

Results of the Public Consultation for the proposed extension of the Monsal Trail from Bakewell to Matlock, part of the White Peak Loop 23 August – 15 September 2014

The Consultation

A public consultation exercise for the proposed extension of the Monsal Trail from Bakewell to Matlock, facilitated by Derbyshire County Council and URS was carried out between 23 August and 15 September 2014. The consultation consisted of exhibitions held at 5 different venues over a 10 day period:

- Arc Leisure Centre, Matlock
- Rowsley Village Hall, Rowsley
- Bakewell Farmers Market at the Agricultural Business Centre
- Whitworth Centre, Darley Dale
- National Park Visitor Centre in Bakewell

Information was also provided on the County Council's website (including via Facebook and Twitter accounts) and an accompanying questionnaire which could be completed both in paper form at the events and on line until 15 September 2014. Posters were displayed at the venues prior to the events, advertising the times and dates of the exhibitions and the details for when the project team would be attending. Information was also sent directly to local councils, interest groups and individuals who had expressed a desire to be kept informed of proposals.

The display material included a detailed description of the proposals, the funding mechanism for the development, images showing the route within the context of the Wider White Peak Loop and schematic drawings of the proposed new bridges.

Public Consultation Response

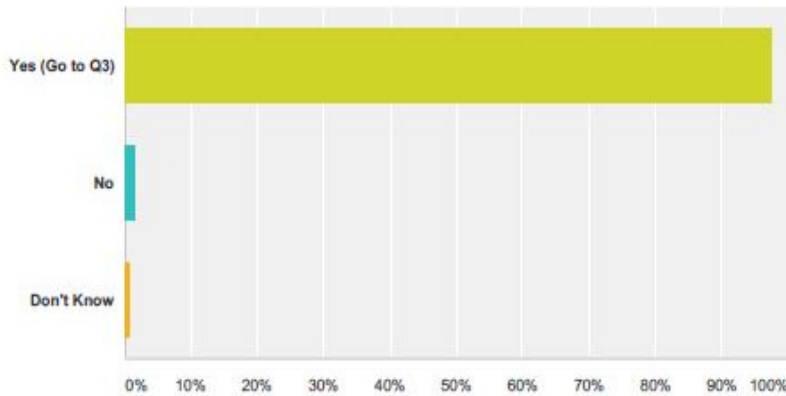
A total of 275 people attended the staffed consultation events in August. By far the most popular event was the one held at the Bakewell Farmers Market, which attracted approximately 137 people. 79 people attended the Arc Leisure centre on the 22 August, and 59 attended Rowsley Village Hall over the 27/28 August. In addition it was estimated that over a thousand people would have passed through the venues while the exhibitions were on display.

A total of 906 questionnaires were received throughout the consultation period; 156 paper questionnaires were completed at the exhibition events and 750 online questionnaires were filled in.

The results of the consultation show an overwhelming support for the development of the multi-user trail. It detailed over 95% of those taken part in the consultation have used the existing Monsal Trail since it re-opened in 2011, the vast majority of respondents use the trail for cycling and 97% would be keen to use the proposed Bakewell to Matlock extension to the trail.

Questionnaire Results

Question 1: Do you support the principle of the route being extended to Matlock?



Over 97% of respondents support the scheme.

Question 2: If no, please say why.

The main reasons provided for not supporting the extension of the route include:

- A wish to spend the allotted money elsewhere;
- Concern regarding the scheme inhibiting the future development of the safeguarded Peak Rail route; and
- Potential user conflicts arising between the various users of the trail.

Question 3: Have you used the Monsal Trail since it opened in 2011?

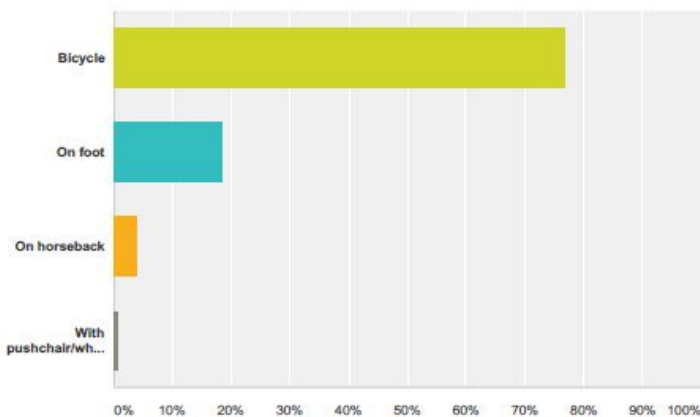
Over 95% of respondents had used the Monsal Trail since its reopening in 2011, 4% hadn't and the remaining 1% skipped the question. ,

Question 4: If no, please say why.

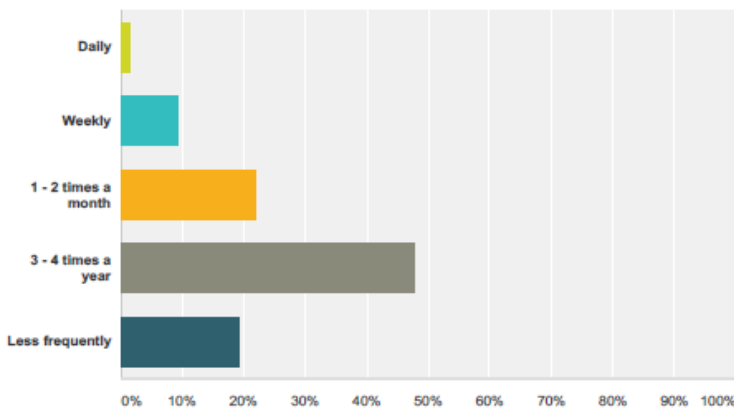
The main reasons provided for not using the Monsal Trail since it opened in 2011 were:

- Time commitments or living too far away;
- User conflict issues;

Question 5: What would be your main use on the trail?

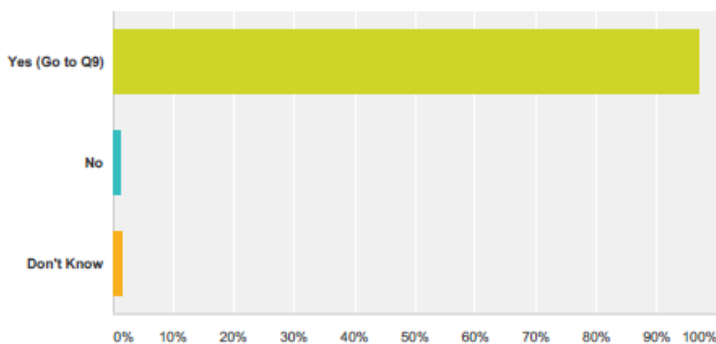


Question 6: How often do you use the existing trail?



The majority of respondents 48% stated they use the trail 3-4 times per year.

Question 7: Would you use the proposed Bakewell to Matlock route?



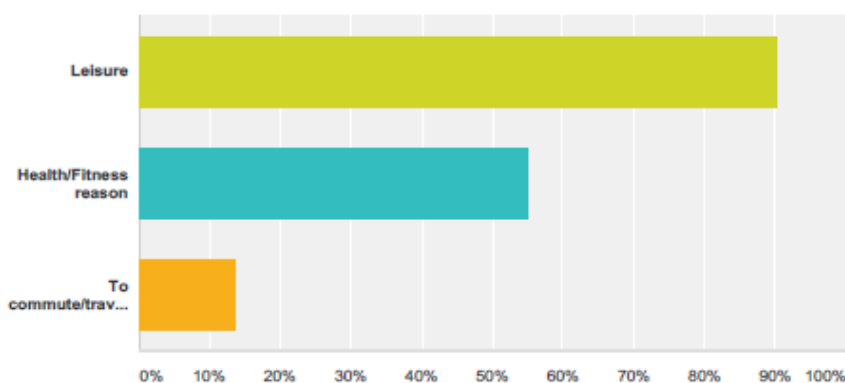
97% of respondents stated that they would use the proposed Bakewell to Matlock scheme.

Question 8: If no, please say why.

The main reasons provided for not using the Bakewell to Matlock section of the route include:

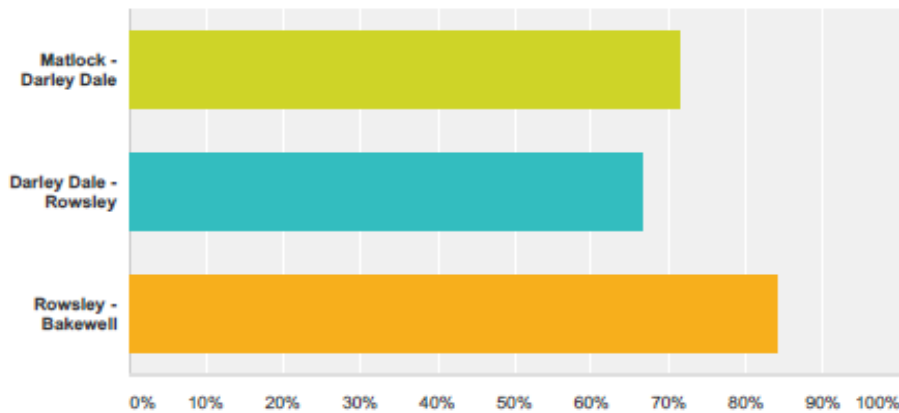
- Location, people living at a distance to the route suggested that they would be unlikely to use it; and
- Two respondents suggested that they already use existing footpaths near to the route and so would not use the proposed trail.

Question 9: What would be the main reason for you to use the route?



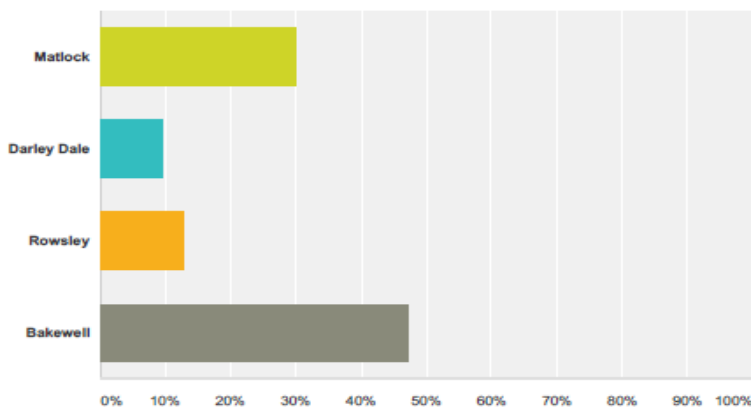
Over 90% of respondents would use the trail for leisure purposes, 55% for health and fitness purposes and 14% would use the trail as a commuter route.

Question 10: Which section of the trail would you mainly use?



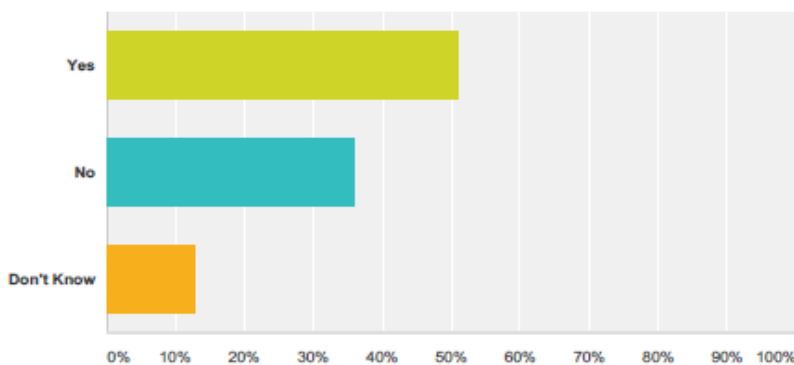
84% of respondents suggested the Rowsley to Bakewell section would be their most preferred section to use, 72% suggested Matlock to Darley Dale and 67% suggested Darley Dale to Rowsley.

Question 11: Where would you mainly get on to the route?



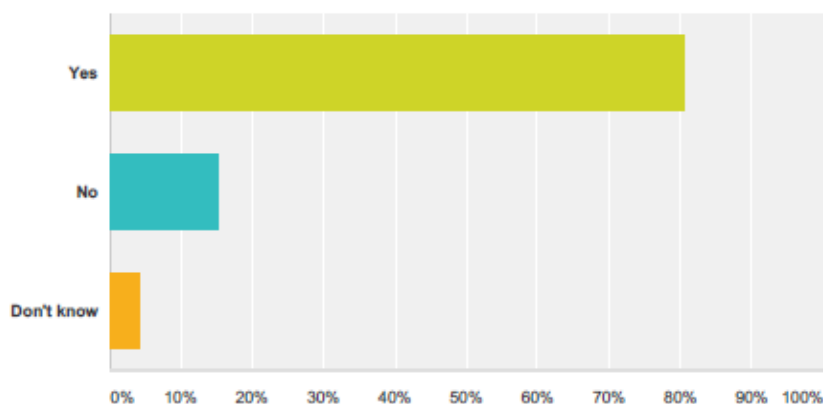
Bakewell was the most favoured place to join the route with 47% of respondents stating they would join the trail there, Matlock 30%, Rowsley 13% and Darley Dale 9.5% (4.4% skipped the question).

Question 12: Would this trail reduce some of your car use?



Over 50% of respondents stated the trail would reduce they car usage, 36% said it would not reduce their car usage and 13% did not know.

Question 13: Would this trail encourage you to cycle more or start cycling?



The vast majority of respondents (80%) stated this trail would encourage them to cycle more or start cycling. 15% stated that it would not encourage them to start cycling or to cycle more and 4% did not know.

Question 14 gave respondents an option to provide any further comment in a free text box.

504 respondents (54%) chose to comment at this question. Of the respondents that did comment on this question 80% used this opportunity to further express their support for the scheme.

Other positive comments made at this point include:

- Benefits to tourists (12.3%);
- Relieving the safety concerns for those cyclists using the A6 (10.8%);
- The positive impact on healthy lifestyles (9.9%);
- An increase in bike usage (9.3%);
- A cut down of car usage and the associated emissions (6.3%);
- A boost for the local economy (5.8%); and
- The creation of a safe commuter route for work, school and local amenities (3.9%).

A number of respondents used this opportunity to raise the potential negative impacts brought about by the scheme, these negative impacts included:

- User conflict issues (3.2%) i.e. conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists using the route;
- The potential negative impact on Rowsley including the traffic increase, increase in parking issues and impact on the Conservation Area (0.9%);
- Insufficient parking provided as part of the scheme (0.9%)

Other statements were made including:

- Equestrian concerns i.e. a desire to include horse access on the trail (5.8%). Two local groups: Peak Horsepower and Matlock and District Bridleway Action Group were particularly concerned about this.
- An assurance that the scheme would not inhibit the future of the Peak Rail development (4.5%); and
- A desire to extend the link into Matlock Town Centre (2.2%).
- Five local councils responded to express their support for the scheme (Matlock Town Council, Carsington and Hopton Parish, Middleton PC, Darley Dale Town Council, Hognaston PC) and Derbyshire Dales District Council has also been very supportive.
- Two local councils, Rowsley Parish and Bakewell Town Council have expressed concerns, particularly in connection with the lack of car parking and for the potential knock-on effect for the local communities.

Respondents were asked at the end of the questionnaire to provide details of their postcode. The attached plan provides a summary of the locations of these postcodes. It illustrates a large cluster to the south and west of Sheffield and another along the A6 corridor between Matlock and Bakewell in the vicinity of the route and the exhibition venues. There was another smaller cluster in the Chesterfield area

