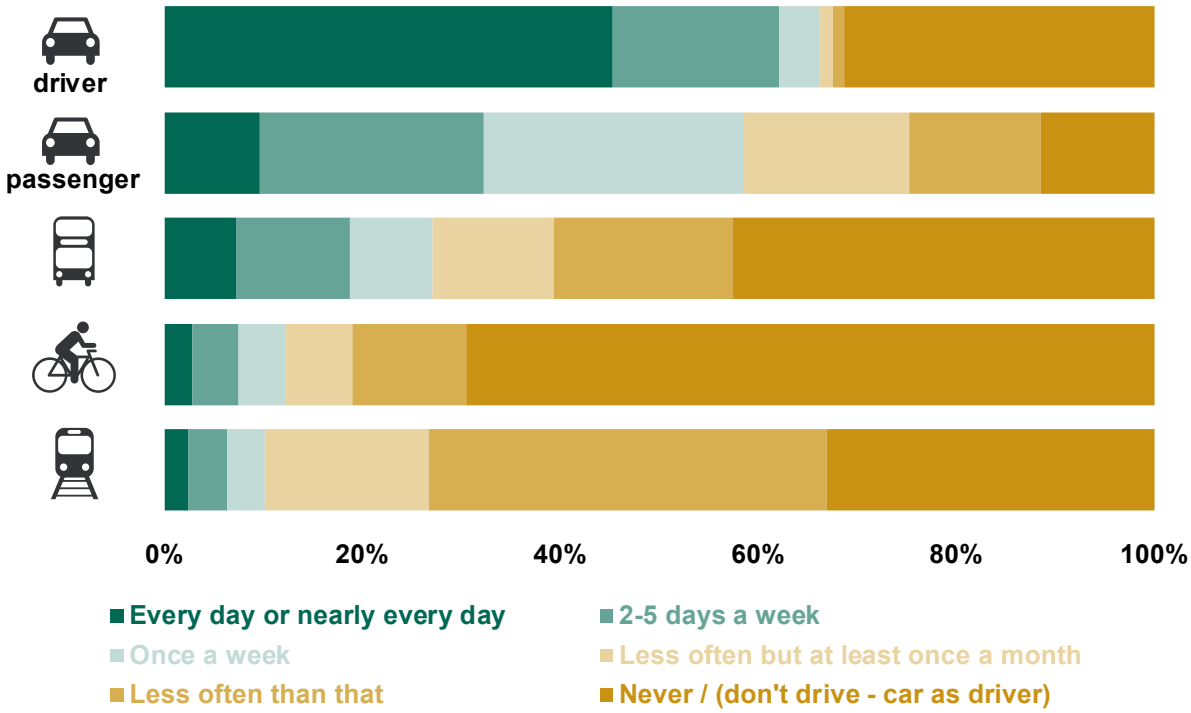
- Whilst 90% of respondents agreed that use of hand-held mobiles while driving is dangerous, 48% agree that all mobiles, including hands-free sets, are dangerous, and 39% that even hands-free sets should be banned.
- Nearly half of respondents think that speed cameras are mostly there to make money, and 33% said there are too many of them, but agreement with these statements has decreased to the lowest point in the last decade.
- Whilst those aged 65 or older are most likely to support closing residential streets to through traffic, or introducing 20mph zones, support for speed bumps declines progressively with age.

Current travel behaviours: how do people travel?

Understanding travel behaviours is an important first step in exploring attitudes to travel and people's willingness to switch from one mode to another.

Car was by far the most commonly and regularly used mode of transport in 2015. Indeed, 66% of respondents reported travelling by car as a driver at least once a week, and 59% reported travelling by car as a passenger at least once a week. Car driving appears to be a particularly frequent mode for daily use, with 45% of respondents saying they travel by car as a driver every day or nearly every day (Chart 1).

Chart 1: Frequency of travel by mode [ATT0301 - ATT0305]



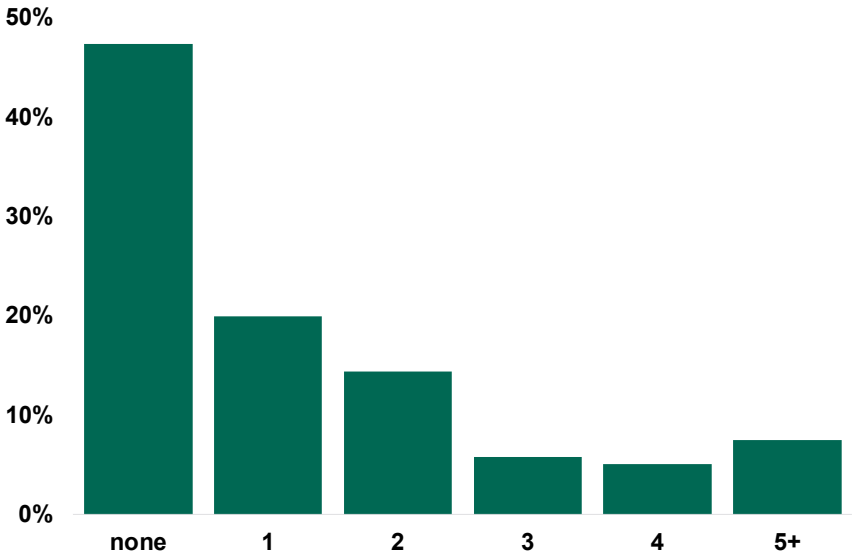
Other modes of transport were used less frequently. 27% of respondents said they travelled by local bus at least once a week, and 10% by train at least once a week. Moreover, 12% of respondents said they travelled by bicycle at least once a week, but 69% reported that they never travel by bike, which is the highest percentage of non-use compared to other modes shown here (Chart 1).

Other sources

Frequency of travel by mode presented here is consistent with figures from the National Travel Survey (NTS0313). Detailed information on how people travel are available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics.

Air travel was a less frequently used mode. In 2015, 47% of respondents said they made no trip by plane in the last 12 months, and 34% said they travelled by plane once or twice in the last 12 months. Only 7% of respondents reported travelling by plane at least 5 times in the last 12 months (Chart 2).

Chart 2: Proportions of the population, by number of trips by plane in the last 12 months [ATT0306]



Definition

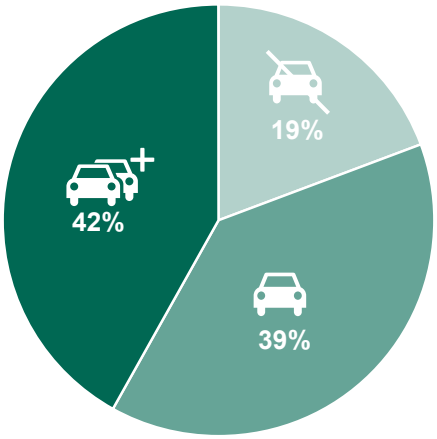
Outward and return flights and any transfers are counted as one trip.

Other sources

Detailed figures on frequency of air travel, split between domestic and international, can be found in the National Travel Survey: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics.

In 2015, 19% of respondents said their household did not own or have regular use of any car or van, 39% said their household had one car or van, and 42% said there were two or more cars or vans in their household (Chart 3). These proportions have remained stable since the question was introduced in 2006.

Chart 3: Car / van availability to individuals in their household [ATT0307]



Other sources

These figures on individual car access are consistent with the National Travel Survey (NTS0206). The NTS also publishes figures for car access at the household level (NTS0205), which differ from those presented here because on average, there are more adults living in households with one car or more than in households without a car.

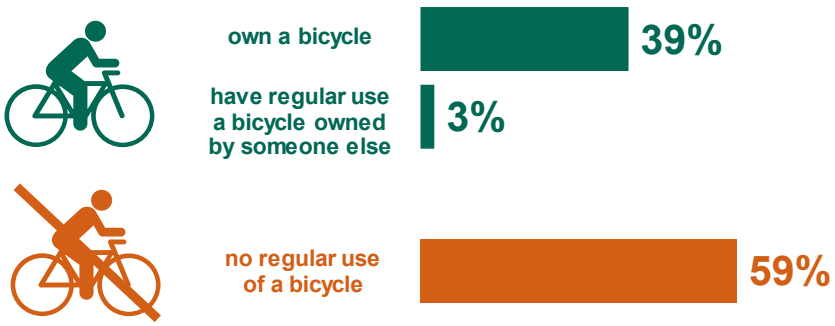
Access to a bicycle, and perception of cycling

In 2015, 41% of respondents had access to a bike, either because they owned or had the regular use of a bicycle (chart 4). Moreover, 38% of respondents said they had ridden a bicycle in the last 12 months. For the analysis, a cyclist is defined as someone who both has access to a bicycle and has ridden one in the last 12 months. Using this definition, 31% of respondents were cyclists in 2015.

Definition

In this report, a **cyclist** is defined as someone who has access to a bicycle and has ridden a bicycle in the last 12 months.

Chart 4: Access to a bicycle [ATT0310 - ATT0311]



Other sources

Detailed figures on bicycle access by age can also be found in the National Travel Survey (NTS0608). Further statistics on frequency of cycling can be found in DfT's Walking and cycling statistics: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/walking-and-cycling-statistics

Being a cyclist was not evenly spread in the population in 2015 (chart 5). Men are significantly more likely than women to be cyclists (39% compared to 22%). The proportion of cyclists increases with household income, and decreases in older age: those aged 55 or above cycle significantly less than those under 55. Adults in households with at least one child are more likely to be cyclists, but not significantly so (chart 6).

Chart 5: The proportion of cyclists varies...

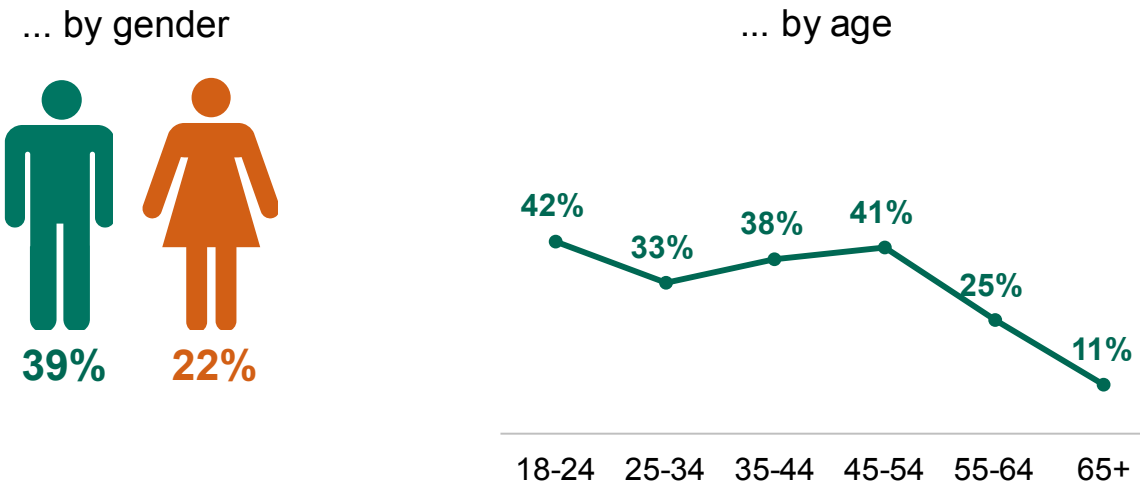
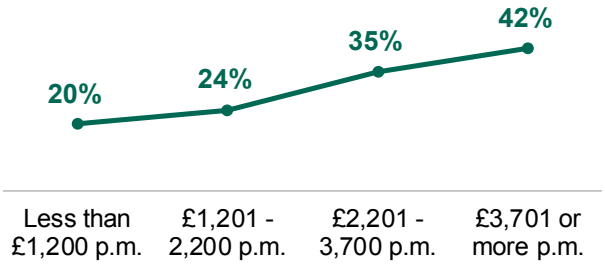


Chart 6: The proportion of cyclists varies...

... by whether there is a child in the household

... by household income



In 2015, 64% of all respondents said they agree or strongly agree with the statement 'it is too dangerous for me to cycle on the road', whereas 20% disagreed or strongly disagreed (chart 8).

This is unchanged from last year (chart 7).

Chart 7: Proportion who agree or strongly agree with the statement 'it is too dangerous for me to cycle on the road' [ATT0313]

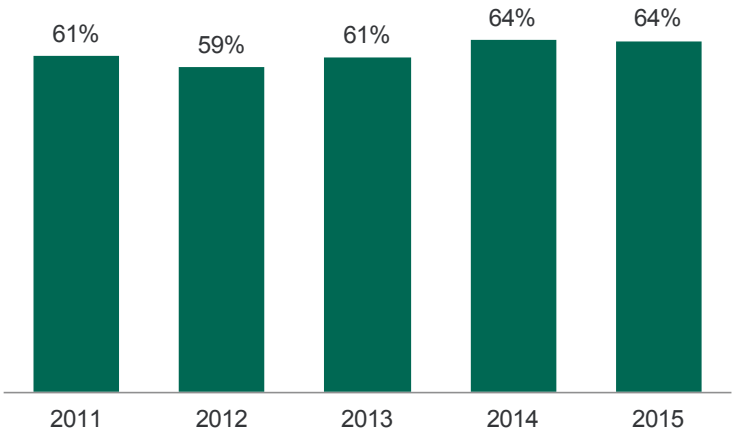
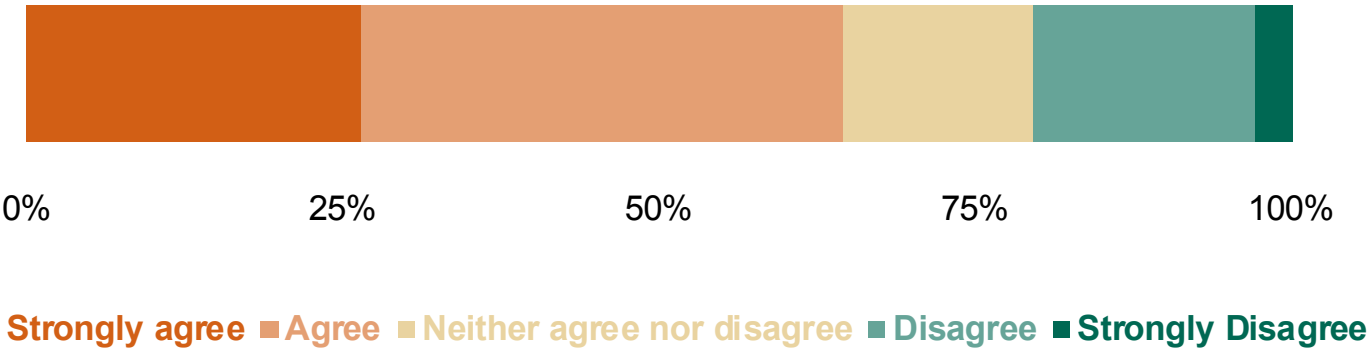


Chart 8: 'It is too dangerous for me to cycle on the road' [ATT0313]



Concern about the safety of cycling on the road is not evenly spread in the population either (chart 9). Women are significantly more likely to think it is dangerous for them to cycle on the road than men (70%, compared to 59%). The proportion of people who think it is too dangerous for them to cycle on the road also increases with age.

Actual travel behaviours and experience of using roads are also likely to play a role in influencing attitudes towards the safety of cycling. Indeed, cyclists are significantly less likely to be concerned about the road being dangerous to cycle on than non-cyclists (48% compared to 72%) and drivers show lower levels of concern than non-drivers (62% compared to 71%, although the difference is not significant).

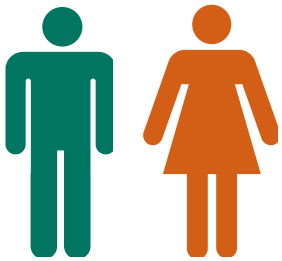
Attitudes are also likely to determine behaviours: being confident about cycling on the road could lead to cycling effectively. It may be that those who see the roads as too dangerous just choose not to cycle - but it is notable that nearly half of those who *do* cycle still see the roads as too dangerous.

Chart 9: Perception of danger cycling on the road

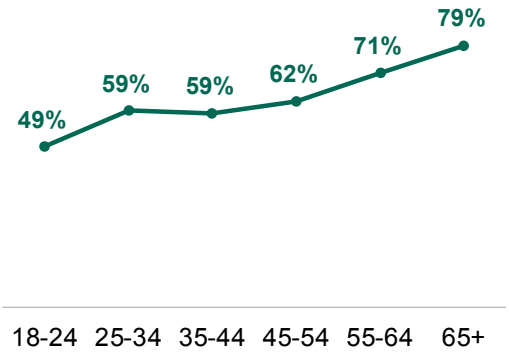
64% of respondents agree / strongly agree that 'it is too dangerous for me to cycle on the road'

this proportion varies...

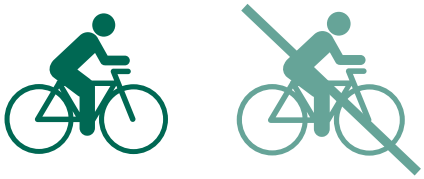
... by gender



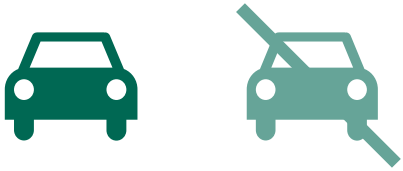
... by age



... by whether they cycle

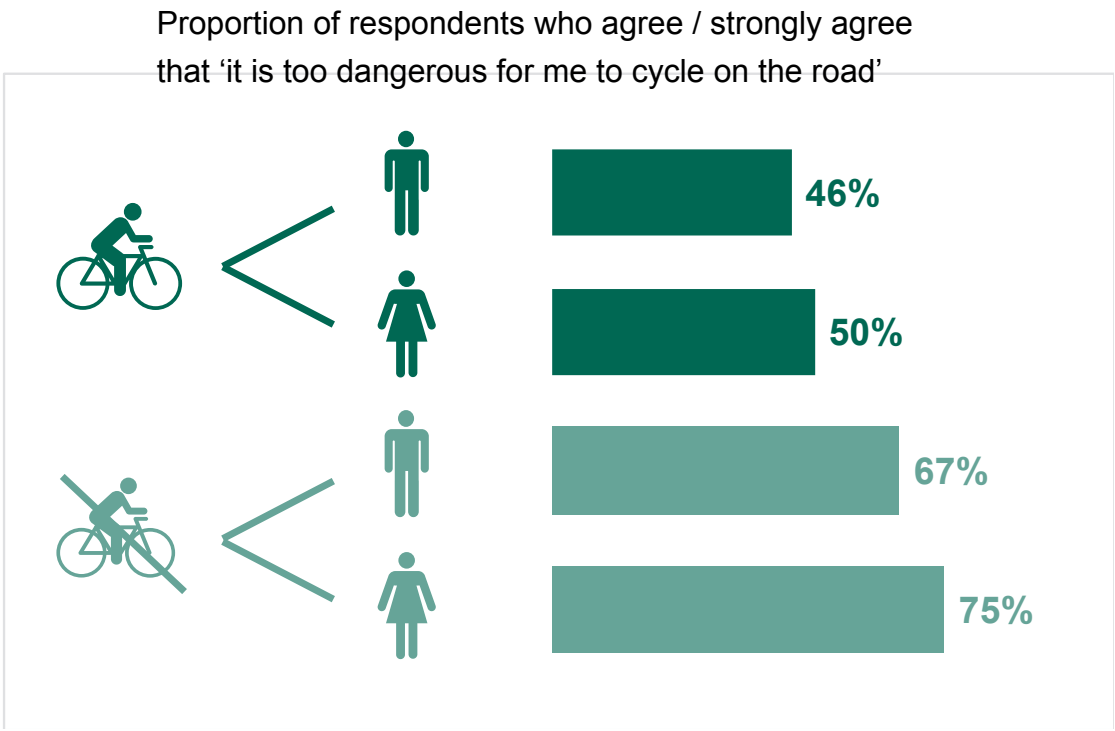


... by whether they drive



Finally, the effects of being a cyclist and gender interact with the attitudes towards the safety of cycling (chart 10). Whilst there is no statistically significant difference in attitude between male and female cyclists, among non-cyclists, women are significantly more concerned about danger than men (75% and 67% respectively).

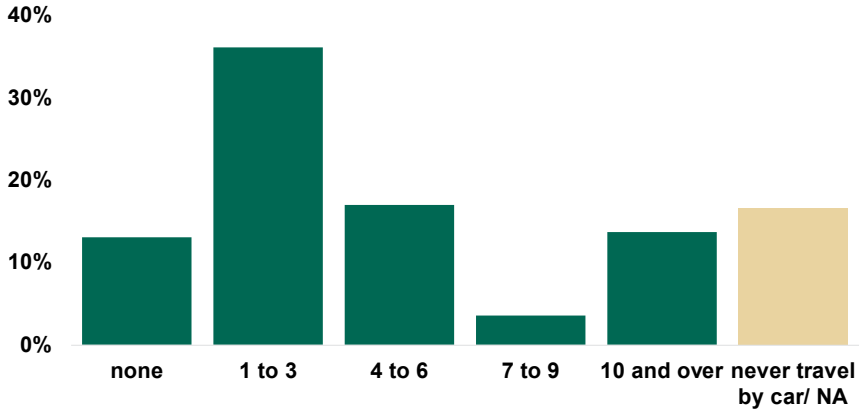
Chart 10: Perception of danger cycling on the road by gender and cycling behaviour



Willingness to switch to more sustainable modes of transport

Short journeys made by car are important to consider when investigating people's willingness to switch to more sustainable transport modes - particularly to local buses, walking and cycling. On average, respondents reported making 3.8 journeys of less than two miles by car in a typical week. Short journeys made by car are frequent for respondents, with about a third (34%) saying they make at least 4 journeys by car in a typical week.

Chart 11: Number of journeys of less than two miles made by car in a typical week [ATT0314]

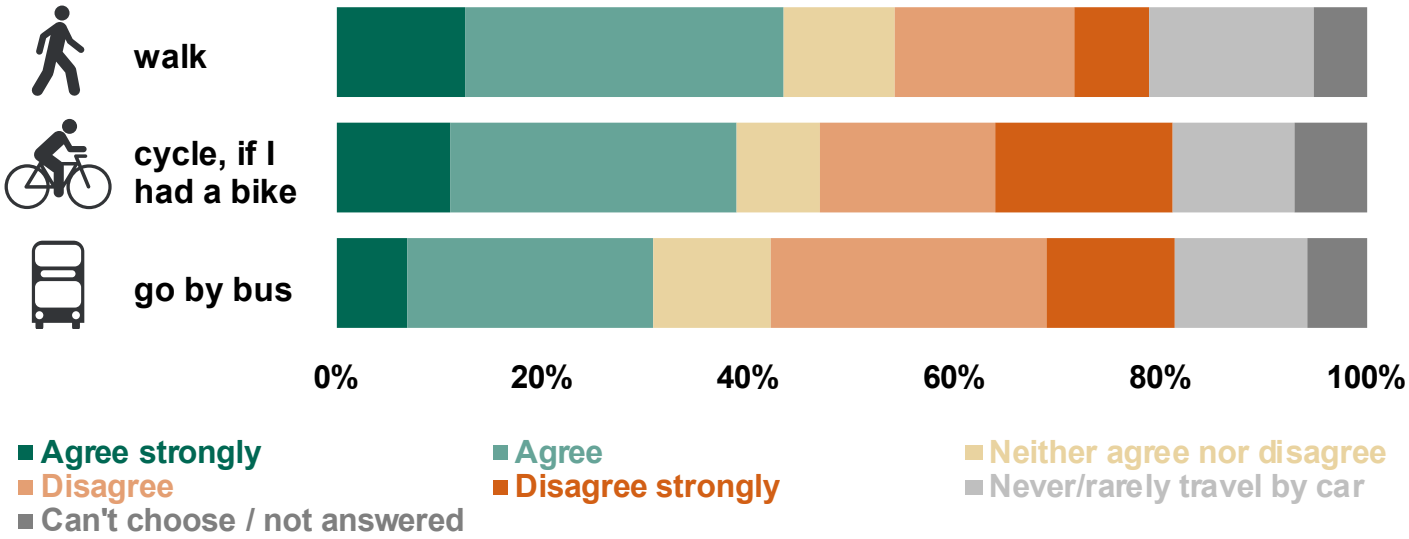


In 2015, 30% of respondents said they either do not drive or do not make any journey of less than two miles by car in a typical week (chart 11).

A considerable proportion of respondents said they could use alternative modes of travel for short journeys made by car, be it by local bus, walking or cycling. Indeed, for many of the journeys of less than two miles they now travel by car, 39% of respondents said they could just as easily cycle, 44% said they could just as easily walk, and 31% said they could just as easily take the bus although a higher proportion of respondents (39%) disagreed (chart 12). These results are similar to the previous year.

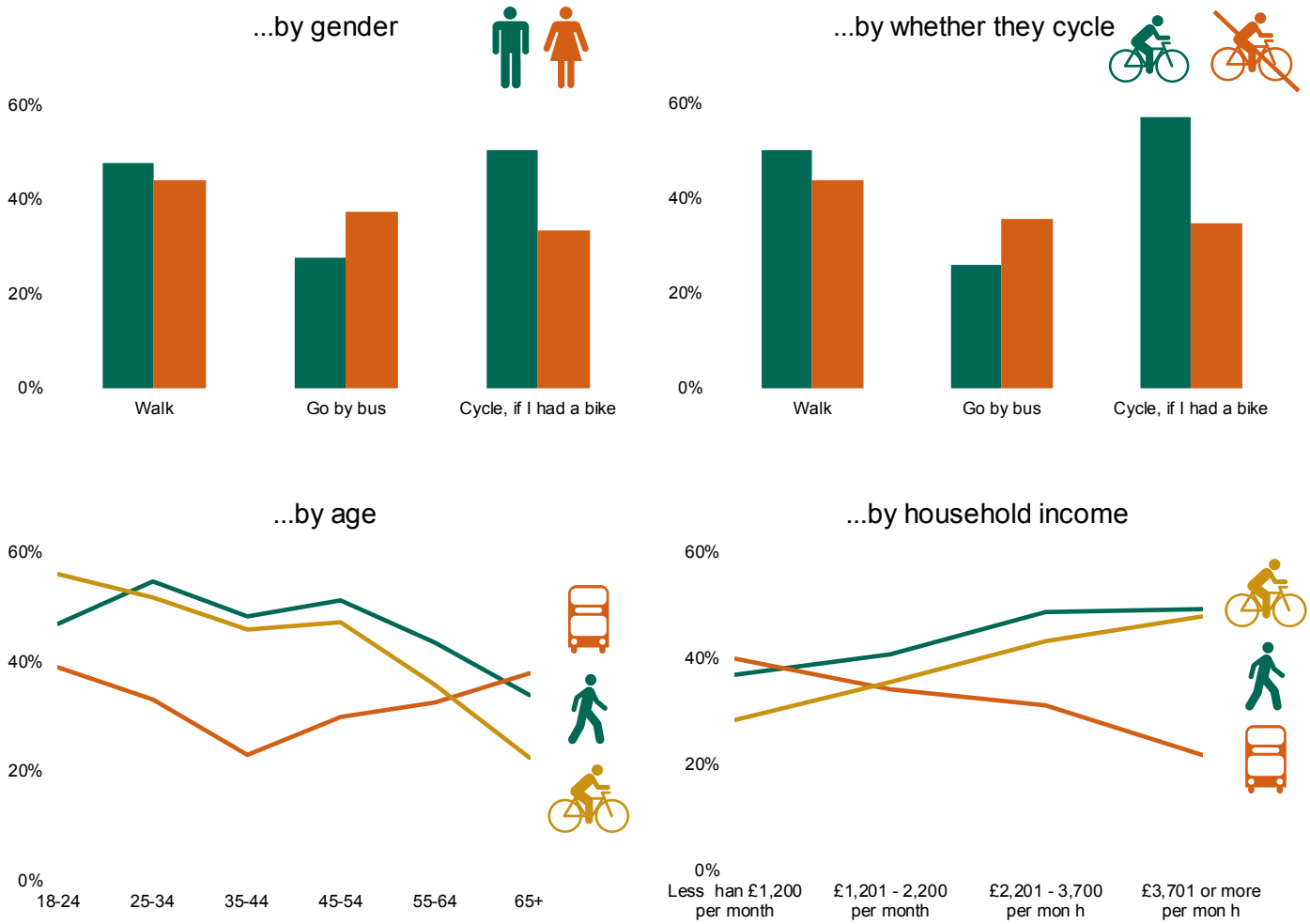
In summary, two thirds of people make short journeys by car at least once in a typical week, and there is a considerable potential to switch to other modes of transport for these journeys.

Chart 12: Many of the journeys of less than 2 miles that I now make by car, I could just as easily… [ATT0315 - ATT0317]



Willingness to switch to more sustainable transport modes varies however according to socio-demographic characteristics (chart 13). Indeed, men are significantly more likely to agree that they could switch to cycling for short journeys made by car than women (50% compared to 33%). This may reflect lower levels of cycling amongst women and higher safety concerns (see previous section), or that more of the journeys undertaken by women are less practical with a bicycle than with a car. Cyclists are also significantly more likely to agree that they could switch to cycling than non-cyclists for short journeys made by car (57% compared to 35%).

Chart 13: The proportion* of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that for many of the journeys of less than 2 miles that they now make by car, they could just as easily walk, cycle or go by bus, varies…



Willingness to switch from the car to active modes for short journeys seems to decrease with age. The 65+ age group is significantly more likely than all others to disagree strongly that they could switch to walking and cycling, which is likely to be linked to the increase of mobility difficulties at older ages.

Willingness to switch to walking and cycling seems to increase with household income (although these differences are not significant) whereas the willingness to switch to local bus seems to decrease with income, which could be linked to the social acceptability of these modes. The richest income group (over £3,700 per month) is significantly more likely to disagree that they could switch to the bus than the lowest income group (less than £1,200 per month).

* In calculating these percentages, the 13% of the population who state that they seldom or never make short car trips of less than 2 miles are included in the total percentage, as well as those who agreed or disagreed.

Transport and climate change

In 2015, just over 8 in 10 respondents believed climate change is taking place and is, at least partly, a result of human actions. This figure is the highest since it was asked in 2011, although the difference is not significant (chart 14).

In contrast, 13% of respondents believe climate change is taking place, but not as a result of human action, and a lower proportion of respondents did not believe climate change is taking place (4%). These results were not significantly different from last year's results.

Chart 14: Opinions on climate change and causes [ATT0318]

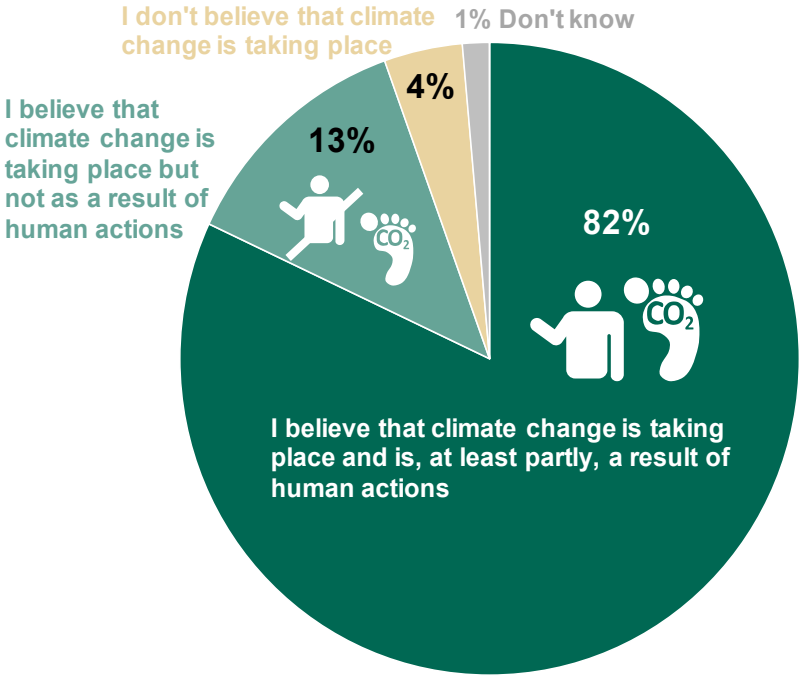
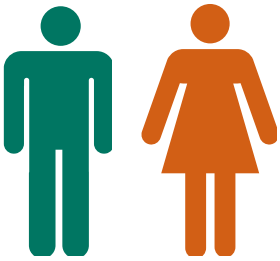
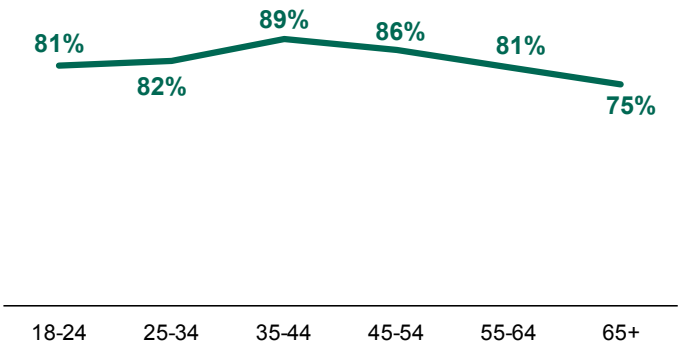


Chart 15: The proportion who believe that climate change is taking place and is, at least partly, a result of human action, varies...

... by gender



...by age



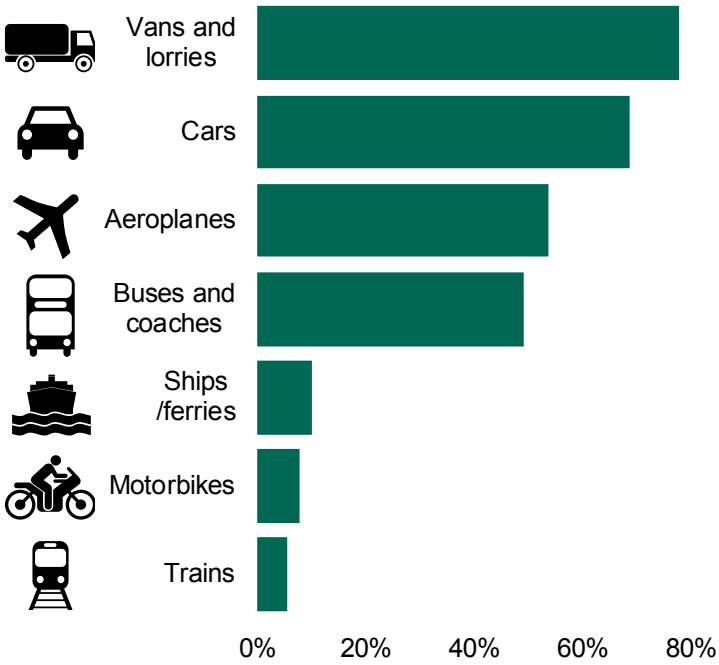
There no longer appears to be any significant difference by gender: in previous years, men were slightly more sceptical than women, but in 2015, 82% of each believed that climate change is taking place and is, at least partly, a result of human actions (chart 15).

Believing that climate change is a result of human actions seems to be lower in both the younger and older age groups, with the middle age groups (35-54 year olds) more likely to believe in human-caused climate change.

Respondents were asked which transport modes they thought had the most impact on climate change and were allowed to choose up to three options (chart 16). In 2015, the most commonly cited mode was vans / lorries, increasing from 68% in 2011 to 78% in 2015. The proportion of respondents who said cars increased significantly from 65% in 2013 to 69% in 2015.

There were a few respondents (1%) who did not believe climate change is taking place, or believe climate change will happen anyway.

Chart 16: Transport factors deemed to have the most impact on climate change [ATT0319]



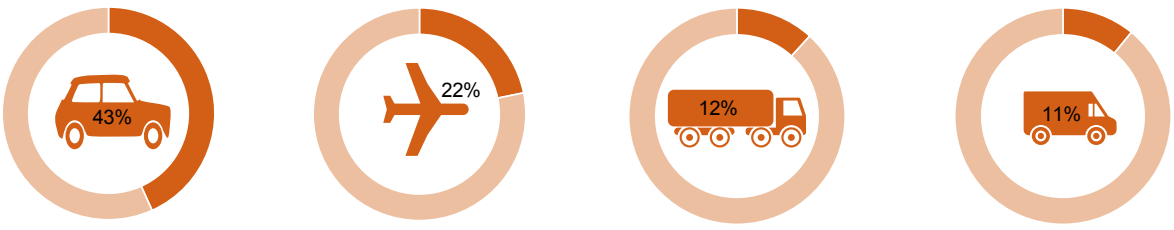
Note: respondents could choose up to three options, so results do not add to 100%.

By comparison with what people believe (which may relate to individual vehicles), if we compare the totality of emissions, the transport sector in fact contributes around 23% of all greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in the UK (chart 17). The main source of emissions from transport is the use of petrol and diesel in road transport. In particular, cars accounted for 43% and aviation for 22% of GHG transport emissions (including international and domestic aviation). Heavy goods vehicles and light vans accounted for 12% and 11% of UK emissions respectively.

Other sources

Detailed figures on UK transport greenhouse gas emissions are available in the Department for Transport table ENV0201

Chart 17: UK transport GHG emissions by mode



Source: DECC UK greenhouse gas emission statistics, 2014. Note: Other transport modes also contribute to GHG emissions although very small, for example domestic and international shipping, rail, buses and coaches.

Willingness to change travel behaviour for the environment

Attitudes towards changing travel behaviour for the environment varied by transport mode. In 2015, 74% of respondents showed willingness to buy a car with lower CO_2 emissions, 36% said they are willing to reduce the amount they travel by car to help reduce the impact of climate change, and 19% said they are willing to reduce the amount they travel by plane to help reduce the impact of climate change (chart 18).

Chart 18: Willingness to change travel behaviour for the environment [ATT0321 - ATT0323]

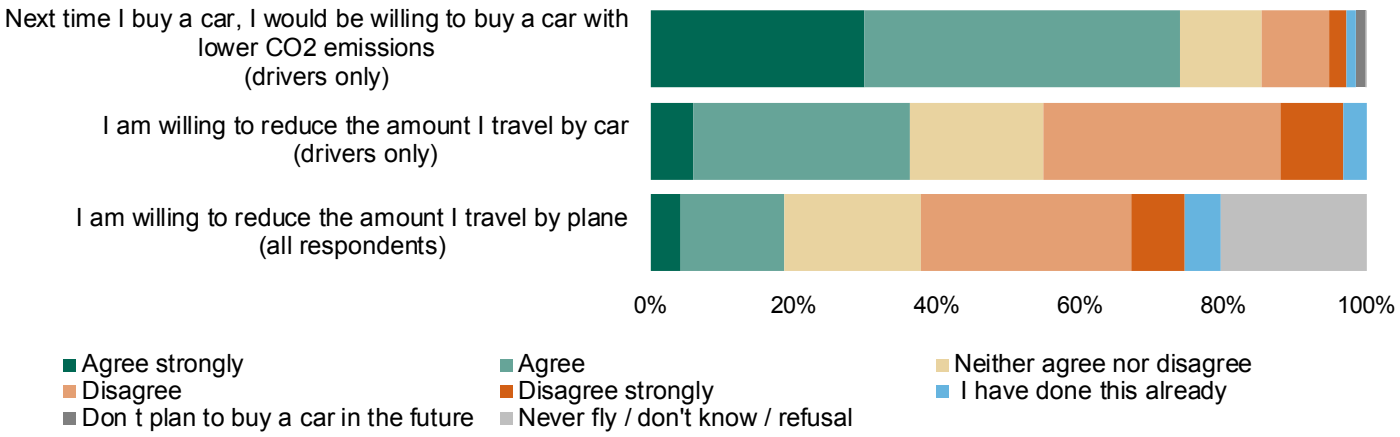
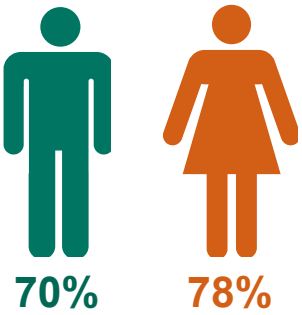


Chart 19: The proportion who agree or strongly agree varies...

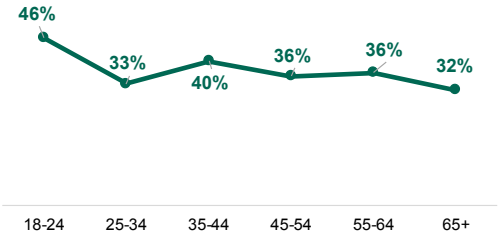
'I would be willing to buy a car with lower CO_2 emissions'

... by gender



'I am willing to reduce the amount I travel by car'

...by age



Women are more willing than men to consider carbon emissions when buying a car (chart 19).

Young people aged 18-24 (who already drive less) are less willing than older adults to reduce their car use further.

Considering just those who believed that climate change is taking place and is, at least partly, a result of human action, 41% agreed they are willing to reduce the amount they travel by car to reduce the impact on climate change (or do this already), whilst 40% disagreed. This implies that, even among those who believe in human-caused climate change, there are nearly as many people against reducing car use as in favour.

Opinions on the environment and plane travel

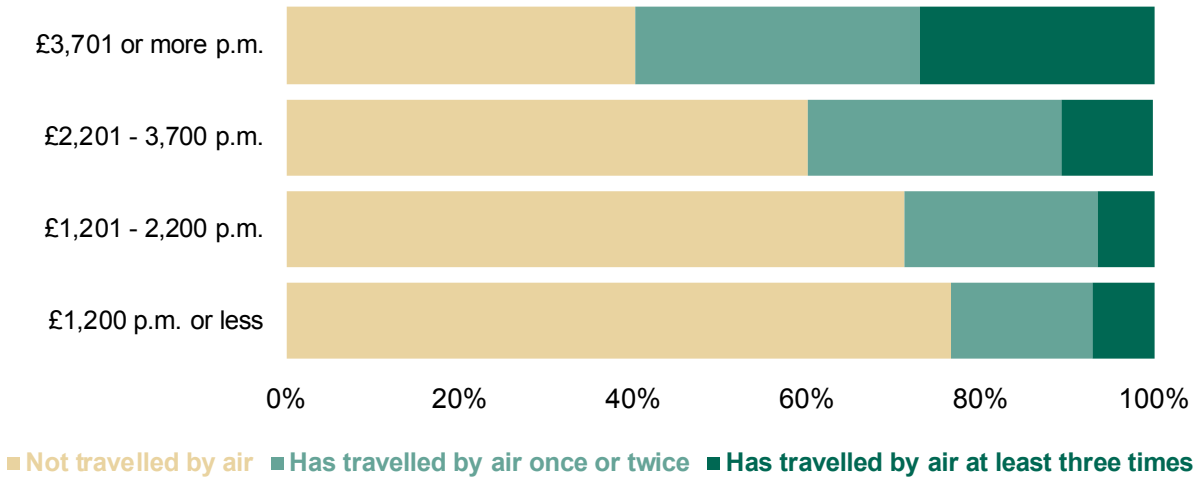
As seen in chart 2, nearly half of respondents said they had not taken any trips by plane in the last twelve months, whilst a third of respondents had taken one or two trips by air, and 19% had travelled by air at least three times in the last 12 months.

The number of trips by plane increases by household income (chart 20). Respondents in the highest income group are more likely to travel at least three times a year, compared with respondents in the lowest income group (27% and 7% respectively). Between 2014 and 2015, the number of flights made by the highest income group appears to have fallen: the proportion making at least 3 flights per year fell from 36% to 27%; at the same time, the proportion making no flights increased from 25% to 40%.

Other sources

More information about air travel, behaviour and income can be found in the latest National Travel Survey publication: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics

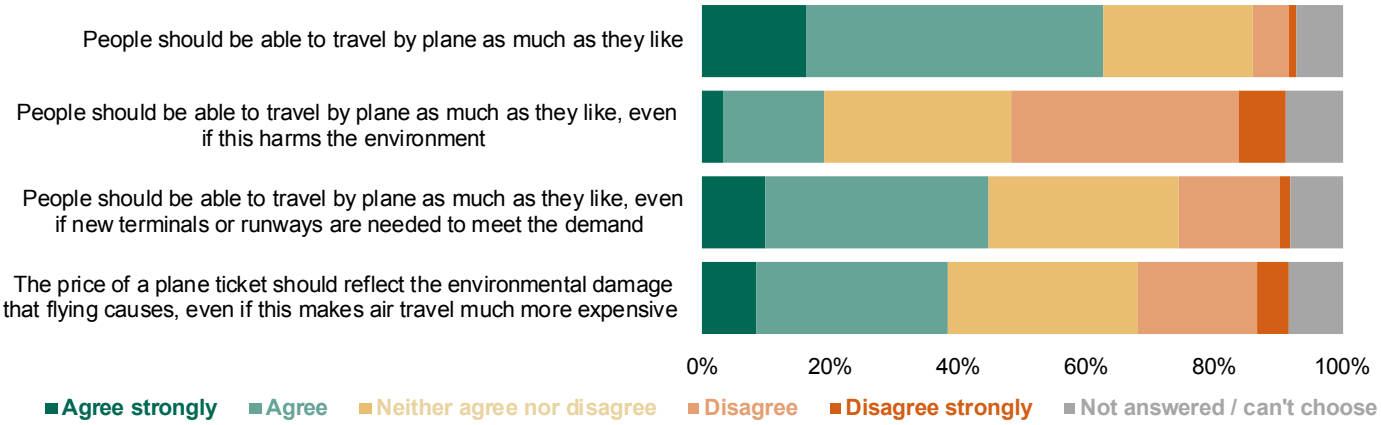
Chart 20: Number of trips by plane in the last 12 months, by household income



People feel strongly about the freedom to travel by plane. They are also concerned about the environment, but do not appear to associate flying inherently with damage to the environment. Thus, in 2015, 67% of respondents strongly agree or agree that people should be able to travel by plane as much as they like. However, when asked in the context of environmental impacts, the proportion who agree that people should be able to travel by plane as much as they like decreases to 20% (chart 21).

Almost half of the respondents agreed people should be able to travel by plane even if new terminals or runways are needed and 39% agreed the price of a plane ticket should reflect the environmental damage that flying causes. These results were not significantly different from the previous year.

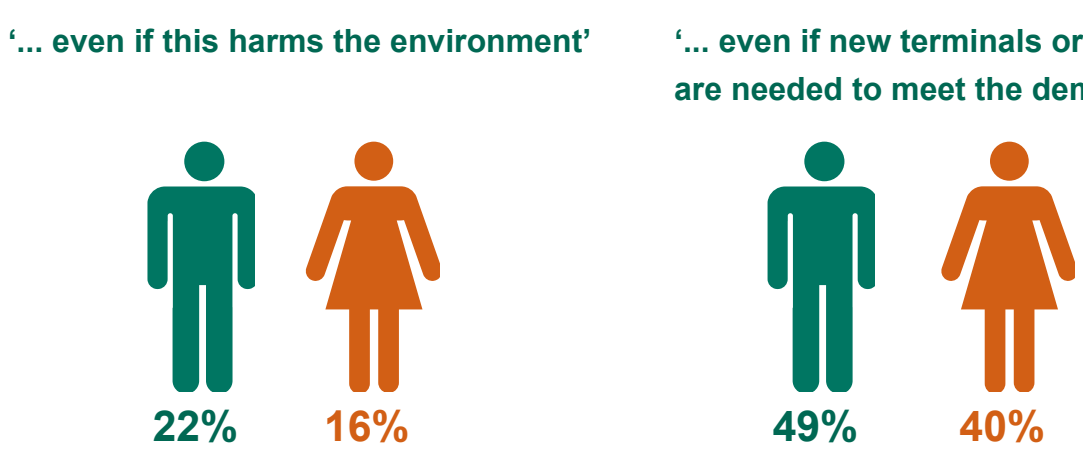
Chart 21: Attitudes towards air travel and the environment [ATT0324 - ATT0327]



Men were more likely to agree people should be able to travel by plane as much as they like, even if this requires new terminals and runways or harms the environment.

Chart 22: The proportion who agree or strongly agree varies by gender

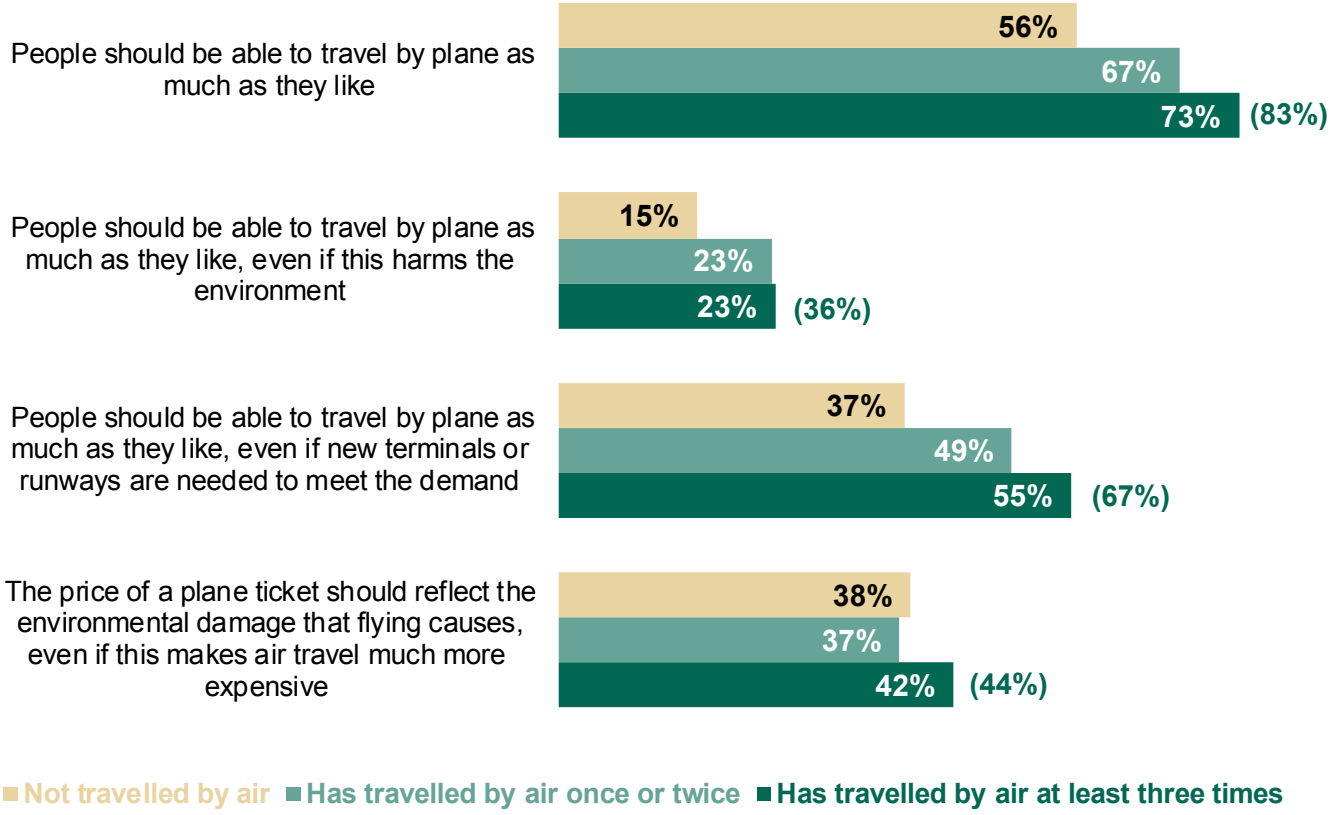
'People should be able to travel by plane as much as they like...'



When looking at respondents' plane use, those who travelled by air at least three times in the last 12 months were more likely to agree that people should be able to travel by plane as much as they like, even if this harms the environment and even if new terminals or runways are needed to meet the demand. Those that have not travelled by air in the last 12 months were more likely to disagree. (chart 23).

However, there is some evidence that, over the last year, frequent fliers (at least 3 times per year) have become more concerned about the impact of flying. For 2014 and 2015 respectively, the proportions of frequent fliers agreeing with the first three statements below on air travel behaviours, fell from 83% to 73%, from 36% to 23%, and from 67% to 55%.

Chart 23: Attitudes towards air travel, by frequency of flying: Proportions agreeing or strongly agreeing (2014 figures in brackets)

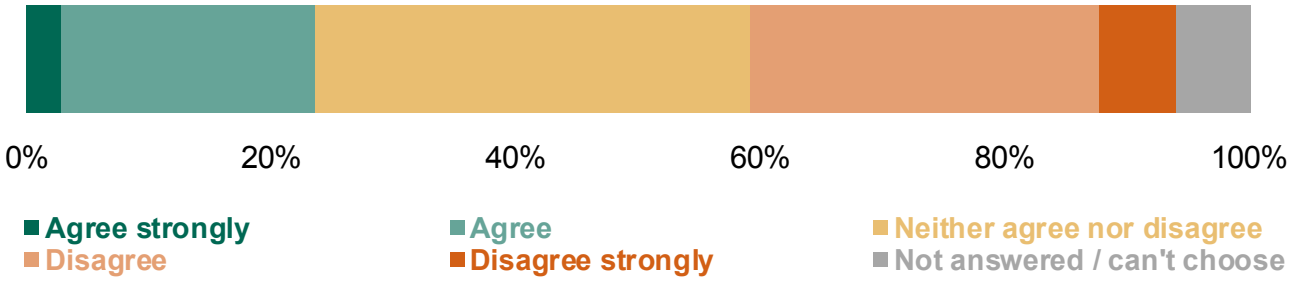


Opinions on the environment and car travel

When respondents were asked whether people (in general) should be "allowed" to use their car as much as they like, even if it causes damage to the environment, respondents' attitudes varied, with 24% agreeing, 35% disagreeing and 36% remaining neutral (chart 24). However, what respondents are "willing" to do themselves is more positive about the environment (chart 18): 74% agreed they were willing to buy a car with lower CO_2 emissions and around 36% said they are willing to reduce the amount they travel by car to help reduce the impact of climate change.

There was not much difference between attitudes to car and plane travel and damage to the environment, although people are more supportive of the freedom to use a car than the freedom to fly if it causes environmental damage (24% compared with 19%).

Chart 24: People should be allowed to use their cars as much as they like, even if it causes damage to the environment [ATT0329]

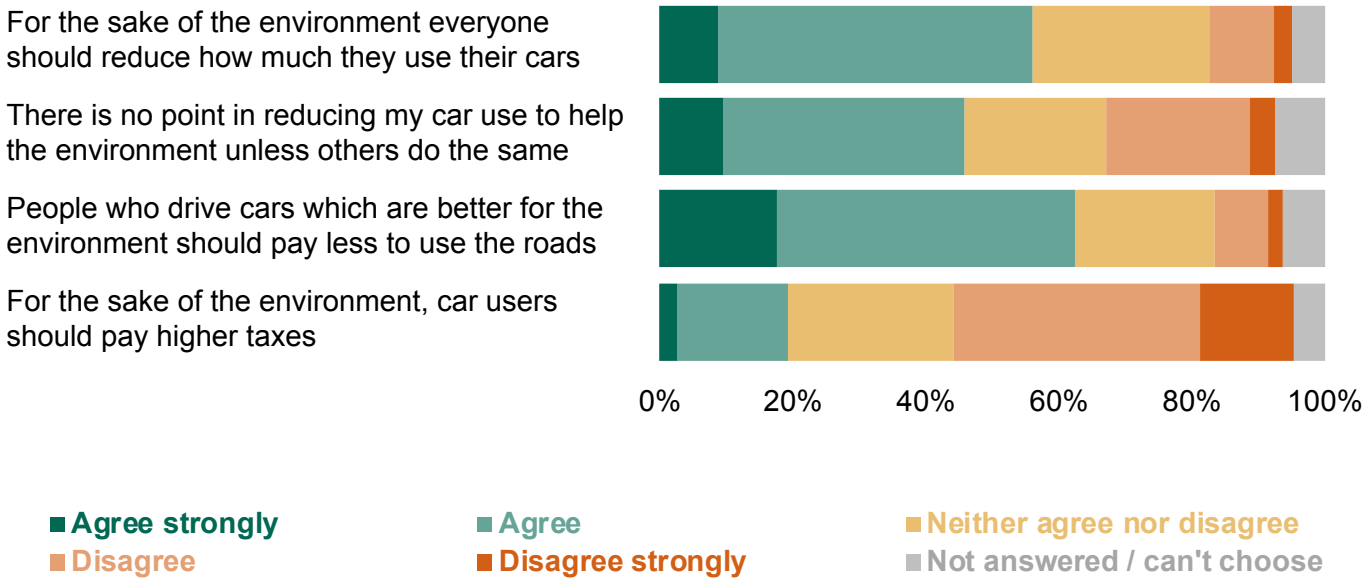


Nearly two thirds of respondents (62%) agreed that people who (specifically) drive cars which are better for the environment should pay less to use the roads. In contrast, 51% of respondents disagreed that, for the sake of the environment, car users (in general) should pay higher taxes (a fall from 62% in 2014).

There is a large gap between what people think should happen and what they report they are prepared to do. Indeed, whilst only 36% of respondents indicated they are willing to reduce the amount they travel by car to reduce the impact on climate change (chart 18), 56% of respondents indicated that, for the sake of the environment, everyone should reduce how much they use their cars (chart 25).

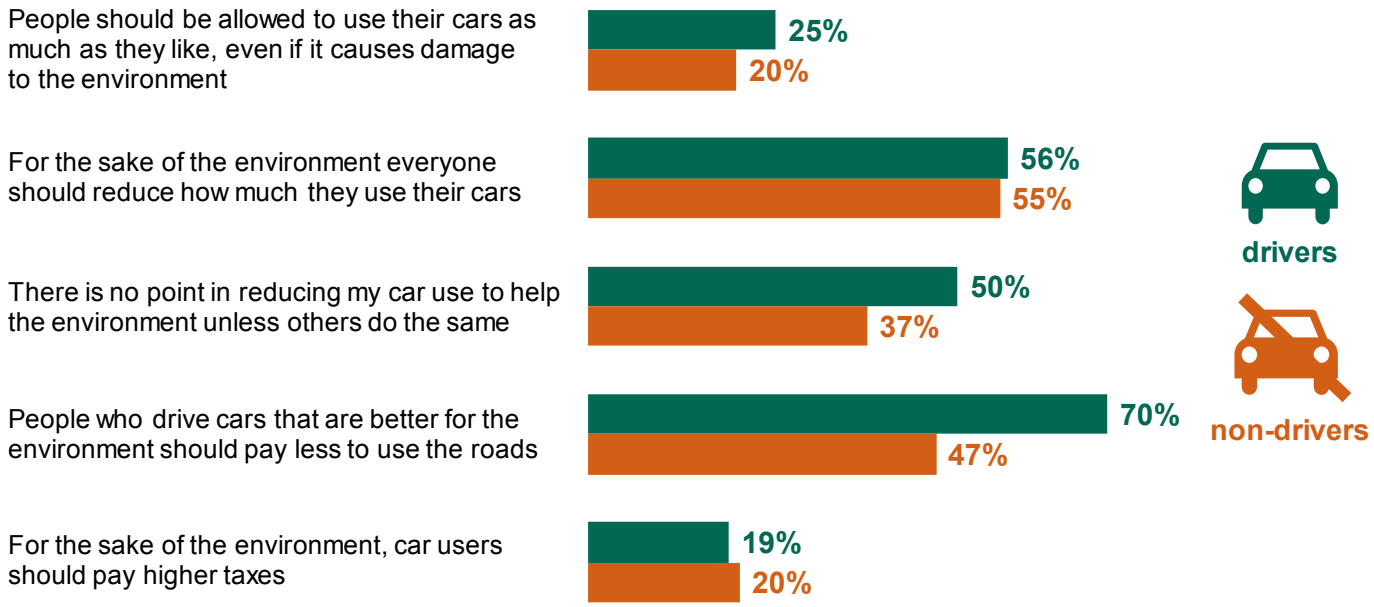
Around half (46%) of respondents agree there is no point in reducing their car use to help the environment unless others do the same.

Chart 25: Attitudes towards car travel and the environment [ATT0330 - ATT0333]



These results vary between drivers and non-drivers, where drivers mostly agreed more than non-drivers with statements favourable to car use (chart 26).

Chart 26: The proportion who agree or strongly agree varies between drivers and non-drivers



Opinions on congestion

In 2015, concern about congestion on motorways had risen since its low point in 2011. Around 37% of respondents considered congestion on motorways to be a very serious or serious problem in 2015 compared with 22% in 2011 (chart 27).

Concern about traffic congestion in towns and cities had also risen, from a low point of 39% in 2012. In 2015, 55% of respondents felt that traffic congestion in towns and cities was a very serious or serious problem.

Chart 27: Concerns about congestion as a very serious / serious problem [ATT0334 - ATT0335]

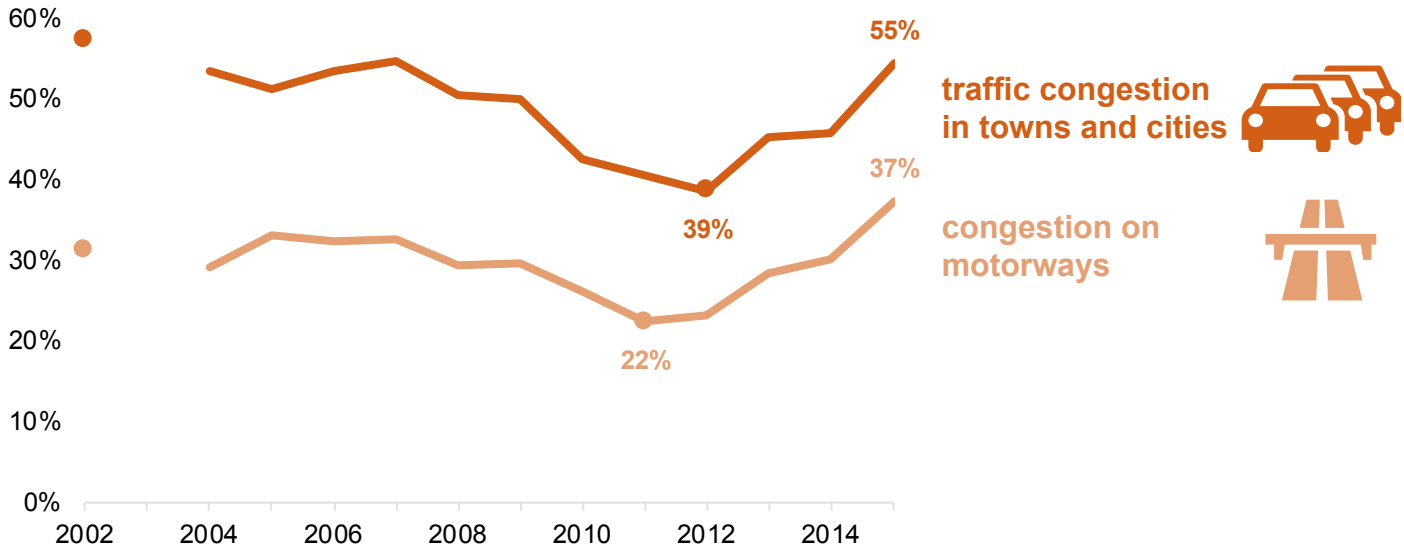
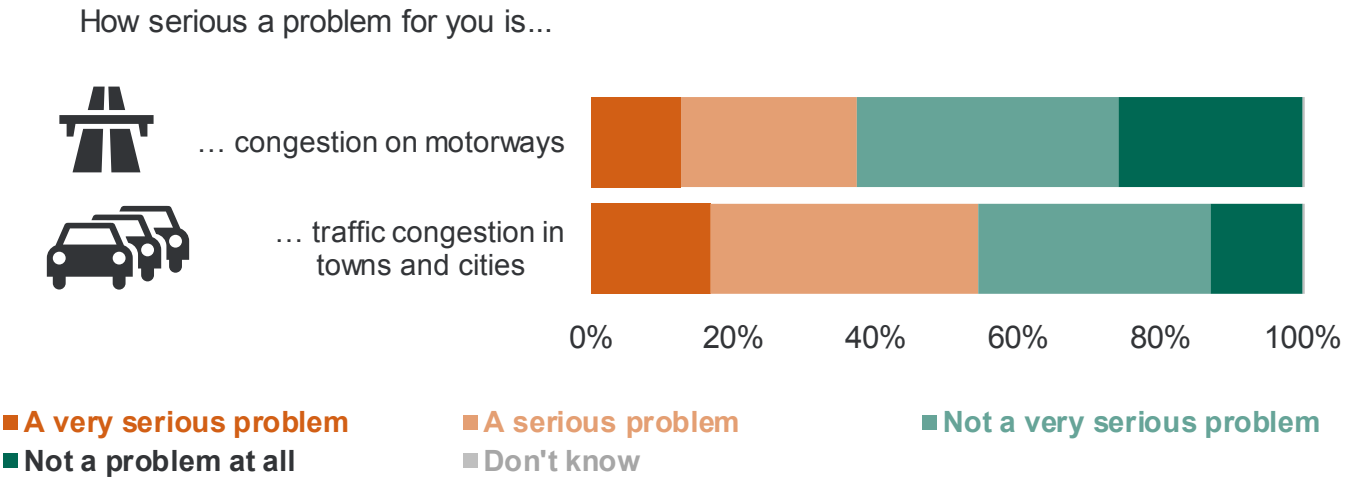


Chart 28: Concerns about congestion as a very serious / serious problem [ATT0334 - ATT0335]



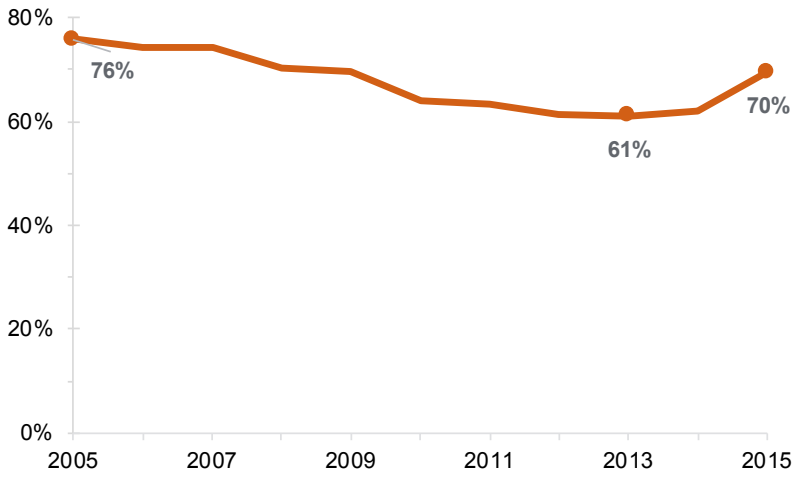
The proportion varies when looking at individual characteristics. Drivers were more likely to report that motorway congestion is a problem for them (42% compared with 28% of those who don't drive) and more likely to consider that traffic in towns and cities is a problem (58% compared with 47% of those who don't drive).

Men were more likely than women to consider motorway congestion to be a problem (41% compared with 34% of women) and more likely to consider congestion in towns and cities to be a problem (58% compared with 52% of women).

Opinions on road building

Concern about damage to the countryside from road building decreased after the question was first asked in 2005, when 76% of respondents seemed to be very / fairy concerned. Since 2013, it has risen again. In 2015, 70% of respondents indicated that they were concerned about damage to the countryside from road building, an increase from the previous year although not significant (chart 29).

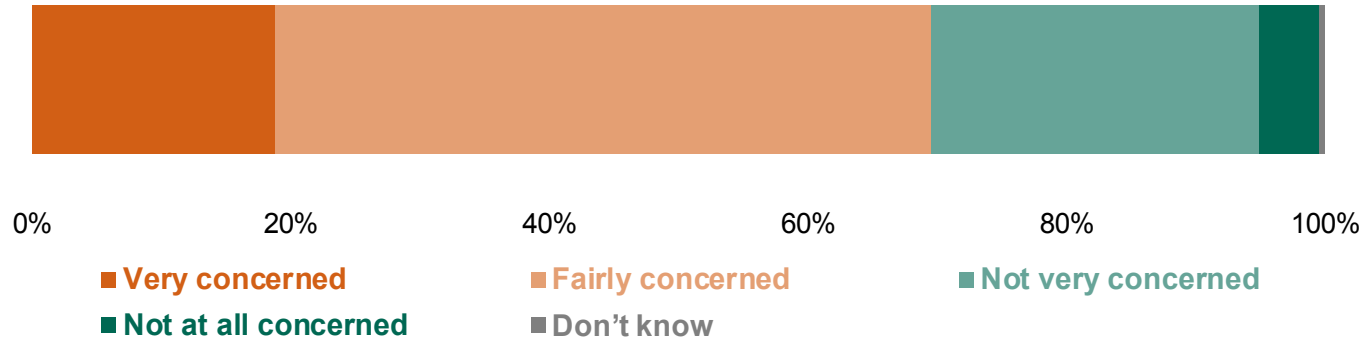
Chart 29: The proportion who are very concerned / fairly concerned about damage to the countryside from road building [ATT0338]



The proportion of those concerned was higher among those who drive but not significantly different compared with non-drivers. Similarly, women were more likely to be very / fairly concerned about damage to the countryside from road building than men (74% compared with 64% of men).

The 18-34 year old age group were less likely to worry about damage to the countryside (63%); the 65 and older age group were most likely to worry about damage to the countryside, compared with any other group (74%).

Chart 30: Concerns about damage to the countryside from road building [ATT0338]



Opinions on exhaust fumes

Respondents' attitudes towards exhaust fumes in towns and cities have varied over time. Whilst responses were steady between 2004 and 2009, concern declined to a lowest level in 2012, at 44%, since when concern has been rising again. In 2015, 60% of respondents considered exhaust fumes from traffic in towns and cities to be a very serious or serious problem (charts 31 and 32).

Chart 31: Attitudes towards exhaust fumes in towns and cities as a serious or very serious problem [ATT0339]

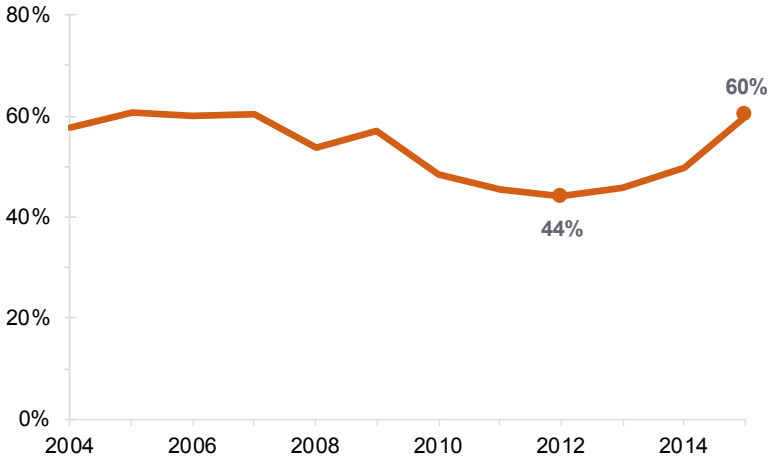
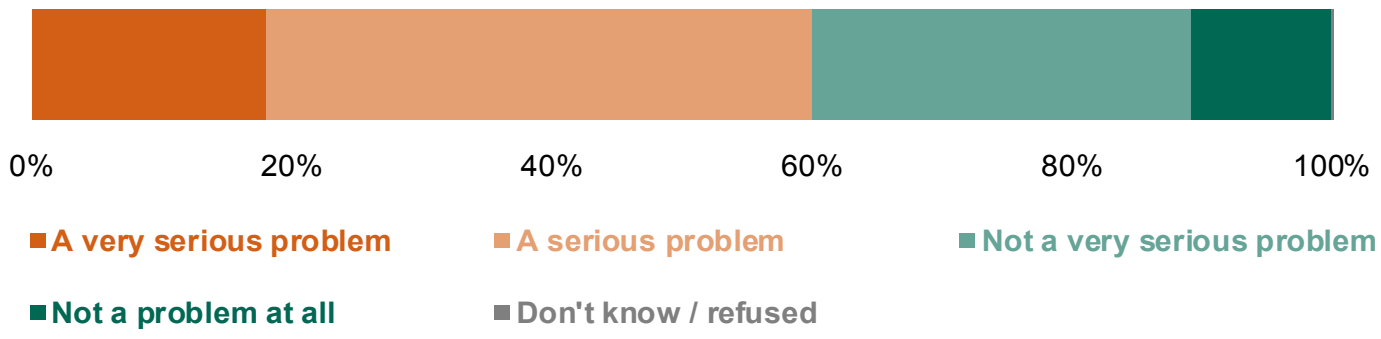


Chart 32: Attitudes towards exhaust fumes in towns and cities [ATT0339]



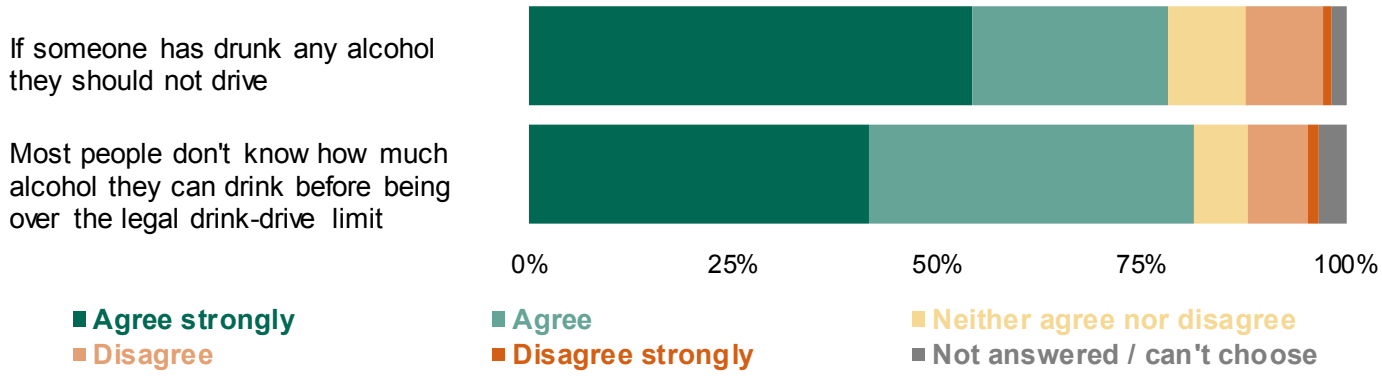
Road safety and drink driving

A large majority of respondents disapprove of drink driving: 78% of respondents agree or strongly agree that someone should not drive if they have drunk any alcohol, and 81% agree or strongly agree that most people don't know how much they can drink before being over the legal drink-drive limit (chart 33).

Other sources

More statistics on drink-driving can be found in DfT's road accidents and safety statistics: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/ras51-reported-drinking-and-driving

Chart 33: Attitudes towards drink-driving [ATT0346 - ATT0347]



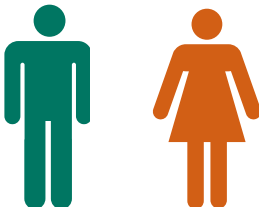
Attitudes towards drink driving vary by gender and by whether someone drives a car or not. Indeed, women are significantly more likely than men to agree that someone should not drive if they have drunk any alcohol, and non-drivers are also significantly more likely to agree with this statement than drivers (chart 34).

Chart 34: Attitudes towards drink driving

78% of respondents agree / strongly agree: 'if someone has drunk any alcohol they should not drive'

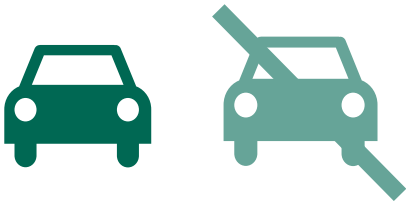
this proportion varies ...

... by gender



70% **85%**

... by whether they drive



76% **85%**

Road safety and mobile phone use

When asked about a range of statements about driving and mobiles phones:

90% **disagree** that it is perfectly safe to talk on a hand-held mobile phone while driving

68% **agree** that the law on using mobile phones whilst driving is not properly enforced

48% **agree** that all use of mobiles while driving, including hand - free kits, is dangerous

39% **agree** that all use of mobiles while driving, including hand - free kits, should be banned

Other sources

More statistics on mobile phone use while driving can be found in DfT's road accidents and safety statistics: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/seatbelt-and-mobile-phone-use-surveys-2014

Whilst a large majority of respondents (90%) think use of hand-held mobile phones while driving is dangerous, less than half (48%) agree that hand-free kits are dangerous (chart 35). Women are significantly more likely than men (53% compared to 43%) to agree that all mobile phone use - including hand-free kits - while driving is dangerous, and should be banned (chart 36).

Chart 35: Attitudes towards the use of mobile phones while driving [ATT0349 - ATT0352]

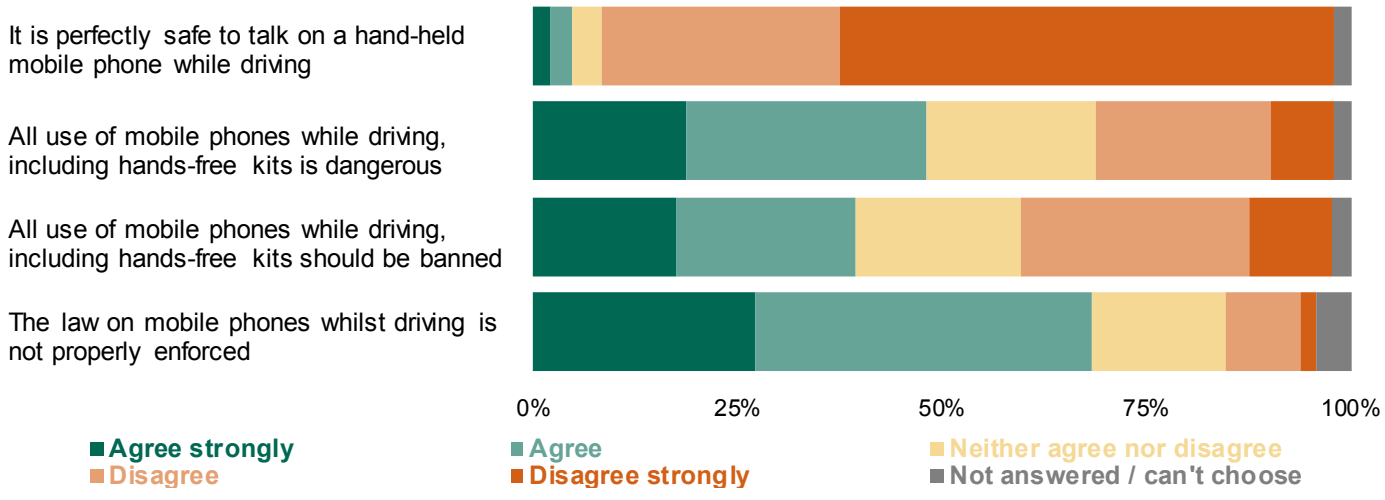
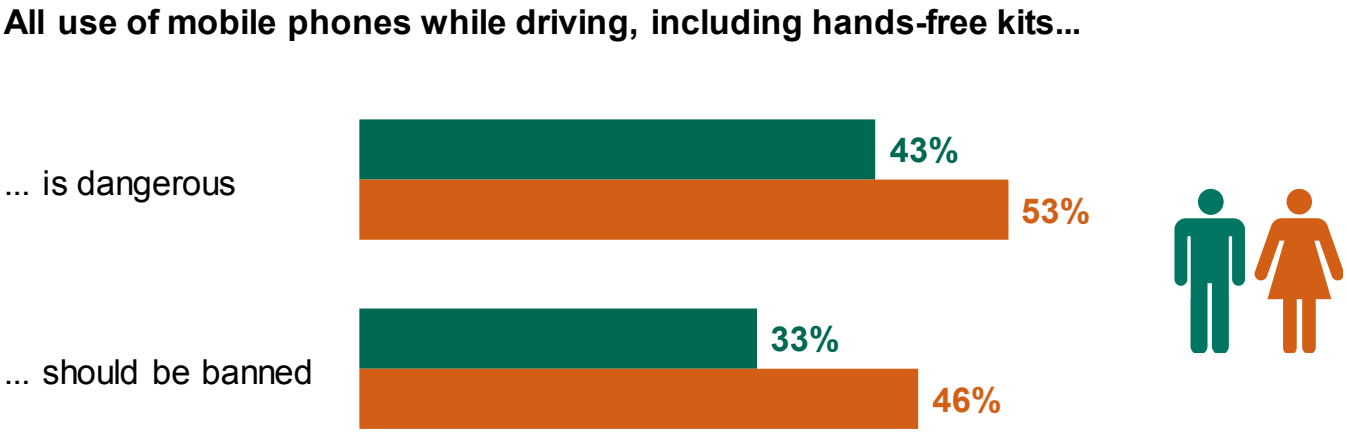
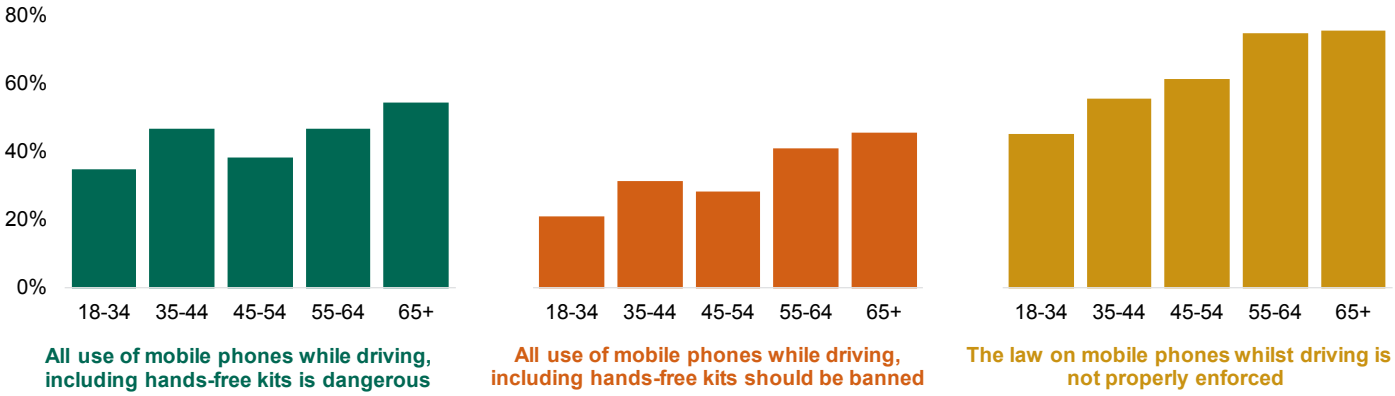


Chart 36: Proportion who agree or strongly agree with statements on the use of mobile phones while driving. by gender



Attitudes towards the use of mobile phones vary between age groups. The oldest age group (65+) is significantly more likely than younger age groups (18-54) to agree that all use of mobile phones while driving should be banned. They are also more likely to think the law on mobile phones whilst driving is not properly enforced compared to the youngest age group (18-34) (chart 37).

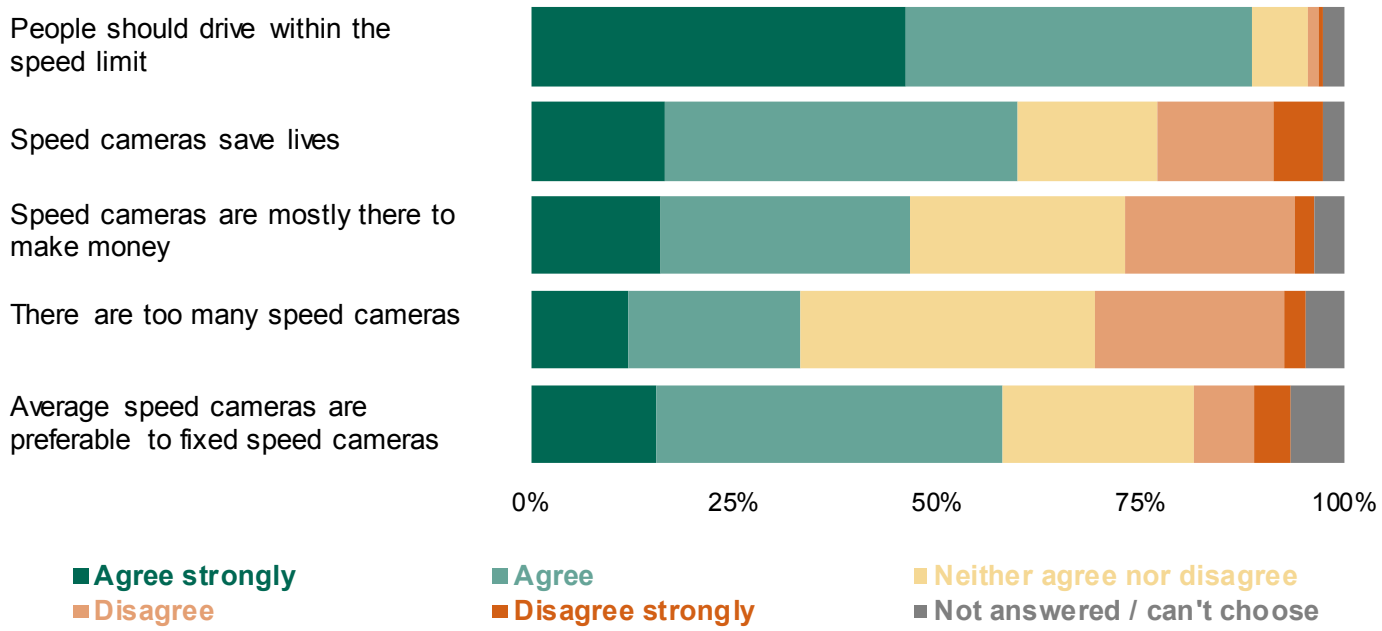
Chart 37: Proportions who agree or strongly agree with statements on the use of mobile phones while driving, by age



Road safety and speed cameras

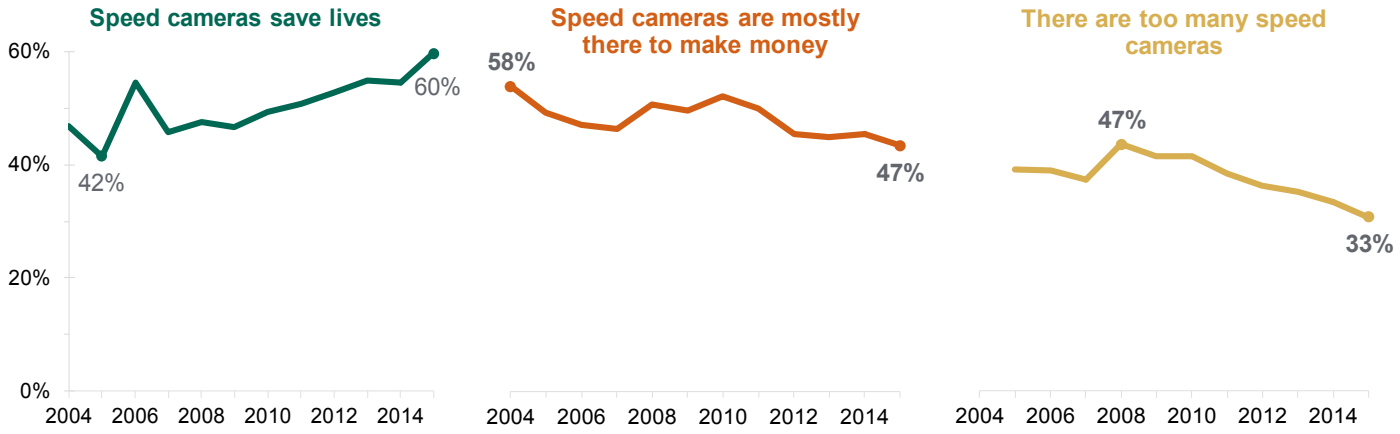
Overall, 89% of people agree that people should drive within the speed limit, and a majority (60%) agree speed cameras save lives (chart 38). However, nearly half (47%) agree that speed cameras are mostly there to make money and a third (33%) think there are too many of them. 58% of respondents also agree that average speed cameras are preferable to fixed speed cameras.

Chart 38: Attitudes towards speeding and speed cameras [ATT0353 - ATT0357]



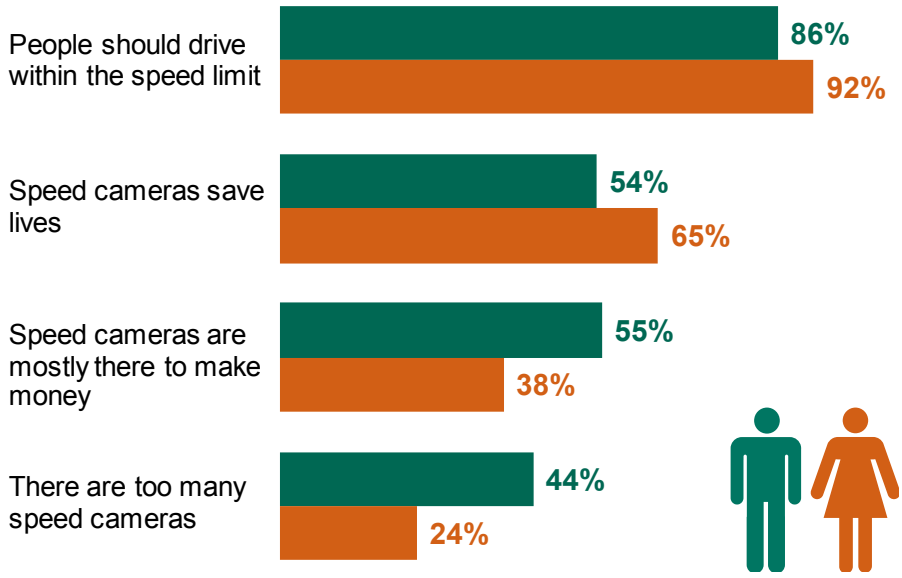
While agreement with the general statement that people should drive within the speed limit has remained broadly stable over the last decade (around 90%), opposition to speed cameras has reduced (chart 39). The proportion of people who think speed cameras save lives has increased to the highest point, while the proportion of people who think speed cameras are mostly there to make money, or that there are too many of them, has decreased to the lowest point.

Chart 39: Proportion who agree with statements on speed cameras [ATT0354 - ATT0356]



While women are significantly more likely to think speed cameras save lives, men are significantly more likely to believe there are too many speed cameras or that they are mostly there to make money (chart 40). Preference of average over fixed speed cameras is more similar by gender, although women are significantly more likely not to answer or have a neutral opinion.

Chart 40: Proportions who agree with statements on speeding and speed cameras, by gender



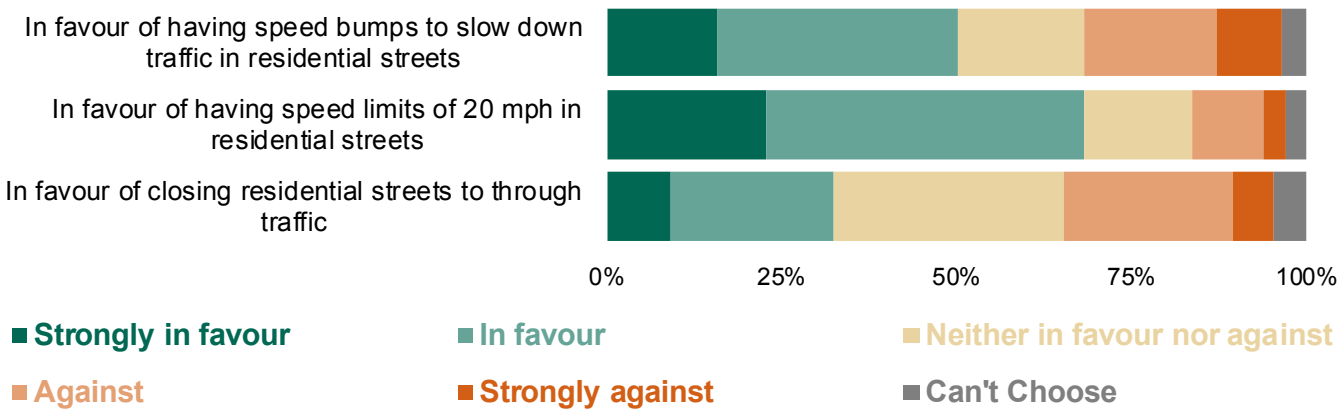
Residential streets

Those supporting speed bumps to slow down traffic in residential areas made up 50% of respondents in 2015. This was slightly lower than the peak 2014 figure of 54%.

In 2015, 68% were in favour of having 20 miles per hour speed limits in residential streets (chart 41). This figure is significantly lower than the 73% in favour in 2014.

Respondents' attitudes to closing residential streets to through traffic have varied over time. In 2004, nearly half the respondents were in favour of closing residential streets to through traffic. By 2015, this support had declined to 32% of respondents. This was not significantly different from the 2014 figure (34% in favour).

Chart 41: Attitudes towards traffic calming measures on residential streets [ATT0358 - ATT0360]



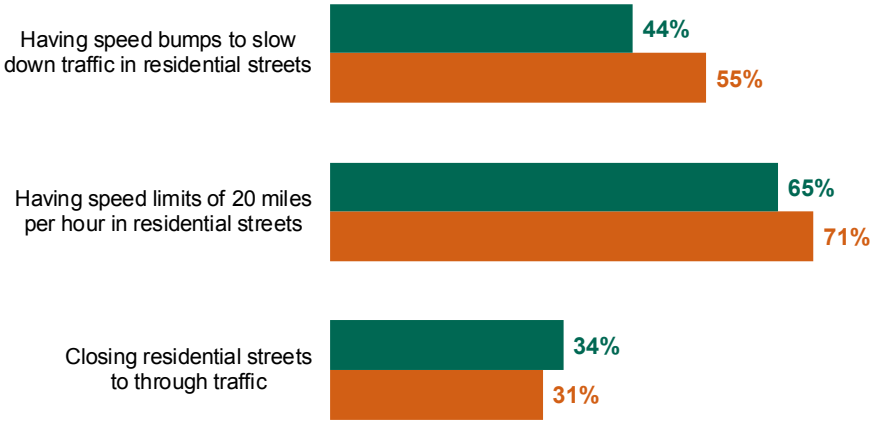
Non-drivers tend to be more favourably disposed than drivers towards traffic calming measures in residential streets which are not main roads. Around 73% of non-drivers were favourable towards having 20mph speed limits in residential streets, compared to 66% of drivers (chart 42). Similarly, 59% of non-drivers favour the use of speed bumps in residential areas, compared to 47% of drivers.

Chart 42: The proportion who agree or strongly agree varies between drivers and non-drivers

A higher proportion of women than men favour having speed bumps in residential areas (55% and 44% respectively). More women than men also favour having speed limits of 20mph in residential streets (71% and 65% respectively) (chart 43).

However, men are slightly more in favour than women of closing residential streets to through traffic (34% and 31%).

Chart 43: The proportion who agree or strongly agree varies



There are some differences in opinions about residential streets by age group. The 65 and over age group were most likely to be in favour of closing residential streets to through traffic (39%), and also most likely to favour 20 mph speed limits (76%). In contrast, the younger age group were most likely to favour having speed bumps in residential areas (60%), and support for speed bumps declines steadily with age (42% of those aged 65 and older).

The British Social Attitudes Survey

The British Social Attitudes survey is a representative household survey of adults aged 18 and over, which collects data on public attitudes towards a range of topics through a combination of face-to-face interviews and self-completion questionnaires.

The British Social Attitudes survey is managed and conducted by NatCen Social Research and contains questions sponsored by a number of organisations including Government Departments. This document contains results for the questions sponsored by the Department for Transport. The NatCen British Social Attitudes Survey report can be found on their website.

This report was prepared by John Cummings, a statistician in the Department for Transport. Please email attitudes.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk with technical enquiries about this report.

Detailed statistical tables

Detailed analysis of long term trends may be found in Trends in Attitudes to Transport, 1990 to 2009. Excel tables ATT0301 - ATT0360 containing the results discussed in this report can be found on the DfT website at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/british-social-attitudes-survey-2013-attitudes-towards-transport

Tables on public attitudes towards other aspects of transport are available here, although for varying years, as the surveys are not annual:
https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-public-attitudes-to-transport#publications
These include: ATT01 Public attitudes to buses, ATT02 Attitudes and behaviour to climate change, ATT04 attitudes to train services, ATT05 Public attitudes towards electric vehicles. The site also has reports on public attitudes to air travel, and towards mobility scooters.

Methodology

The sampling frame is the Postcode Address File (PAF) and is limited to those living in private households. The sampling method uses a multi-stage design with three separate stages selecting postcode sectors, addresses and individuals. The survey is weighted to correct for the unequal selection of addresses, dwelling units and individuals and biases caused by differential non-response.

In 2015, respondents were randomly allocated to one of three self-completion modules (B, C and D). Thus the sample size for certain questions varies depending on which module(s) they featured in.

Fieldwork was mainly carried out between August and October 2015, with a small number of interviews taking place in November.

Further information

The achieved sample size for the 2015 face-to-face interviews was 4,328 respondents. This equates to a response rate of 51%. Of the 4,328 face to face survey respondents,1,062 completed self-completion module B, 1,078 completed self-completion module C and 1,083 completed self-completion module D.

All results presented here are weighted and any differences in results between 2014 and 2015 are statistically significant at the five per cent level of confidence using an estimated design factor (DEFT) of 1.2.