

RIVER STOUR REPORT

Bournemouth town centre to/from Ferndown route

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Version: V1.1





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Introduction

BCP Council, on behalf of Dorset Council and BCP Council, ran a consultation on the proposed changes and designs of the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) programme. This consultation ran from:



24 February 2021 – 31 March 2021

This report details feedback received on the River Stour section on the survey (which is on the Bournemouth town centre to/from Ferndown route). The proposed changes on this section are:

- Route options from the north of Redhill Roundabout to Chapel Gate Roundabout are being assessed and subject to agreement with landowners.
- An accessible bridge over the River Stour
- A new crossing point on Christchurch Road
- Improvements to the existing path on the north side of Christchurch Road to provide shared space near school

Methodology

The consultation was run online using BCP Council's engagement platform. The platform hosted accompanying information outlining the proposed changes and designs as well as some example images of what the proposed changes could look like. A survey was also hosted on the platform which allowed respondents to provide comments on any section of the four cycling routes. An option to request hard copy versions of the information and survey was also made available.

Survey results



220 respondents

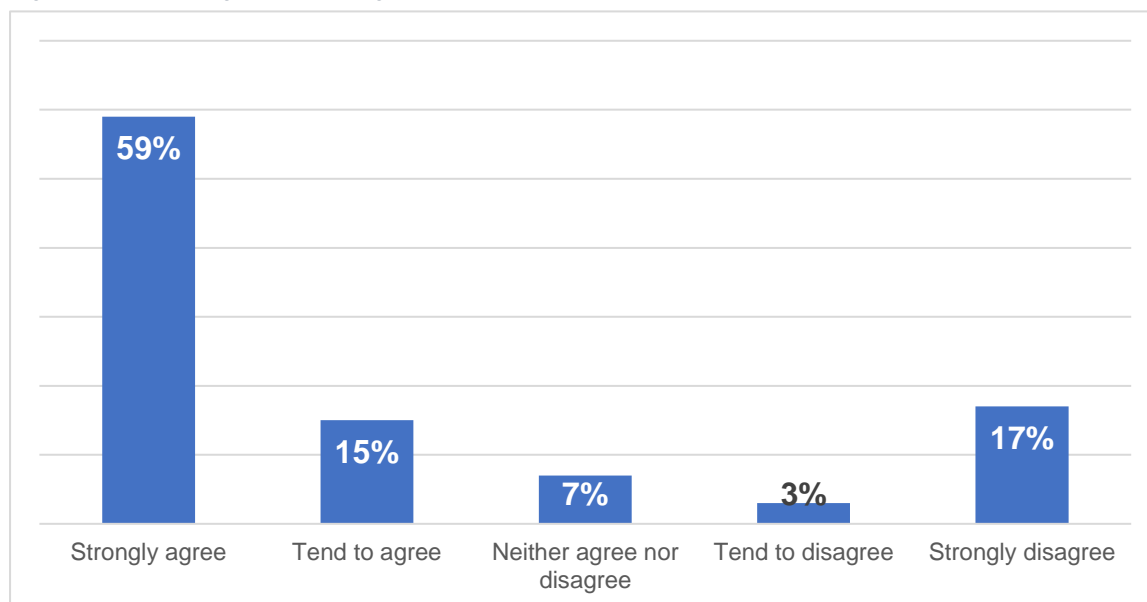
Figures in this report are presented as numbers of respondents who answered the question; this excludes 'don't know', 'not applicable' and 'no reply', unless otherwise stated.

Results are shown by mode of travel or equalities groups. The base number of respondents for some of these groups are low (less than 20); therefore caution should be taken when interpreting the results. Bases of less than ten are not shown.

Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes in this section?

Over half of respondents (59%) strongly agreed with the proposed changes and just under one fifth (17%) disagreed.

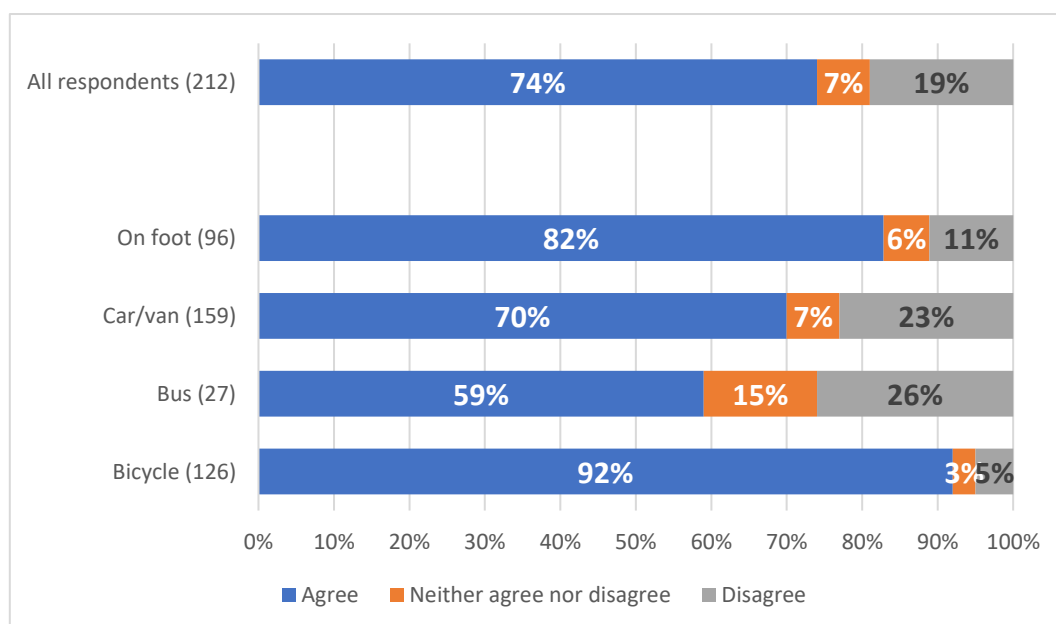
Figure 1 – Overall agreement/disagreement levels for River Stour (% respondents)



Base: All respondents

Figure 2 shows agreement levels by mode of travel on the Bournemouth town centre to/from Ferndown route. Respondents who travel by bicycle are most likely to agree with the proposed changes.

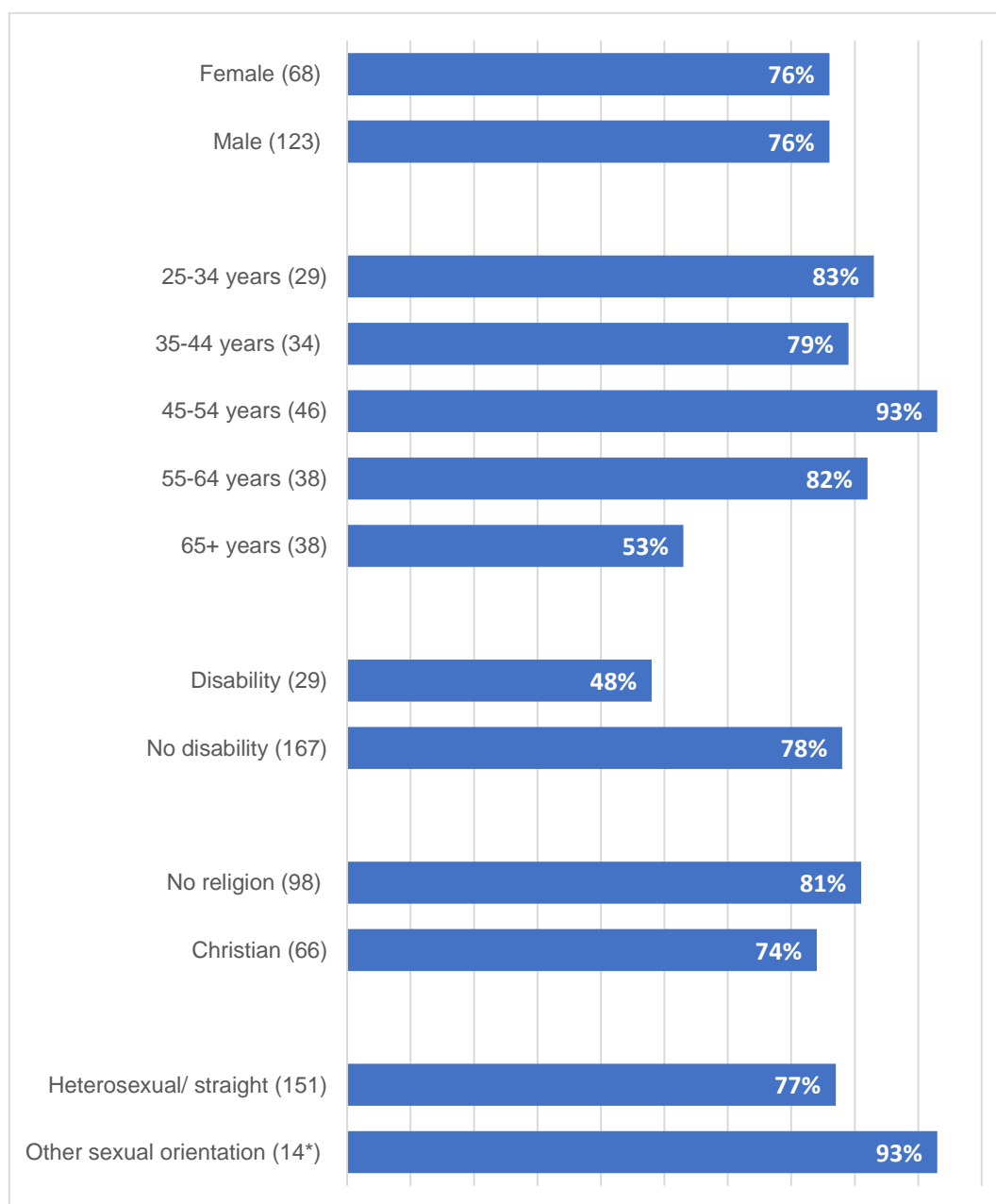
Figure 2 – Agreement/disagreement levels by mode of travel (% respondents)



Base: Variable as shown (* denotes low base. Excludes modes of transport with a base of less than 10)

Figure 3 shows agreement levels by equalities groups. Ethnicity has not been included as only white British respondents had a large enough base. Respondents aged 65+ are significantly less likely to agree with the proposed changes compared to all other age groups. Respondents with a disability are significantly less likely to agree with proposed changes compared to those without a disability.

Figure 3 – Agreement levels by equalities groups (% respondents)



Base: Variable as shown (* denotes low base. Excludes groups with a base of less than 10)

Comments



116 comments

Respondents were asked to explain why they agreed or disagreed with the proposed changes. Almost 120 respondents made a comment in relation to the River Stour section. This included two written responses.

Comments were exported into Excel and coded into categories. Qualitative research does not seek to quantify data, instead, its purpose is to provide deeper insights into reasoning and impact. The numbers of people mentioning the most prevalent codes are provided in this report to give an indication of the magnitude of response. Importantly, however, given the nature of the data, this does not provide an indication of significance or salience in relation to the question asked.

Figure 4 shows the themes of comments received. The most prevalent themes were general agreement and design comment/ suggestion.

Figure 4 – Themes of comments

Theme	No. of comments
General agreement	80
Design comment/ suggestion	26
General disagreement	22
General cycle comment	16
Environmental factors	7
Negative impact on traffic/car users	6
Disability/ Accessibility Issue	5
Disagree with upgrade/improvements to existing paths	4
Agree with crossing on Christchurch Rd	4
Agree with upgrade/improvements to existing paths	1
Disagree with crossing on Christchurch Rd	1

Base: 116 respondents



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General agreement:



"A much needed alternative to using busy New Road. Any path/bridge that crosses the Stour needs to be raised so flood resistant due to the area often being underwater in winter."



"An accessible bridge over the River Stour is absolutely crucial and long overdue. I cannot state this strongly enough. I previously lived north of the Stour and when I first began to cycle in to work in Bournemouth I realised how much of a barrier it is to cycling. There are so few crossing points, and none that are both safe and direct all-season crossings for cyclists. Therefore, any new bridge needs to be linked up with high-quality, sealed surface and well-lit direct routes on either side of the river, so that anyone (including children, the elderly, women on their own, etc.) feels safe and able to use it at all times of the year and all times of the day. Its frankly absurd that in the 21st century the crossing situation for cyclists (and also pedestrians) across the Stour is still so medieval."



"This is an excellent idea and would take traffic off the road and into a more enjoyable, and safer, environment."



"Definitely would massively improve connections."



"Agree, along the river Stour there is not enough space for cyclists and cars get too close too often."

Design comment/ suggestion:



"Lighting along this rural stretch will be crucial to make sure it is used in commuting times outside of light evenings and mornings. Otherwise, very much looking forwards to this."



"This part of the Stour Valley Way is often under water in winter. The proposed bridge and approaches need to be raised enough to make them flood resilient. The bridge is a much needed alternative to the currently popular New Road cycle route that currently has no cycling infrastructure."



"This route for a bike path skirts round where people actually live and work. My understanding of the evidence from the Netherlands is that bike paths only work when they are direct - this one isn't. It should come straight down from Ferndown through Parley Cross to join the routes in BCP, instead of this dark, unlit, remote out of town route that is proposed. Even the map you've created to show the routes highlights that the proposed route from Ferndown into Bournemouth actually goes around the outside of where most people live! Spend the available money on making the Parley Cross road, which is already well used by cycles, safe for them. Right now it is frequently very dangerous, but is clearly where people want to actually ride a bike as an alternative to driving. It also seems like the gap in the detail of the route over the Stour caused by needing landowner agreement for a new bridge means that the whole thing could quite easily never happen. Is it actually a serious undertaking?"