

Community Opinion Survey Findings

**Birnam to Ballinluig A9 Community Group
September 2016**

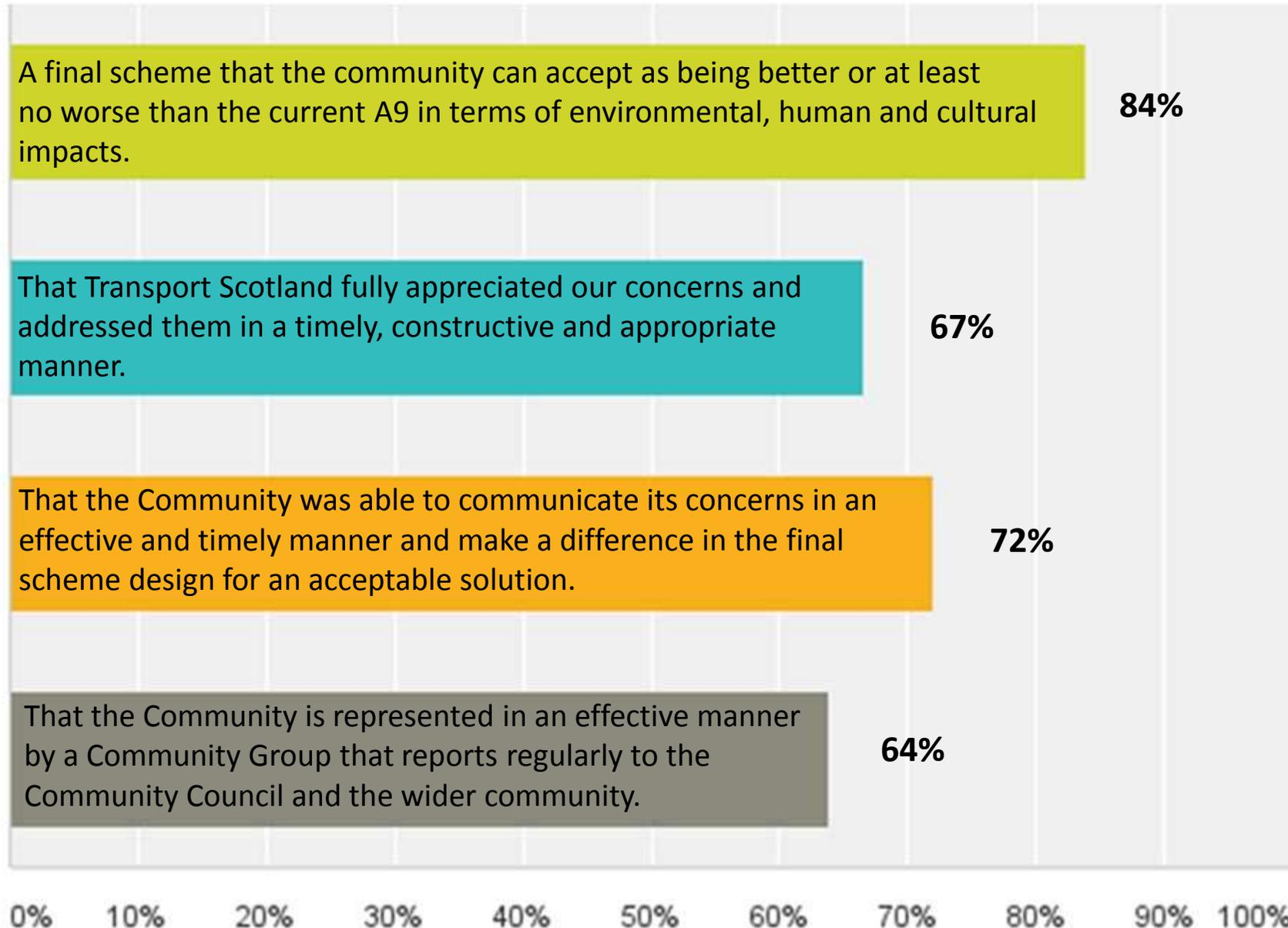
Background

- May to August 2016
- Online and paper
- 452 respondents
 - 291 respondents were happy to indicate where they came from (96% were residents of Perthshire)
 - 4% were visiting from within the UK
- Survey data is a rich source of information and opinion
- We can only present a summary of the findings in this presentation

Emerging Themes

- Size and scale and design of current options
- Landscape
- Impact on people
- Economic
- Safety
- Community engagement

Q1: What would you like to see as the outcome of the Community Engagement with Transport Scotland? Please tick all that apply.



Do you have any other objective(s) you feel are important?

96 additional outcomes were identified and these can be categorised into broad themes:

Design

“The present options which are all are over engineered, too invasive and with too large a footprint”

“Very little seems to be being said about the visual and noise pollution this road will cause”

“A9 is already too close to communities”

Tourism and Business

“To prevent the “Gateway to the Highlands” becoming a concrete jungle”

“Maintain the attraction of the Dunkeld and Birnam area to visitors and tourists”

Environment

“That the proposal is sustainable”

“How they are going to mitigate the impacts of the A9 dualling e.g. noise and air quality”

Safety

“Reducing the intended 70mph speed limit through this section of natural beauty to minimise the effects of such a development”

“It only takes a small lapse in concentration to have an articulated lorry or bus come crashing through homes”

Cost

“The final scheme will have a financial cost which has to be justified as the best option for the community regardless of being the highest or lowest construction cost”

Communication and Information

“As a layman I find the proposed solutions difficult to assess and even more difficult to remember”

“To know community concerns and opinions are acted upon and that consultation is not simply a "tick box" exercise”

Landscape

“It is important that the impact of the new proposals do not adversely affect the scenic beauty of the area and minimise destruction of ancient woodlands and wildlife habitat”

“To protect the countryside from the devastating effects of the off line plans”

Station

“The proposal should not “further disconnect the original station so integral to the beginnings, development and story of this place”

Path / Cycle Routes

“Ensure there is safe and well designed integrated cycle path / routing”

Health

“The proposal should not “undermine the health and well-being of the local population”

Construction

“That households adjacent to the A9 can be given assurances regarding possible damage to their properties during construction”

Public Transport

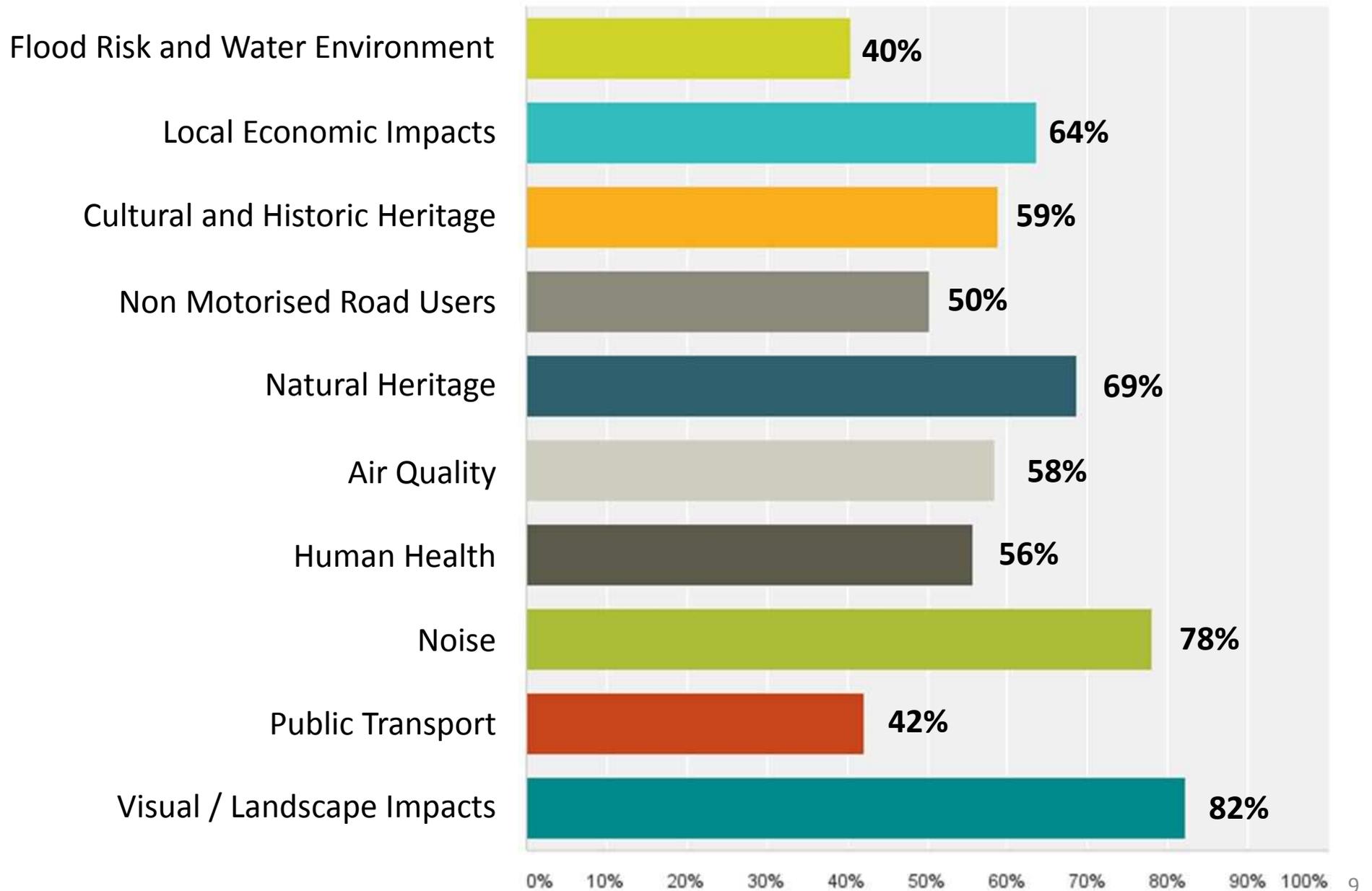
“Encourage easy access to Dunkeld and Birnam for local and long distance buses”

Residential / Housing

“Overall impact of living beside (within 75 metres) of the existing A9 and resultant downgrading of living standards once dualled A9 is completed”.

“ ... Concerns of the effects on our property currently within 70 metres of existing road”.

Q2: Which issues relating to the dualling project are of particular concern to you?



Q3: Do you have views on the local economic impact of the A9 dualling project? These could be positive or negative.

208 people gave their views:

- More than two-thirds expressed negative views
- 12 people expressed both positive and negative views
- 28 people were positive (13 qualified their positive response, for example: “... as long as it has minimal impact ...”)

Q3: Do you have views on the local economic impact of the A9 dualling project? These could be positive or negative.

Theme	Positive View	Negative View
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “As long as it has minimal impact on countryside” • “There will be winners and losers” • “Important that sensitive design is used to minimise negative aspects” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Important to note that there is a perception that the view and experience of drivers on the A9 is being prioritised over those who are off the road. The driver experience will be fleeting. The experience of Birnam and Dunkeld as a scenic, cultural DESTINATION needs to be protected” • “Plans I have seen look like they belong for a city! Not for a small town community like Dunkeld” • “Could be classed as environmental vandalism”

Theme	Positive View	Negative View
Public Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “If the dualling is done creatively, we could benefit from more visitors on foot from the station and station road could be revived” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Will encourage traffic to fly by the villages, and will take people off public transport, not encourage them onto it”
Housing Market		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Noise issues could reduce house values” • “Homes will be rendered worthless and businesses could be devastated”
Journey Time North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Makes it a better/safer journey to Inverness. Dunkeld/Birnam should be a good stopping point for this” • “Dualling will mean faster and safer travel times for locals and tourists therefore cutting fuel costs and lost revenue for businesses from longer journey times” 	
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It will be an improvement once done, but I am concerned about the traffic jams and impact on journey times whilst the work is being done” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Need access at both Dunkeld and Birnam for through flow of visitors” • “The current system with average speed cameras and dualled sections for over-taking seems to be working brilliantly.... Why do we need to dual it??”

Theme	Positive View	Negative View
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The community council needs to make Dunkeld more attractive for passing traffic to visit” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “This proposal would make the area less attractive to tourists and therefore impact on the economic viability of Dunkeld and Birnam” • “Serious risk to the local economy, visitors come for peace, historic, beautiful walks in ancient woodland and conservation areas, along cycle ways and core paths, not to negotiate fly overs, concrete, noise and increased traffic noise and pollution” • “Tourists did not regard the road as busy and could not see the need for a 4 lane highway. Having a motorway running next to a village does not make it an attractive place to visit” • “I have a caravan on Inver Caravan Park and I do not want my current outlook to become one of looking at a major road development with increased noise”

Local Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Noting the government’s topline objective of increasing economic growth by dualling but do not regard this as automatic” • “Package of related measures - such as considering suitable junction design, lower speeds approaching the local junctions and suitable signage - will be needed to ensure benefit from the economic opportunities” • “Income for local business” • “Dual asap please and find a creative solution for Dunkeld and the Guay areas” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Concern that dualling the A9 will be detrimental to local businesses” • “Unknown length/period of time visitors and locals alike will endure during construction works, and the real possibility of visitors and locals alike avoiding spending time and money locally” • “Traffic will head past Dunkeld and there will be a drop in trade for local businesses” • “If any of the current options are chosen there will be no economy to be concerned about” • “Business would have to move, resulting in the loss of at least thirty jobs in the area, and the loss to farmers and homeowners would be substantial”
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Q4: What benefits could the community seek as an outcome of the Dualling process (Planning Gain)?

- Enhanced railway station access and experience including station building
- Revitalised and reconnected Station Road
- Integrated and improved cycling, walking and public transport infrastructure
- Better traffic management through villages
- Safer Telford bridge (new pedestrian footbridge), pavements, streets and junctions
- Better school, sports and youth facilities
- Tree planting and reduced noise
- Easier and free parking
- Community business and group support.

Q5: The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 109 people made aware of opportunity to respond in 2013
- 79 people made aware of opportunity to respond in 2014
- 27 people submitted a formal response

“What issues might you have raised?”

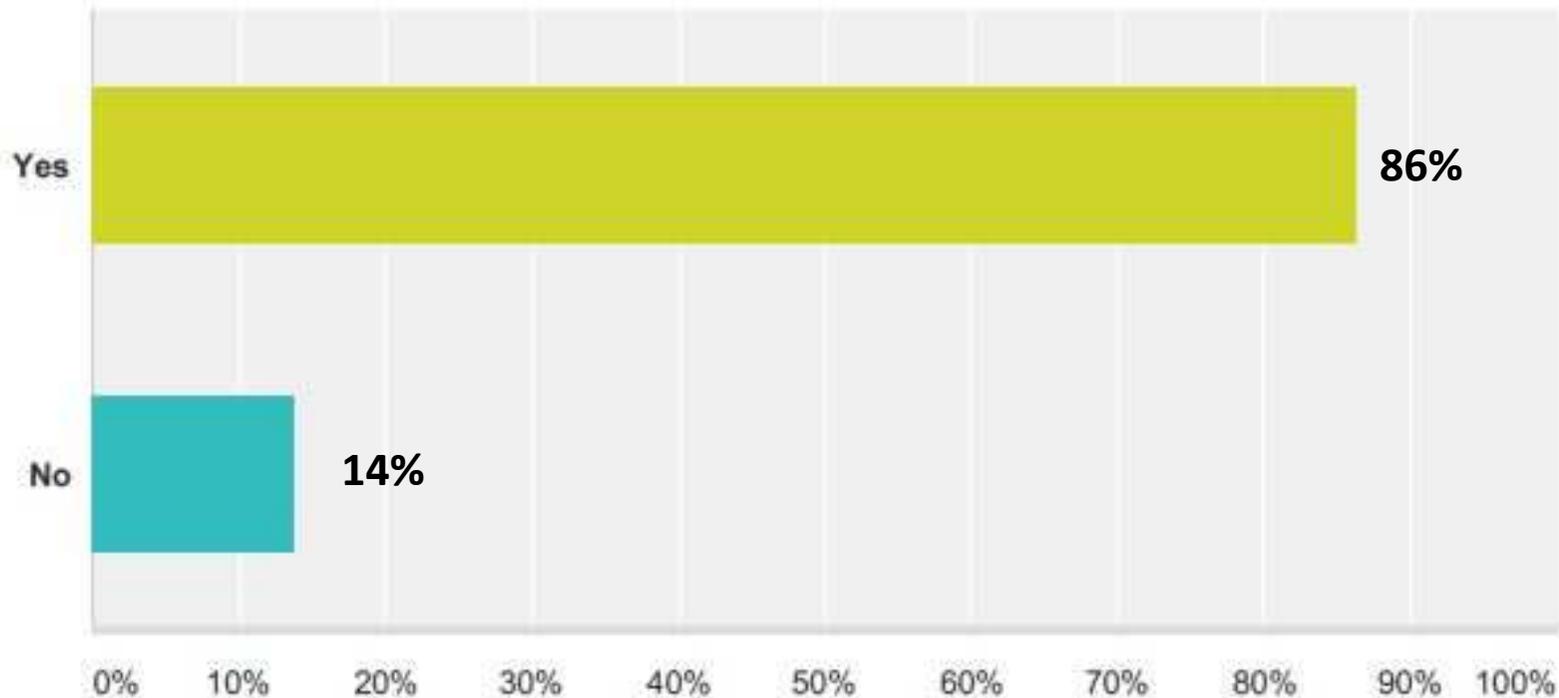
- What is an SEA?
- Impact of off-line proposals
- Air quality changes
- Construction issues (piling, traffic through village)
- Increased traffic and therefore emissions
- No move to modal shift, pedestrian and cycle paths
- Impact on natural woodland and wildlife habitat
- Reduction in speed limit
- Safety

Q5: The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- Impact on cultural heritage and integrity
- Downsizing of junctions
- Impact on health from noise and air pollution and detailed study required given unique geography
- Impact on water environment
- Impact on visual landscape
- Impact on school
- Use of partial dualling, roundabouts and underpasses as alternative solutions
- What happened to URS proposals?
- Access to and between Dunkeld, Birnam, the station, the Hermitage, Inver, Dalguise
- Need more information to understand environmental impact
- Inaccurate and difficult to understand information and maps, local knowledge not taken into account
- Loss of amenity at station
- Communication with home owners and community
- Drainage
- Is the solution future proof?

Q6: Derogation of road standards

Respondents were asked whether road standards should be relaxed to support greater flexibility in designing a suitable solution?

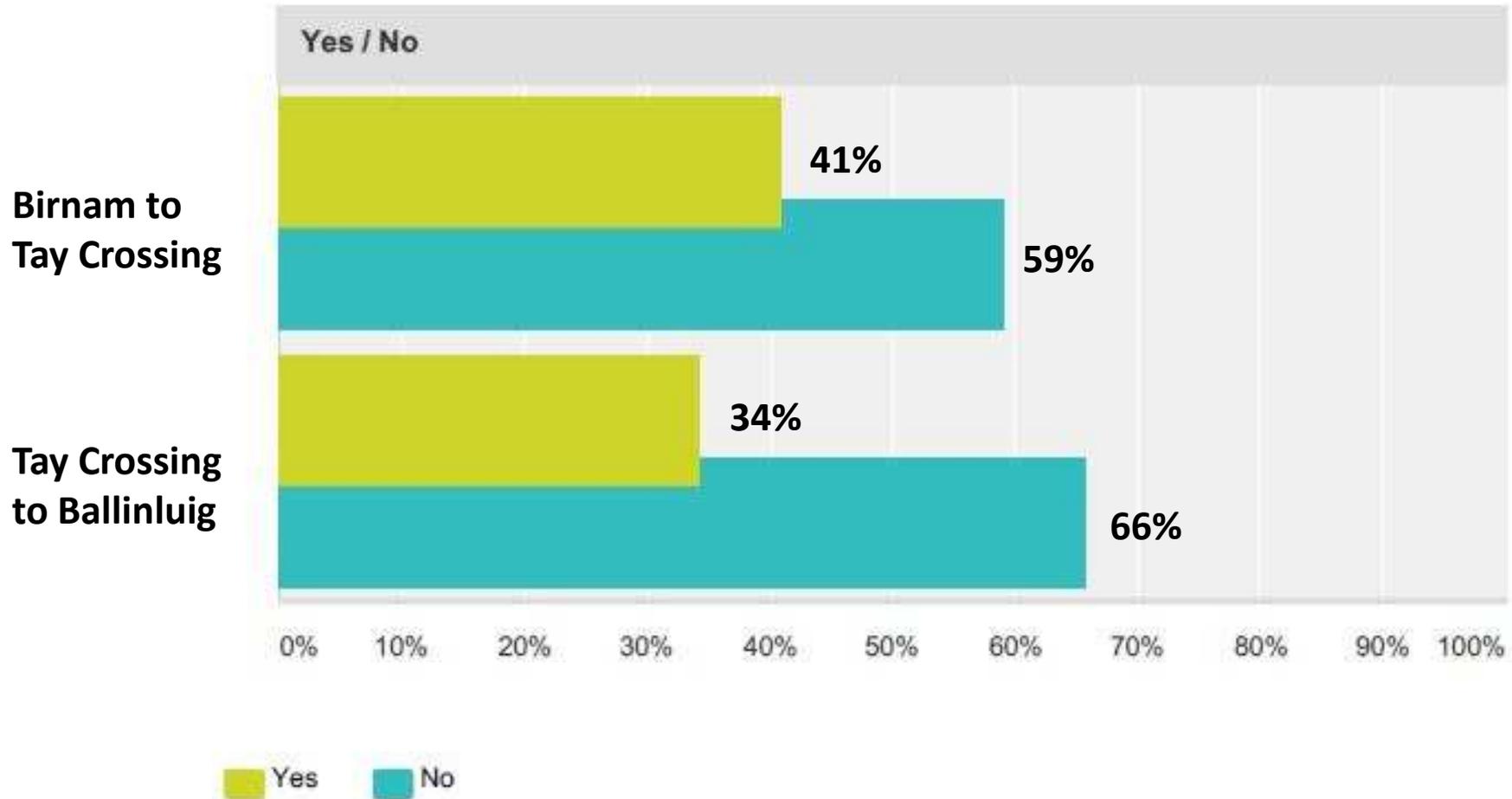


Q7: The Community Group asked for views about their proposed engagement plan

Comments and ideas included:

- Leaflet drops, drop-in sessions with local groups, stalls and other practical suggestions
- Online campaign
- Engage with MSPs and key decision-makers in order to effect real change
- More time to consult (realistic timescales)
- Decisions made with community approval
- A fair and inclusive approach to engagement is needed
- Genuine commitment needed from TS and Jacobs to listen and make changes

Q8: Do you feel you have sufficient information to enable you to adequately assess the current dualling options?



Q8: Additional information required ...

Why can't we have a ...?

Simple accessible information

Independent assessment of information

Before and after models, maps, impressions

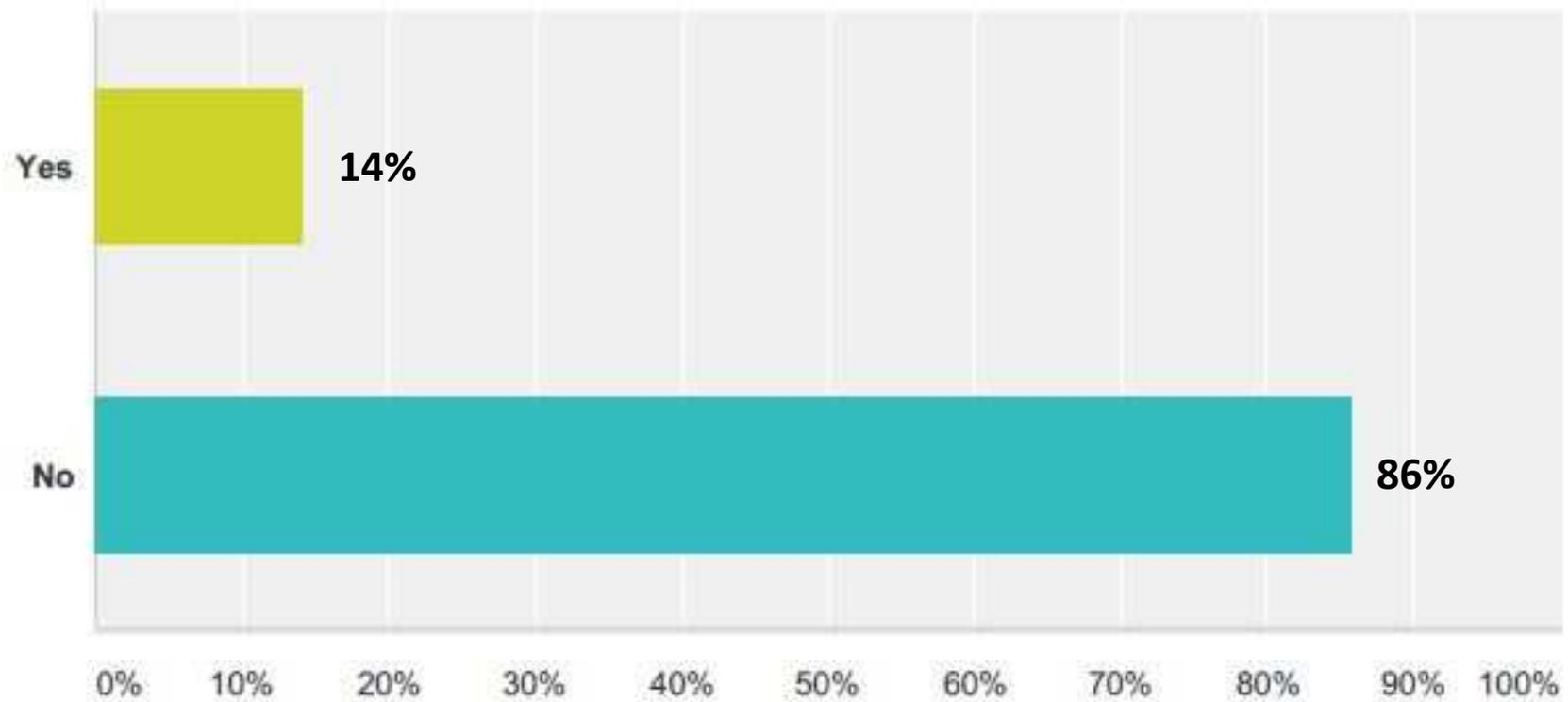
Traffic flow figures and projections

Impact on ...

3D Modelling

How the current proposals have been arrived at

Q9: Do you feel all local issues have been or are being addressed with local stakeholders and experts?



Q10: Design Issues

Junction Design

- No consensus about a **preferred option**. Lots of junction design ideas have been provided.
- There is a consensus about **minimising the impact**.

“If the road speed was reduced, could the junctions be less intrusive on the landscape?”

“Do we need 2 major junctions Birnam and Dunkeld”

Q10: Design Issues

Station

- Emerging theme about **reconnecting the Station** to Birnam village and **improving accessibility**

“Let's revitalise this historic asset for the community”

“Opportunity to improve public transport infrastructure”

Q10: Design Issues

Side Road Options (Tay Crossing to Ballinluig)

- The survey asked about **side road options** and in the meantime a **new off-line option** was introduced. Depending on when respondents completed the survey, they may or may not have known about the off-line option.

“It is impossible at this stage to choose a preference”

“The side roads are running perilously close to houses”

Q10: Design Issues

Any other impacts in relation to the current options?

- Respondents gave very considered thoughts and ideas about other impacts, for example:
 - Pedestrian and cycle access
 - The impact on the structure of their properties
 - Emergency service vehicle access

“Employ many of the effective, low impact, efficient approaches to achieve best safety”

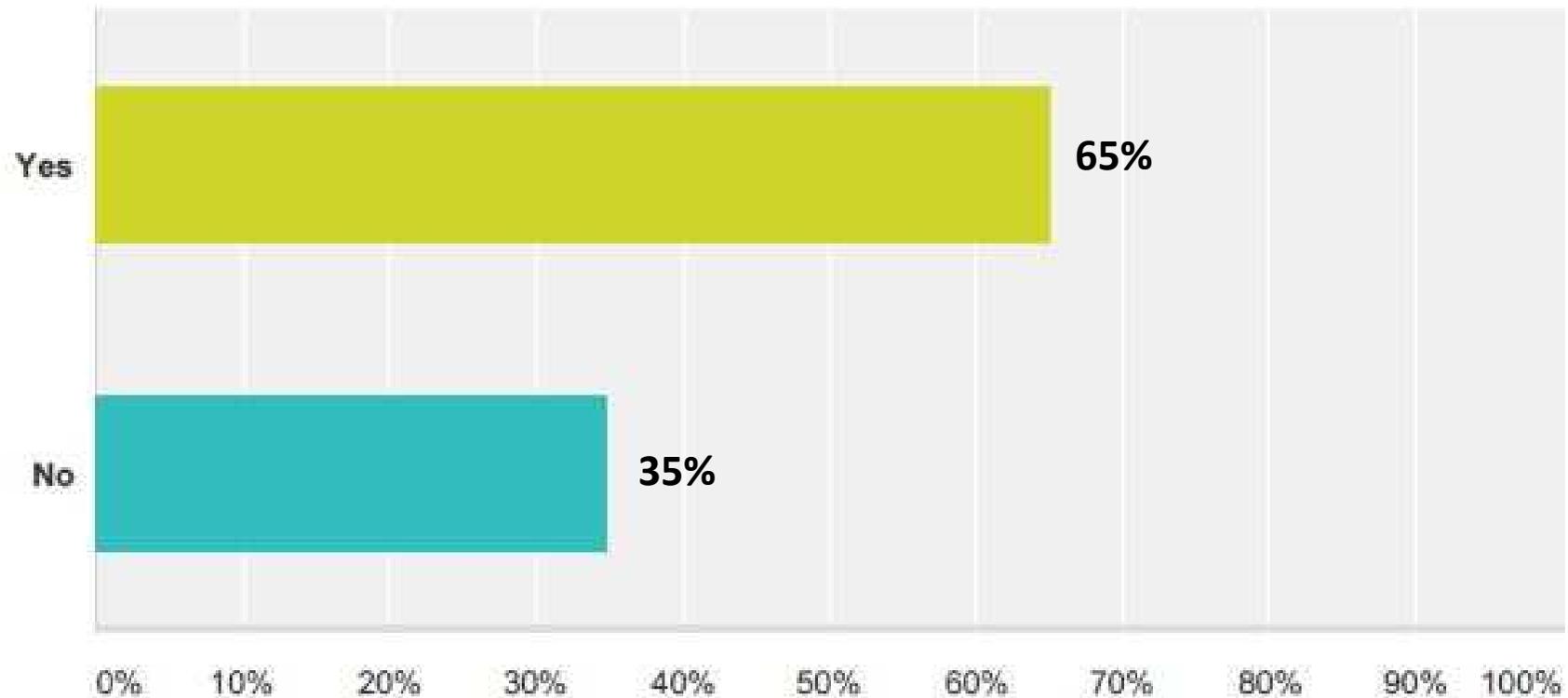
“Not enough information in plans / communications to be able to judge other impacts”

Q11: Can you summarise in a short paragraph any other options you think should be considered?

- Reduction in speed limit
- Improved signage
- Single lane
- Use of roundabouts
- One junction rather than two
- Lower road
- Use tunnels
- Re-routing of road and railway
- Re-instate flood plain
- Limit access on junctions
- Use of underpasses
- Dual one side
- Pedestrian and cycle paths
- 3 lanes for short and sensitive sections
- Use of above and below ground for different flows
- Use of speed cameras
- Investment in public transport
- Safety measures
- Noise mitigation

At least one in five of those who responded to this question questioned the need for dualling in this area

Q12: Do you think the community should raise funds to ensure it has an appropriate level of professional support for the stages ahead in the event it is not satisfied that its concerns are being adequately addressed?



Q13 asked how funds could be raised or accessed. A wide range of responses were given.

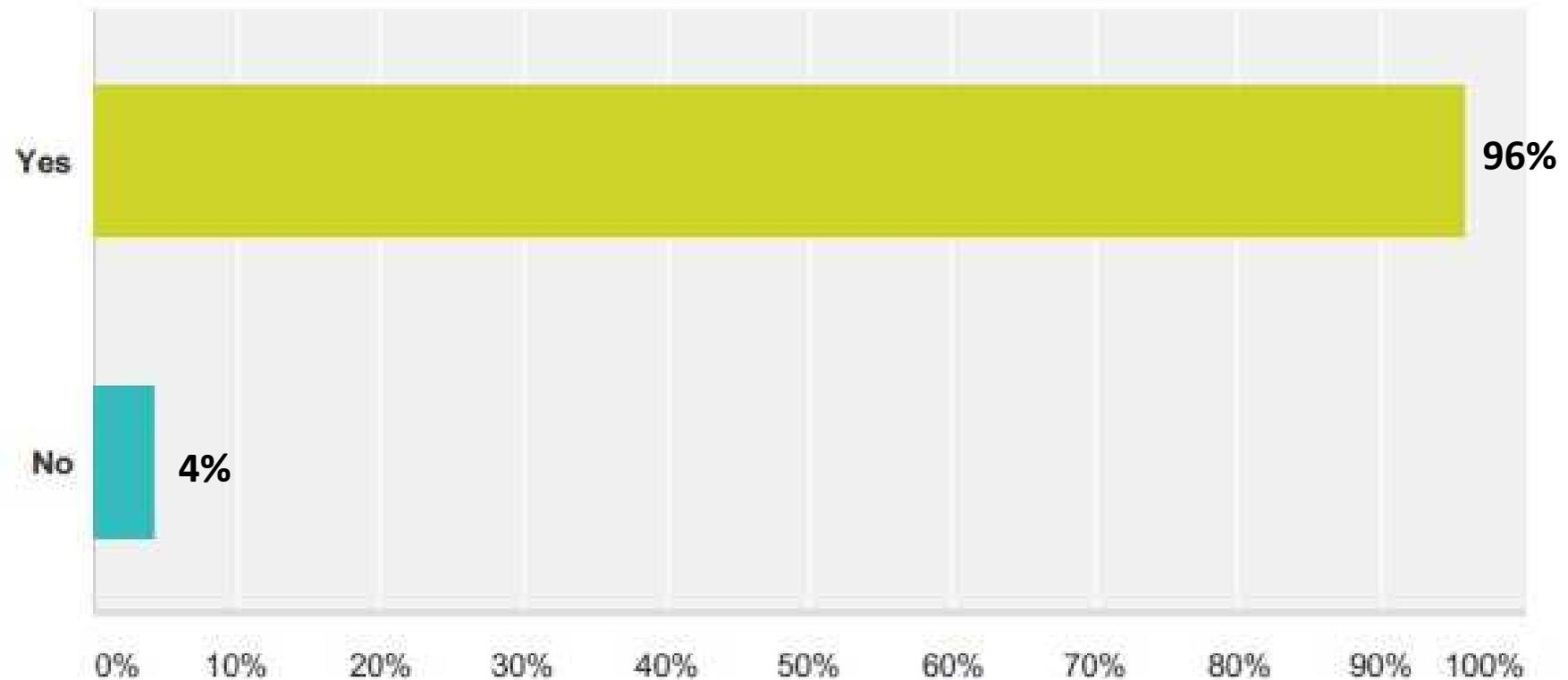
Q14: Name the two main things you think we should try to achieve at the next planned meeting with Transport Scotland.

The following priorities were identified:

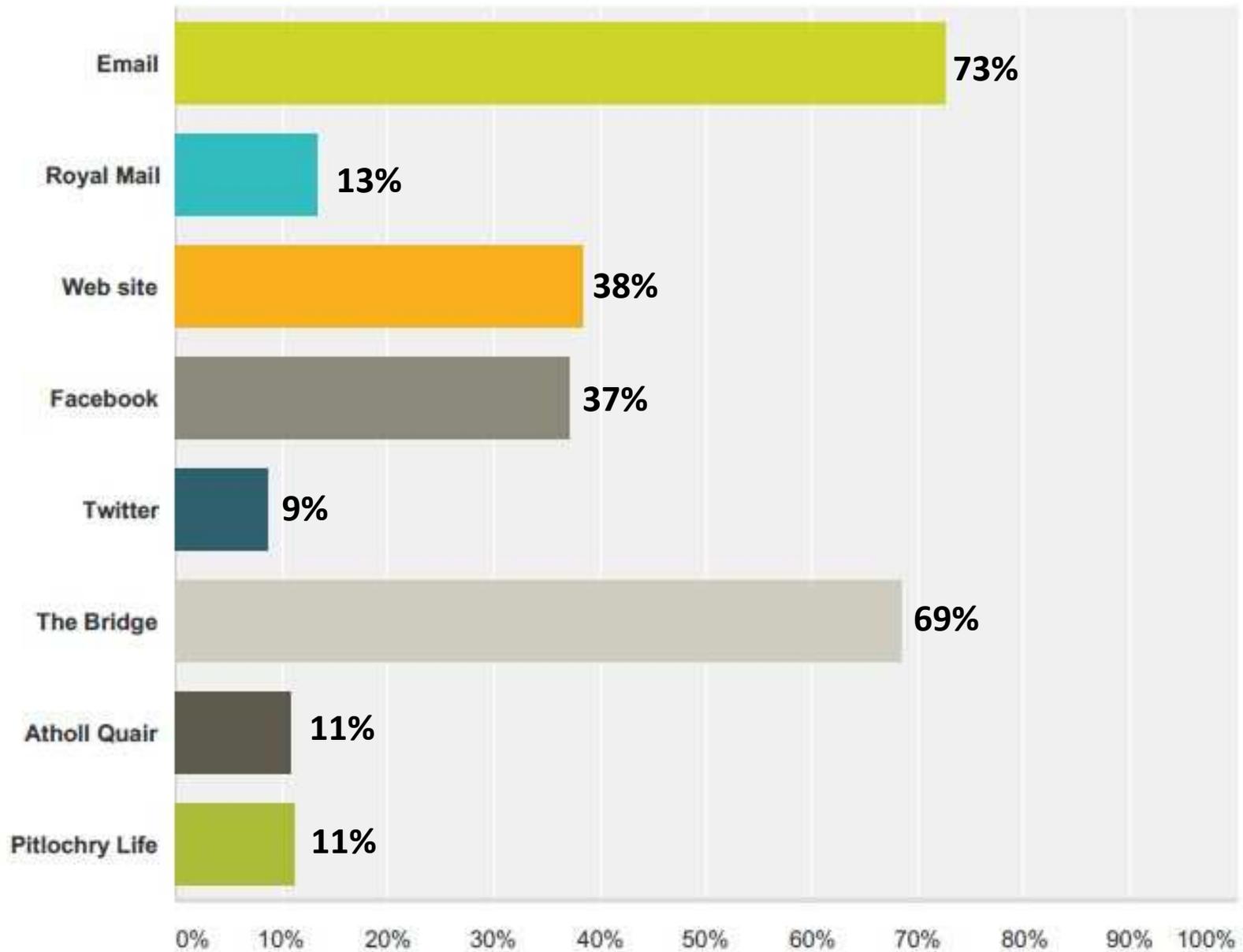
- Challenge TS to adopt a more creative and imaginative approach
- Rejection of proposals
- Cost effective solutions
- Review of proposals to decide which causes minimum impact, does the option on offer which achieves minimum impact cross community's 'red lines'? What are the community's 'red lines'?
- A genuine agreement to listen to concerns and act on them
- Clarification about timeline
- Clarity about old and new options with simple to understand information and communication

- Community approval of final decision
- Effective community engagement plan
- Emphasis on safety and access
- More information about impact of noise, pollution, flooding
- Emphasis on residents and tourists rather than passing drivers
- Revisit objectives for dualling and ask TS to make a case for these locally (weigh up cost versus benefit)
- Community to draw up alternative proposal
- Up front mitigation proposals
- Treat this section as 'special'
- Political support to contest plans

Q15: Should we promote the progress of this community's engagement in the A9 dualling process in the local media?



Q16: Preferred method(s) for getting information about the ongoing process?



Emerging Themes

- Size and scale and design of current options
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Next Steps