



Hampshire
County Council

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Appendix 1, Draft Hampshire Walking
Strategy Report of Consultation

January 2016



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Introduction

The draft Hampshire County Council Walking Strategy was released for public consultation between 26/10/15 and 07/12/15. In this time, 149 respondents, mostly from within Hampshire (all but 4), filled out the online questionnaire. Some areas of Hampshire were better represented than others, with 149 respondents from within Winchester district but just 1 from Gosport borough (this being the most extreme case). An additional 37 respondents fed in responses via email/letter.

Of those who replied to the consultation questionnaire only, 77 respondents classified themselves as members of the public. 37 respondents classified themselves as parish councillors, showing that the decision to distribute an invite to partake was met with some enthusiasm at a local level. In some cases it is difficult to distinguish between individual parish councillors and any official parish council response; however, the numbers give an indication. The third largest group of respondents – 10 – were local walking groups. The below table (which also takes into account email responses) gives an indication of the number of respondents from each category, however, it should be noted that not all respondents indicated from where they were responding.

District/borough	9
Internal staff	1
Member of the public	79
Parish council/ councillor	46
National Park Authority	2
Local Access Forum	1
County Councillor	5
Disability Group	1
District Councillor	6
Voluntary Organisation	2
Walking Club/Groups	12
Other	18
	182

The majority of respondent's answered from either a pedestrian point of view or from an all encompassing, multimodal perspective.

Key outputs of the questionnaire

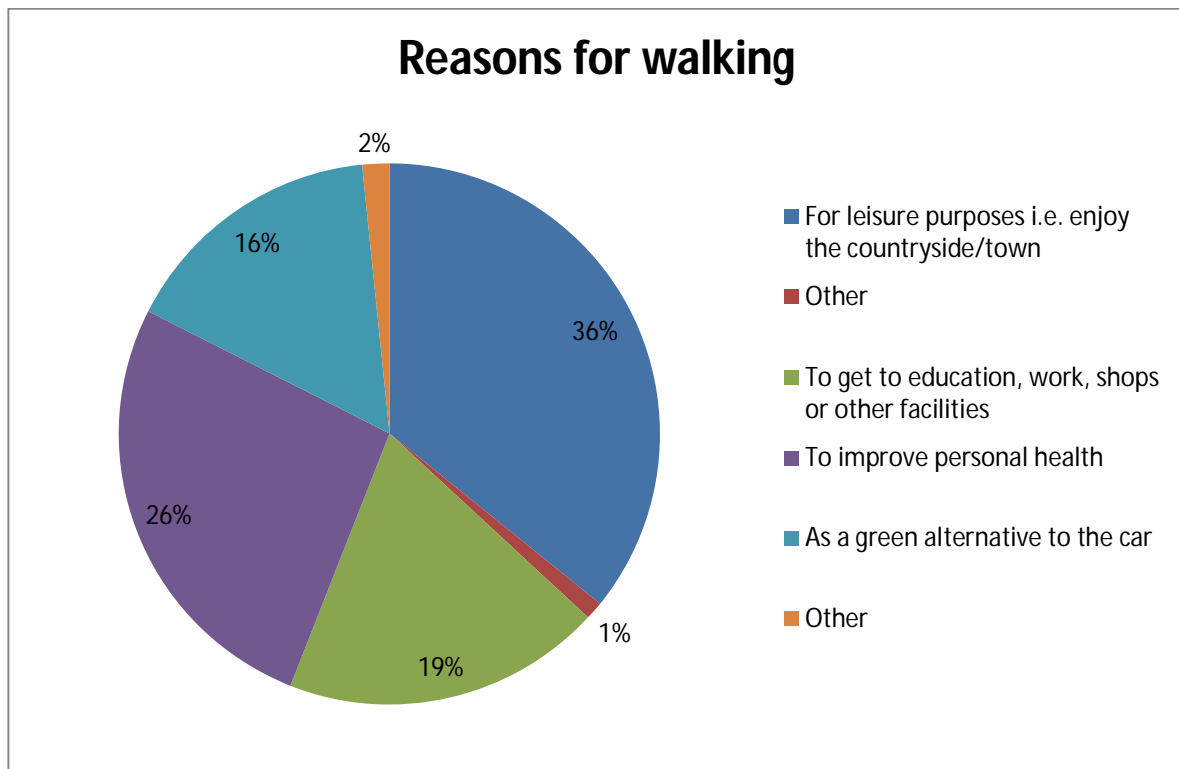
149 individuals and groups completed the questionnaire with generally positive responses:

- 84% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the objectives of the strategy.
- 88% of respondents thought the aims of the strategy were clear.

- 63% of respondents found it easy or very easy to understand the draft walking strategy
- 58% of respondents felt that achieving the aims of the draft strategy would encourage people to walk more in Hampshire.

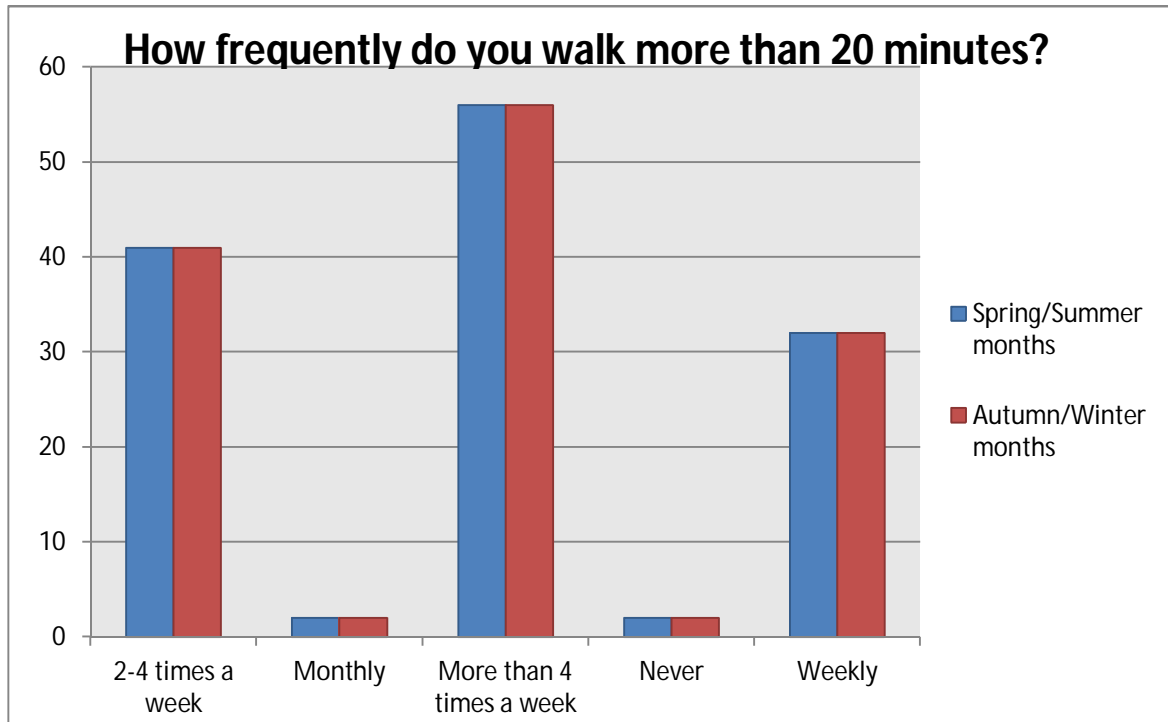
Reasons for walking

The most common reason to walk was for leisure purposes (36%). 26% stated that they walked for health reasons, and only 19% of respondents stated that they walked to get to education, work, shops or other facilities, followed by 16% who walked as a green alternative to travelling by car.



How frequently do you walk more than 20 minutes?

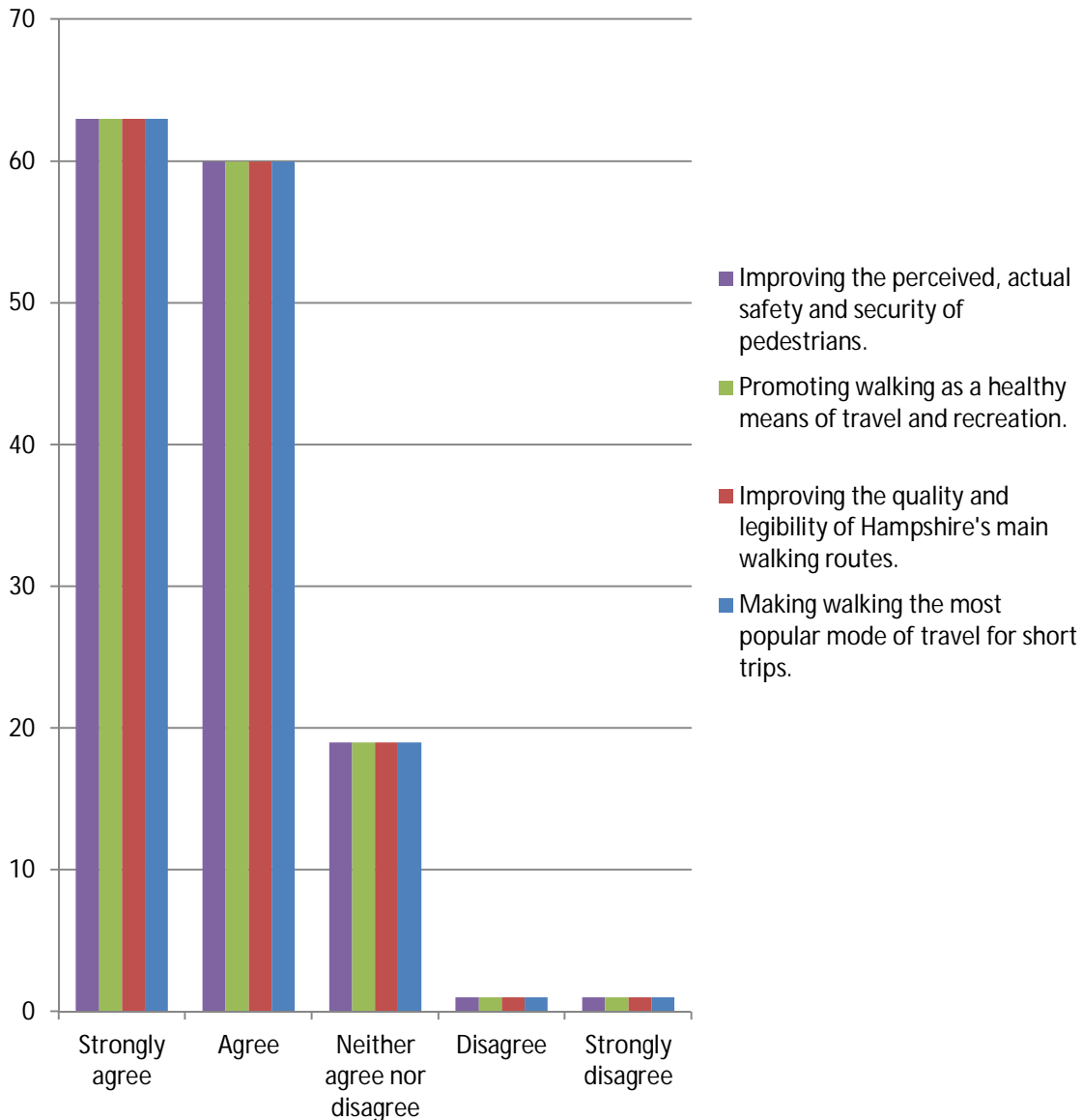
The largest category of respondents – 56 out of 133 who responded to this question - walked more than 20 minutes over 4 times a week, in both warmer and cooler weather. There seems to be no difference between walking length at different times of the year. It may be that if the time spent walking was increased there may be a more marked difference between the seasons.



Objectives and aims of the strategy

When asked to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following objectives in delivering Hampshire County Council's aspirations for making walking the preferred choice where possible, the majority (84%) either strongly agreed or agreed with the objectives. Moreover, in response to a separate question, 88% of the respondents agreed that it was clear from the draft walking strategy document what the aims of the strategy were.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following objectives in delivering Hampshire County Council's aspirations for making walking the preferred choice where possible?



A further 63% thought that the draft strategy was easy or very easy to understand, and only 5% of respondents classified it as difficult to understand.

Finally, 58% of respondents agreed that achieving the aims of the strategy would encourage people to walk more in Hampshire. Only 11%, however, disagreed with this statement, reflecting the large number of respondents (29%) who were undecided.

Analysis of Comments

In addition to the quantitative aspects of the survey outlined above, the survey ended with an open ended comments box. A further 37 email responses were also received.

The topics raised most often are listed below, alongside the appropriate response.

Topic	Response
Expressed support for strategy, or elements of it.	We welcome support for the strategy and its key themes and actions.
Walking needs to be accessible for all ages/abilities (taking into consideration the state/safety of the network and its accessibility for all users i.e. stiles vs gates and safe routes to school.	Accessibility is covered within the strategy. The text has been expanded to consider ways in which accessibility can be improved for specific age groups, independent mobility and more rural areas. The Countryside Access Plan also mentions initiatives which improve accessibility.
Need an improved, better connected footpath network (both urban and rural), which amongst other purposes serves to link local communities to local green spaces, without pedestrians having to contend with traffic.	The strategy has been strengthened to ensure that new developments are easily accessible by walking and planning them around the access needs of pedestrians. For rural areas, see the below topic and response.
Too focused on urban routes - it needs more of a focus on countryside and leisure walking.	The Walking Strategy aims to work in partnership with the Countryside Access Plan and this point has been strengthened within the strategy. The CAP describes how rights of ways and access to the countryside will be managed over the coming years.
Needs more detail on funding, including consideration of health funding streams. No mention of developer contributions. Given funding constraints, viability of delivery is in question.	The strategy will be used as part of a process to secure new funding avenues, where appropriate. The document is a statement of intent, funding levels may change over the lifetime of the strategy.
Maintenance of paths and pavements is important, including investment in well used routes. Routes need to be accessible. Current maintenance standards are flagged up as insufficient; arguable these should be improved before new routes are added.	Work with local partners to establish the improvement and maintenance needs of priority routes. Clarify in the strategy that money for maintenance is not to be used for adding new routes, and that when new routes are added funding for maintenance should be a consideration.
Needs to be more emphasis and background on wayfinding (both urban and rural).	The strategy supports additional wayfinding for popular urban routes and will explore how these can be met. The Countryside Access Plan seeks to make improvements to signage and promotion of through-routes on the rights of way network. Alongside this, HCC will continue to provide freely available, online maps of rights of way and promoted routes.

The health and social impacts of walking need to be recognised/promoted.	The links with the public health agenda have been strengthened throughout the strategy.
The strategy should link better with cycling and other users of the network to optimise resources.	Link to cycling strategy and other corporate strategies have been strengthened.
Not everybody wants to/is able to/has the confidence to walk. Applies to both urban and rural routes.	The strategy recognises that through the right travel planning, clear wayfinding and providing the right facilities, it can help make walking more attractive to everyone. Reference has been made to the development of continuous routes and independent mobility. The need to address perceived and actual personal safety issues for walkers has been also incorporated.
General support for working in partnership with the caveat that the districts and neighbouring authorities have their own financial constraints.	Work with partners to identify opportunities for joint funding across authorities and corporate priorities.
Need for connectivity through multimodal journeys, including urban to rural, and vice versa. Public transport and walking routes should be better integrated.	Better references have been made to the benefits of walking routes as part of multimodal journeys.
Needs more detail on the delivery mechanism, including timescales and actions. Establish a working group.	This is agreed and further references have been made to joint working during the delivery stage.
Concerns that all highway be suitably maintained to levels, and that none are improved or created at the expense of others.	The strategy has been amended to include reference to identifying locally important routes with local representatives, alongside strategically important routes.
Safety - improve pedestrian safety on roads, reduce speeding, educate drivers and pedestrians, and the use of road signs.	The section on pedestrian safety has been enhanced to incorporate many of the comments received.