

Final



# **An analysis of current and future train use by Magor and Undy residents**

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## **Introduction**

As part of a data gathering exercise to establish user requirements from a possible community centre on the '3 Field Site' in Magor and Undy, the subject of 'train use' was also included as it is hoped that a new 'Walkway Railway Station' can be an integral part of the proposed community centre/hub. This survey was organised by South East Wales Energy Agency (SEWEA), a charitable organisation that aims to combat fuel poverty, poor health, and climate change through promoting and facilitating the adoption of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. The agency has an interest in establishing its service as part of the community centre/hub and was pleased to include 'train use' questions within the survey as rail is considered to be an energy efficient means of transport. It is also part of the embryonic '3 Fields Community Trust', as is MAGOR.

## **The survey**

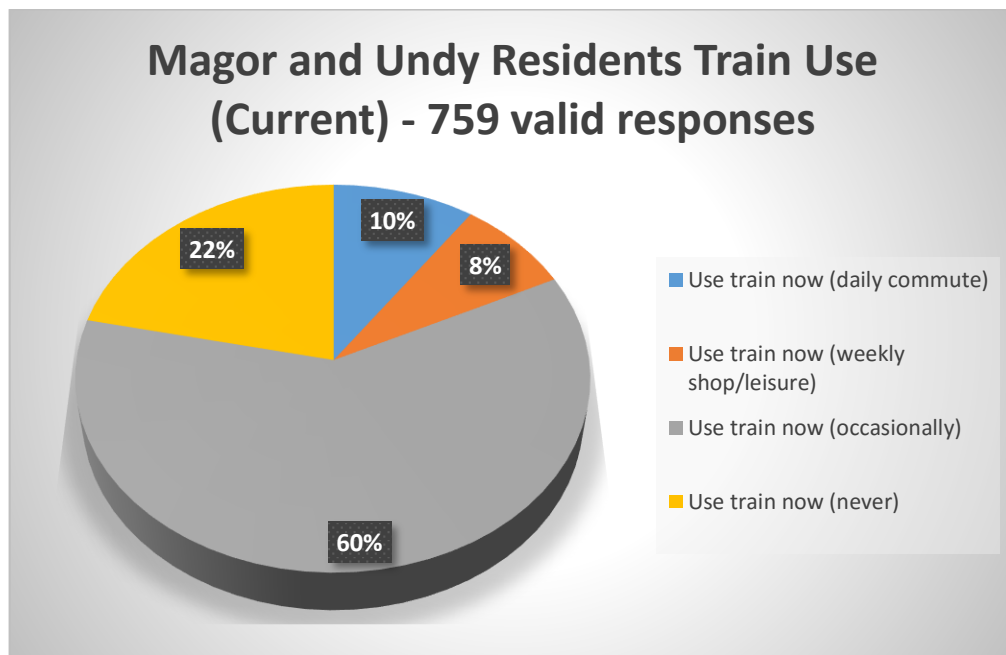
A total of 5,631 survey forms were posted to each member on the electoral register at some 2,500 households in the villages of Magor and Undy. A total of 777 returns were made to SEWEA, which represented a response rate of 13.8%. This data was gathered and collated over the period 29 February 2016 to 31 March 2016. An anonymised subset of the data was supplied to Magor Action Group on Rail (MAGOR) to analyse, in detail, the responses to the rail travel questions. Three areas were examined –

1. Current level of train use by Magor and Undy residents
2. Current destinations and frequency of use by Magor and Undy Residents
3. Suggested level of train use if a station was built to serve Magor and Undy

## **Current level of train use by Magor and Undy residents**

A total of 759 responses contained data in the fields relating to the 'current use of train' and therefore 759 is used as the denominator to calculate the percentages shown in Figure 1 overleaf.

Figure 1

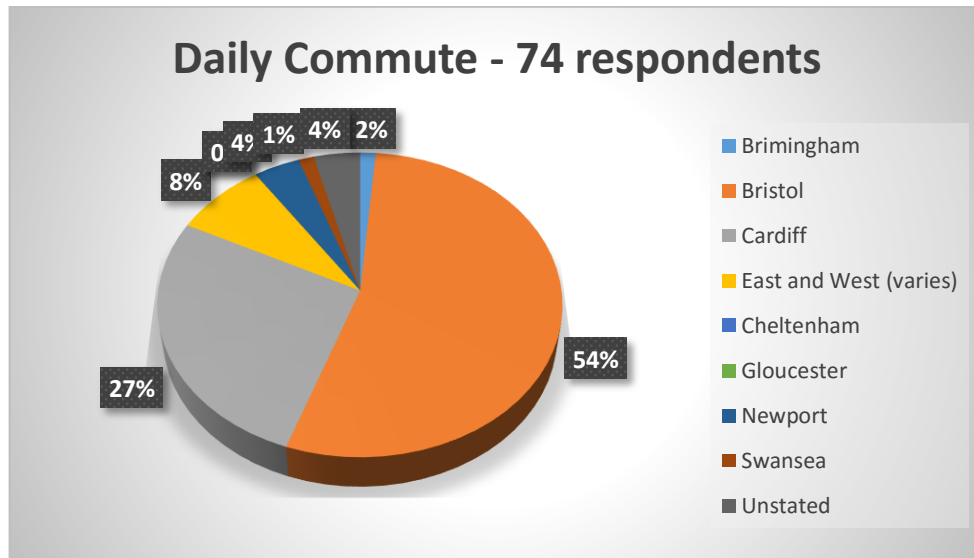


Whilst a 13.8% response rate, on the face of it, would appear to be a very good return in terms of popular surveys, it is believed that this sample probably contains a strong bias. It is suspected this is the case because of similar data that has been collected in the 2011 census and 'footfall surveys' carried out at Severn Tunnel Junction. In these surveys the numbers of Magor and Undy people using the train are reported to be around 100 to 120 on a daily basis (not around 500!). This is probably because the people who responded to the community trust survey are most likely people who are 'actively' interested in seeing a community centre and railway station because they would have strong personal benefits. Whereas the majority who didn't respond are possibly 'passively' content to let others make the running or simply have no interest in the proposals.

### **Current rail destinations and frequency of train use by Magor and Undy Residents**

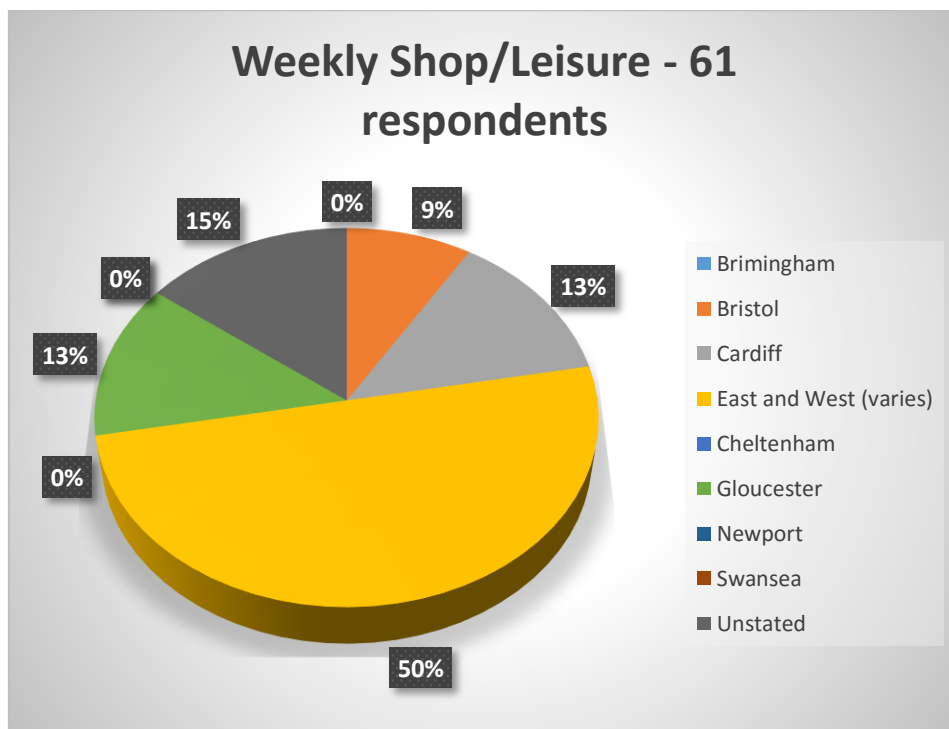
Around 10% of the respondents make a daily commute. Figure 2, overleaf, shows the range of destinations for these commuters.

Figure 2



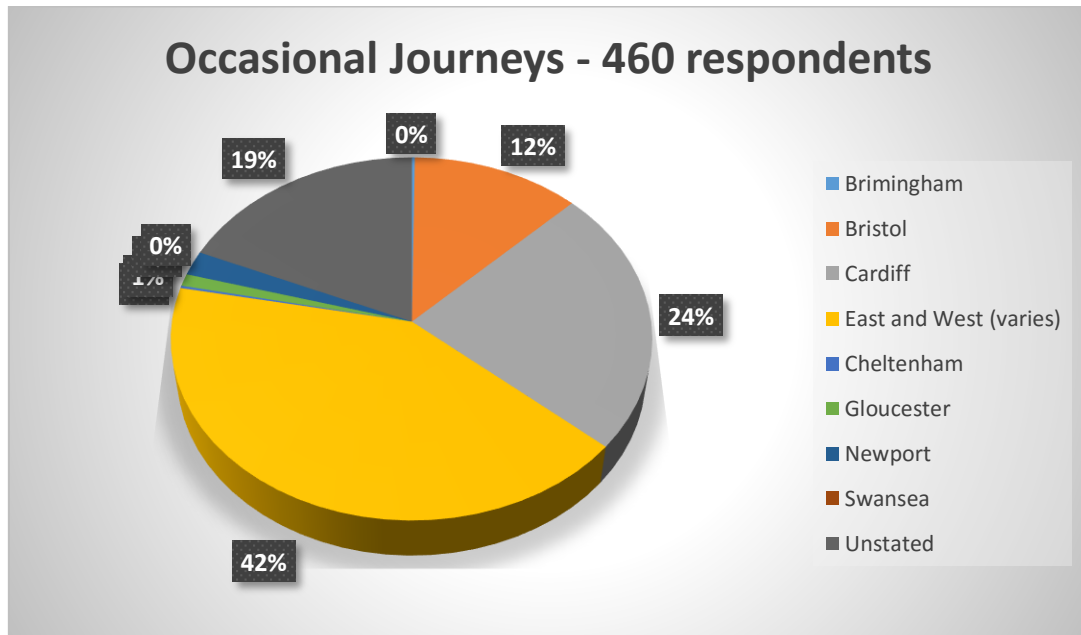
Around 8% of the adult population use the train on a weekly basis for shopping or leisure. Figure 3 below shows the range of destinations for this type of journey.

Figure 3



Around 60% of the respondents said that they used the train on an occasional basis. Figure 4 below shows the range of destinations made on an occasional basis.

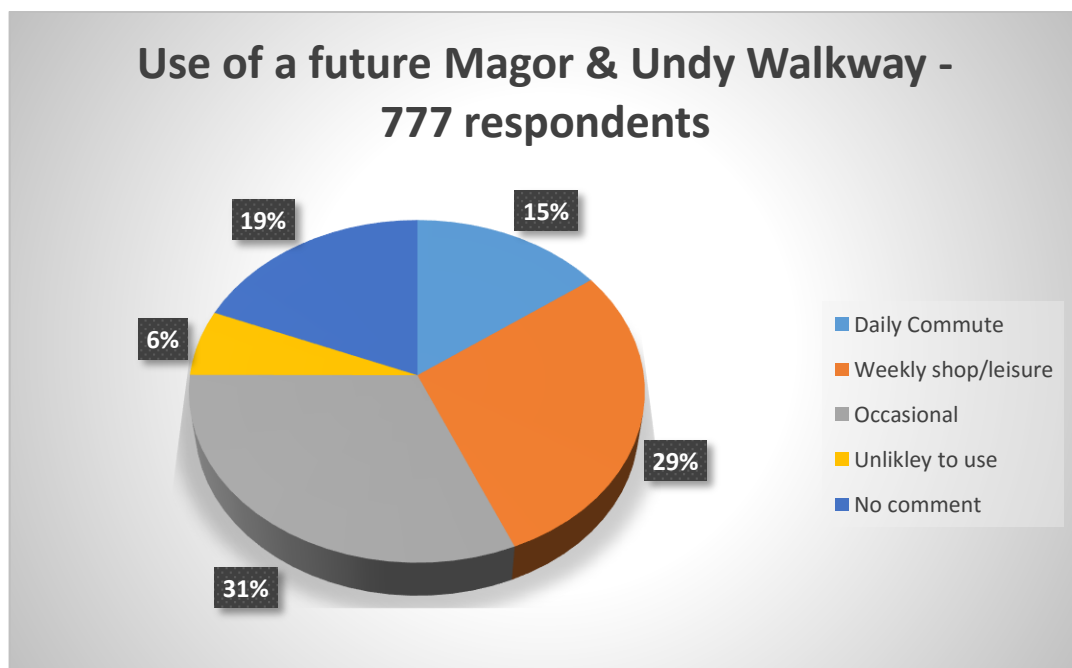
Figure 4



### Suggested level of train use if a station was built to serve Magor and Undy

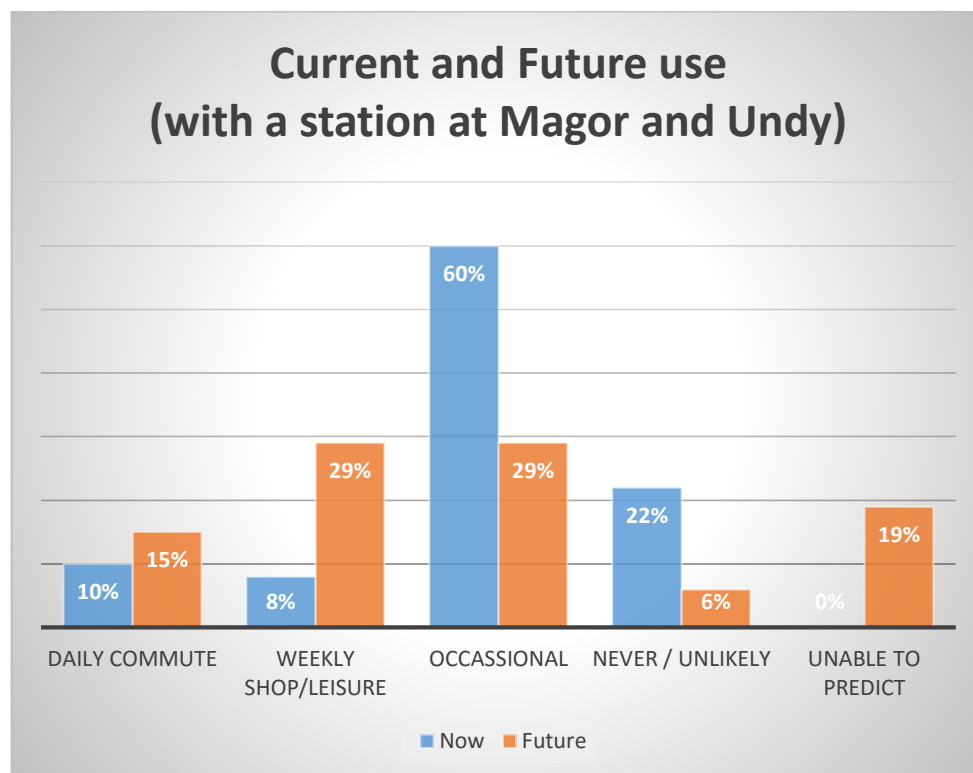
Respondents also indicated how frequently they might use a station if one were built locally to serve Magor and Undy. Figure 5, below, shows this detail.

Figure 5



When a comparison is made between the current train use of Magor and Undy residents and what it might be if a 'walkway station' was built, the figures are quite striking (as can be seen in Figure 6 below). Most noticeable is that, if the station was built, half as many people again who currently use the train to commute on daily basis, would use Magor and Undy Walkway station for their journey. Perhaps the most encouraging fact is that more than three times as many people who currently make a weekly journey for leisure or shopping would do so if Magor and Undy station existed. Of course, these numbers would be offset to some extent by a drop in numbers of people who only use the train on an occasional basis but the data also suggests that those who currently never use the train or are unlikely to in the future drops to almost a quarter and there is a pool of about 20% who are currently unable to predict their future requirements.

Figure 6



## Conclusions

- In broad terms, the survey suggests that currently some 18% of Magor and Undy residents use the train on a regular basis (either for their daily commute or alternatively a weekly shopping/leisure trip). If a new station were built to serve Magor and Undy this would increase dramatically to around 44% of the population becoming 'regular passengers'.
- The shift to 'regular use' would naturally mean a corresponding drop in 'occasional use' and in those of the 'never or unlikely' categories but it should be noted that 20%

of the population felt they were unable to comment on future use and so could be seen as 'pool' of potential passengers

- Over half of the current 'daily commuters' head for Bristol and a quarter head for Cardiff
- A significant number of the 'daily commuters' travel 'both ways' (East and West), e.g. some days Cardiff and other days Bristol.
- Only 4% of the daily commuters travel to Newport but 10% travel further afield (e.g. Birmingham and Swansea)
- Over half of the users who currently use the train for a weekly shopping or leisure trip travel 'both ways' (East or West) but significant portions stated specifically that they head for Cardiff, Gloucester and Bristol. Nobody indicated that they travelled to Newport for shopping or leisure.
- Almost half of 'occasional users' have varied destinations but significant numbers, as expected travel to Cardiff and Bristol with almost 20% travelling to unstated destinations
- The above dramatic increases would be off-set to some degree by a 29% reduction in 'occasional users' but there would be a pool of 'potential passengers' who currently feel unable to predict their use of a future new station
- Because of the suspected strong bias in the survey it is difficult to predict actual numbers of potential new passengers. Nevertheless, the strong movements in the 'before and after' percentages are thought to be valid as a good indicator of a significant number of potential new train users and worthy of further study.

## **Recommendations**

The report should be -

1. shared with a number of industry experts for comment and updating
2. published and highlighted on the MAGOR website
3. referenced in any future GRIP 3 study for Magor and Undy Walkway station
4. referenced as the basis for a more detailed study that could determine annual passenger journey numbers (at GRIP 4 stage)