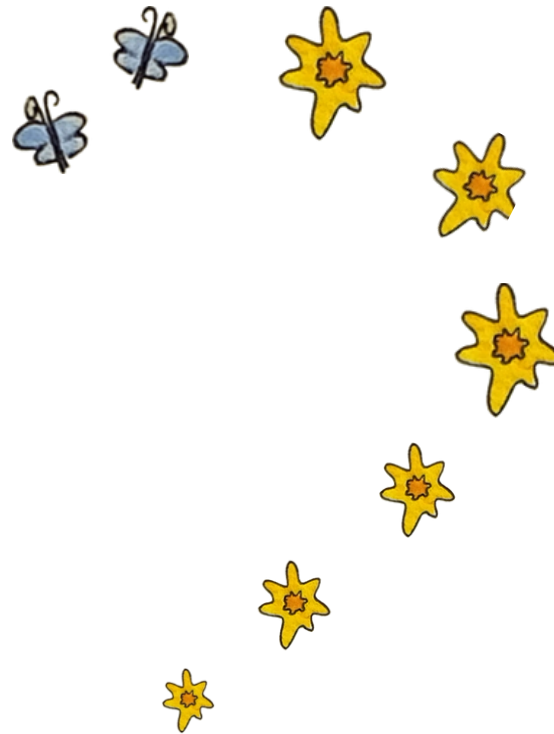


Developing the Daffodil Line

Stakeholders Report
October 2023



Prepared By:

Martyn Evans
Professor Les Lumsdon
Clare Stone

Buses4Us CIC

Email: info@Buses4us.org
Tel: 07766 496210



Public Transport for
People, Places & Planet

Background

- In February 2022 bus services between Ross, Newent, and Ledbury were axed amidst much public outcry.
- Focussed through the Buses4Us Community Action Group (now CIC), local councils, businesses and individuals came together to own the problem and devise a solution.
- After a year of research, planning and fundraising the new 232 Daffodil Line was launched in April 2023.



Plan for Today

- Review Impacts for the first six months.
- Mistakes made, lessons learned, and successes.
- Review Passenger numbers, behaviour, and satisfaction.
- Finances and funding.
- Year 2 plans.
- Year 2 Support.



Impacts - First 6 Months

- 20,914 passengers carried.
- 1,040 trips completed, with only 3 missed.
- 6,300 private car journeys saved.
- £405,000 passenger spend in local businesses.
(£38.80 average)
- 300% increase in kids travel with “Free Kids” in August
- 37% of operating costs covered by ticket and concessionary revenue (average for rural bus services - 30%)

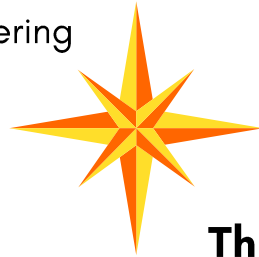
SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Community engagement and Passenger Loyalty.
- Local Media support.
- Stakeholder support and Partnership Working.
- Brand and Marketing.
- Bus Drivers and Service Operator: DRM Bus.
- Updated timetable
- Natural and cultural assets on the route.
- Committed, enthusiastic, and growing Steering Group.

Weaknesses

- The launch timetable, too tight, late running.
- Roadworks threaten timekeeping.
- Steep learning curve for everyone involved: new route, new (to the area) funding model, new steering group.
- Concessionary reimbursement. Pass holders are 40% of our passengers but generate just 22% of revenue, an average of 80p per journey.



Opportunities

- Further awareness raising: many locals still don't know we exist.
- Partnership working with events and festivals.
- More destination marketing - supporting local businesses.
- Continued affordability with £2 fare cap.
- BSIP funding opportunities for improvements/extension to service.
- Robin DRT service extending to funnel isolated passengers to our route.

Threats

- The weather: bad weather impacts passenger numbers: see July.
- Funding uncertainty: funding policies can change dramatically and we have no control over this.
- Political uncertainty: very supportive local politicians currently.
- Volunteer fatigue. no signs so far, but we know we need to guard against this.

Data Sources

Our passenger data comes from 2 key sources:

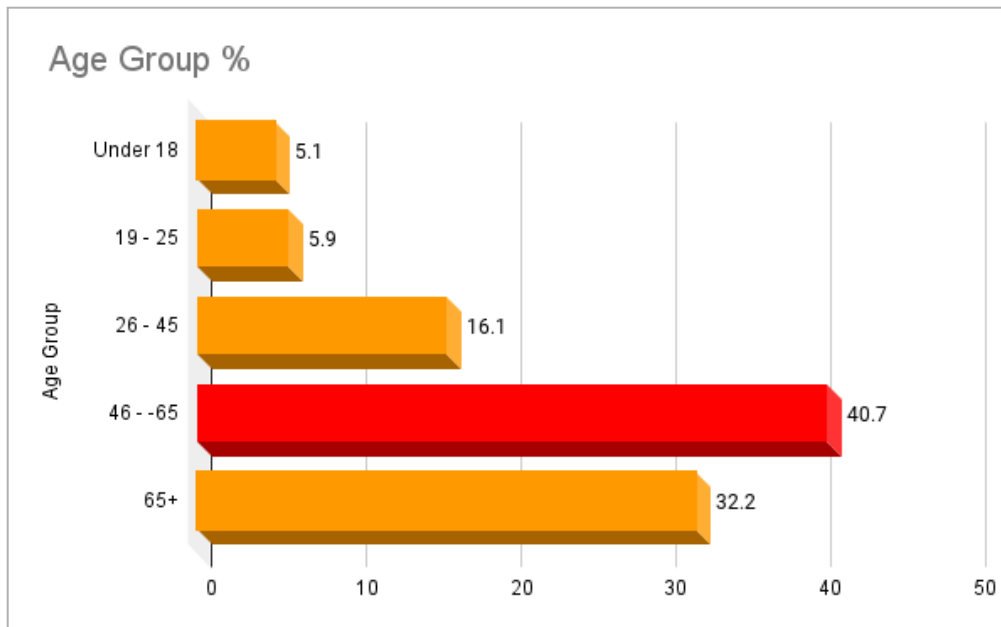
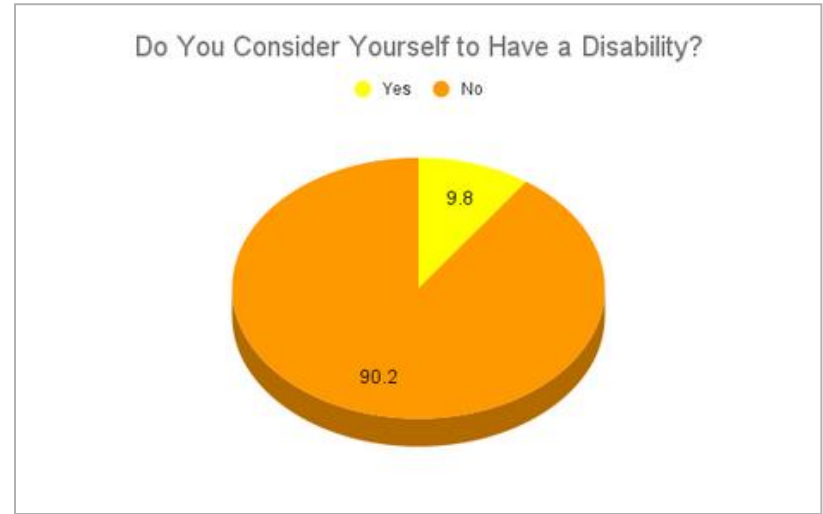
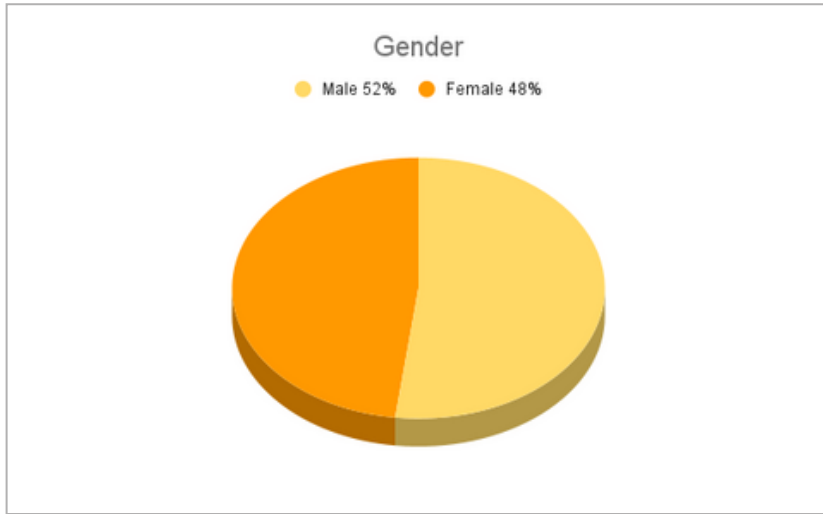
- **Ticket Reports** give data on passenger numbers and revenue.
- **Passenger Surveys** give data on passenger behavior and satisfaction.

Ticket Reports give very accurate data on revenue, especially as a large number of payments are now taken by card.

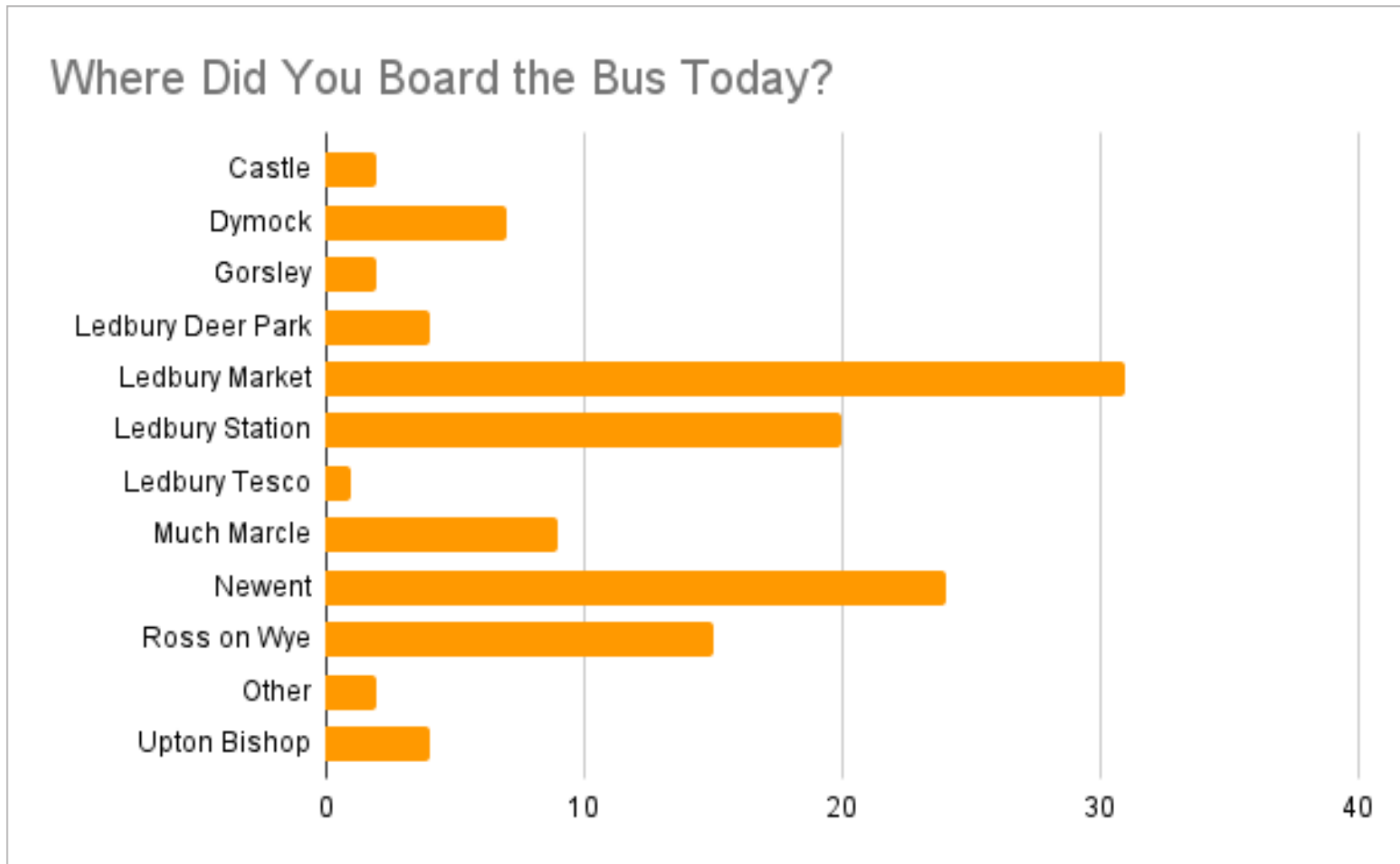
Volunteers aim to carry out passenger surveys at least twice a month. This is resulting in an ongoing and growing data set which will become more robust over time. At the time of writing 113 surveys had been completed on the bus.

Passenger Behaviour

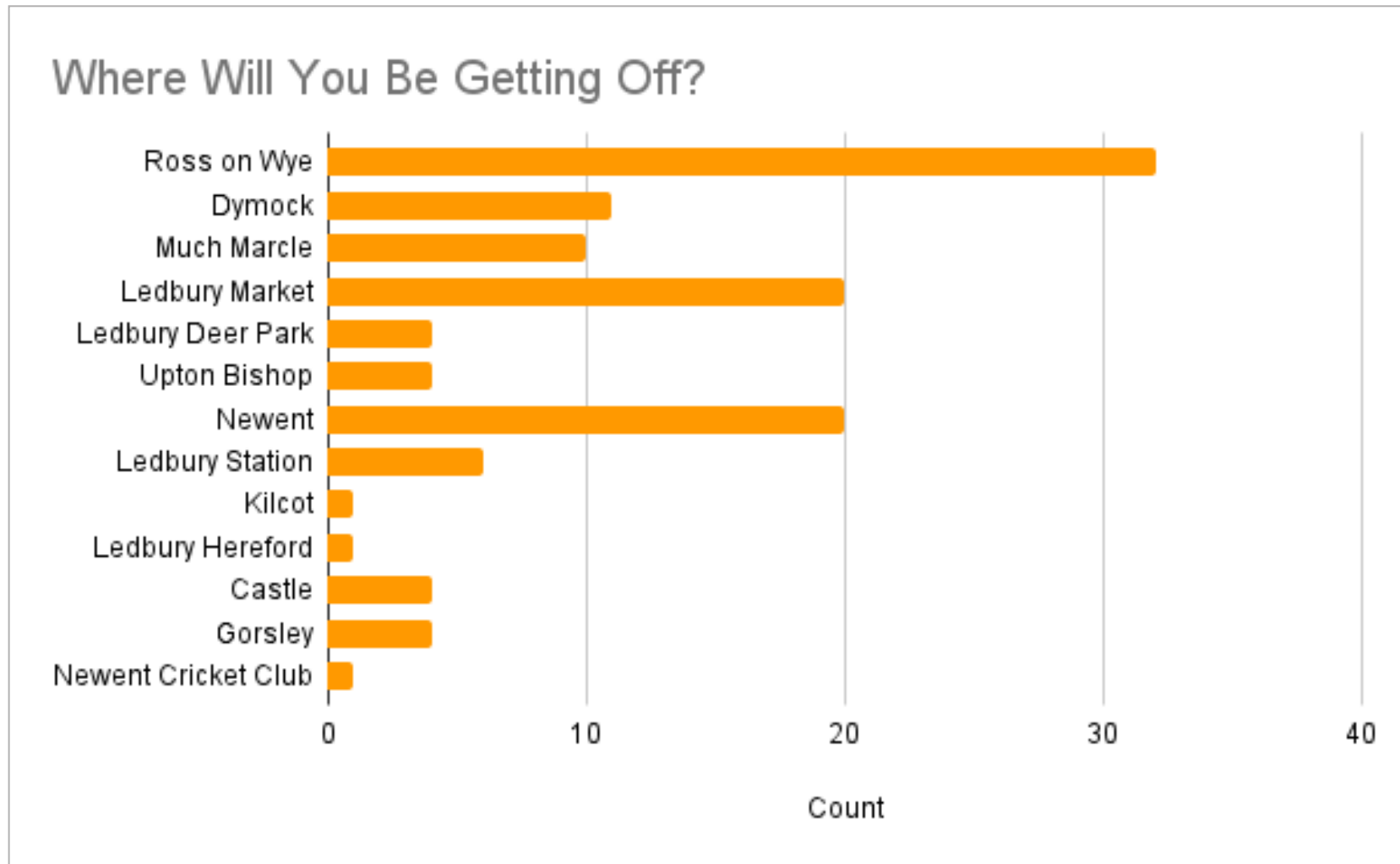
Demographics



Departures and Destinations



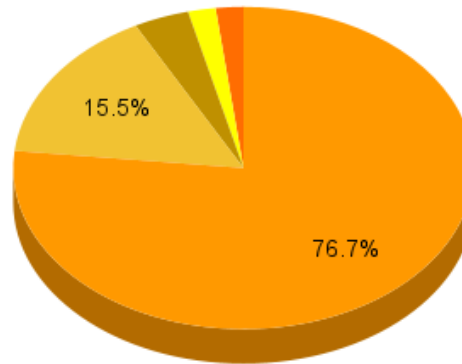
Departures and Destinations



Getting to the Bus Stop

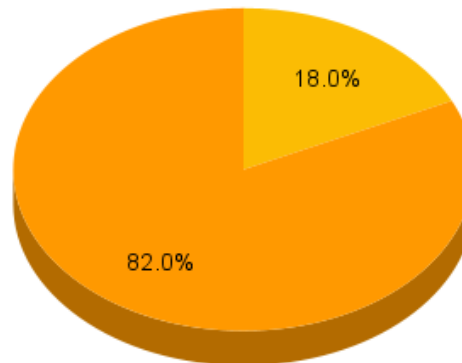
How Did You Get To the Bus Stop Today?

● Walked ● By Train ● Another Bus ● By Car ● Other

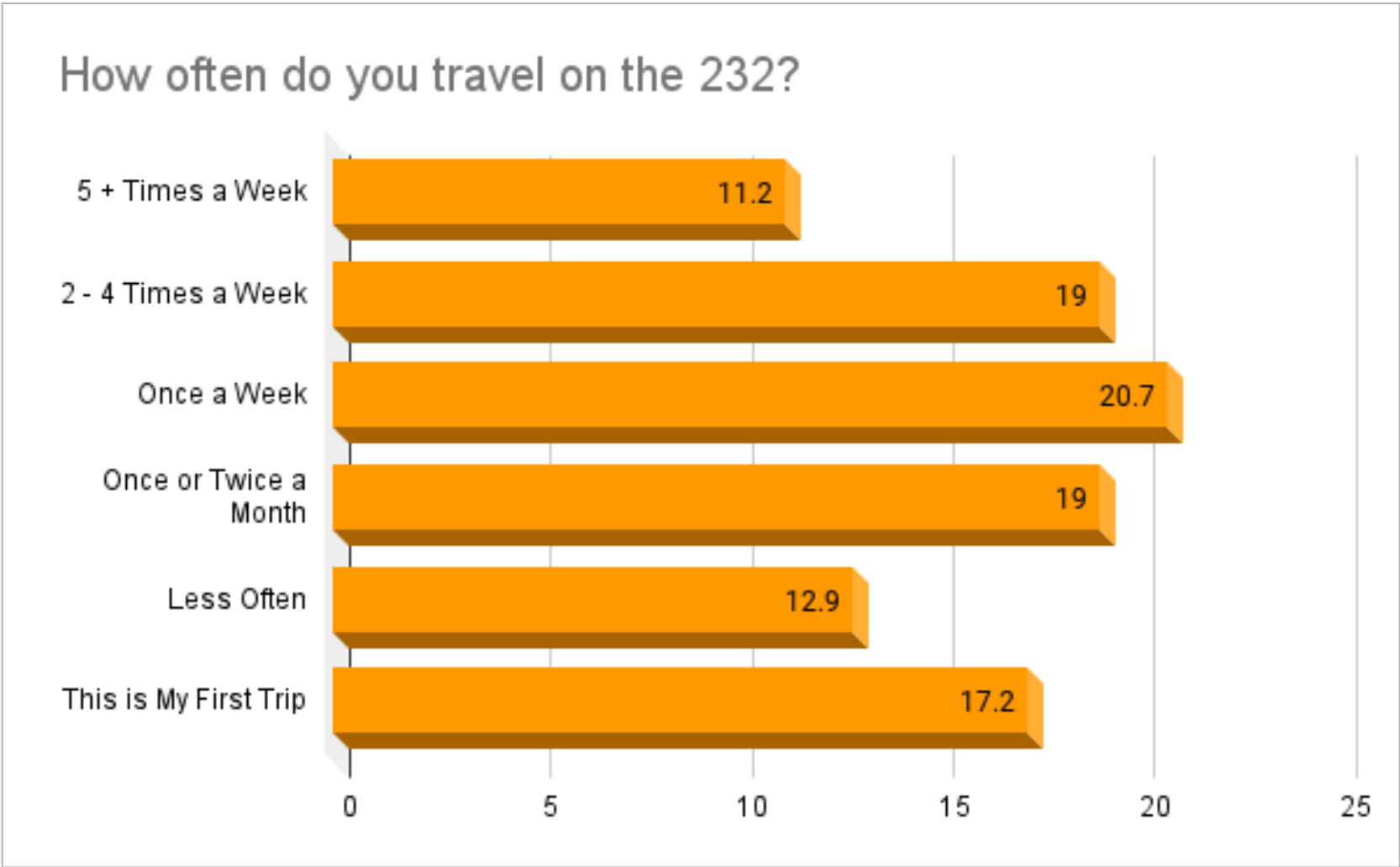


Are You Connecting to Another Bus or Train Today?

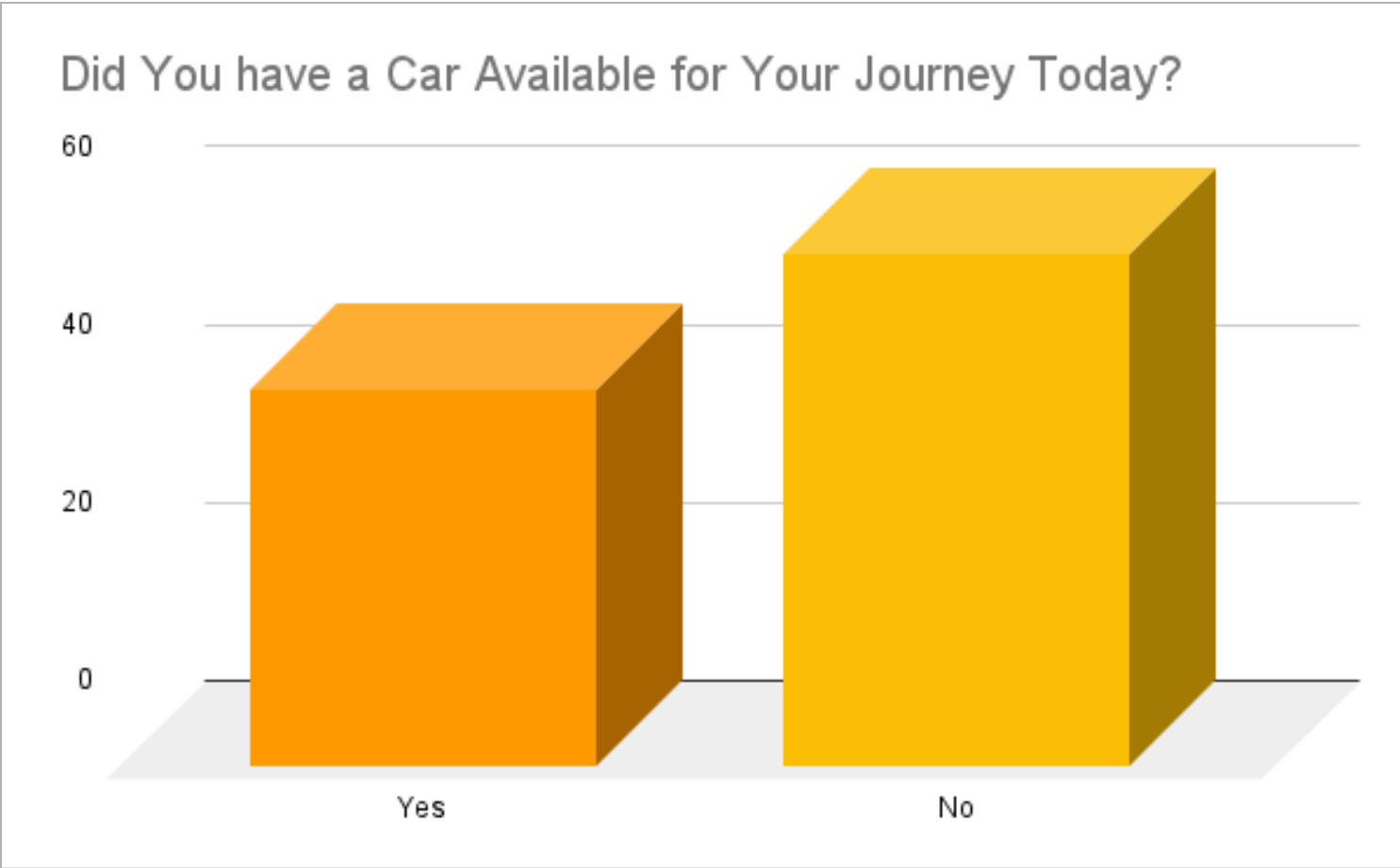
● Yes ● No



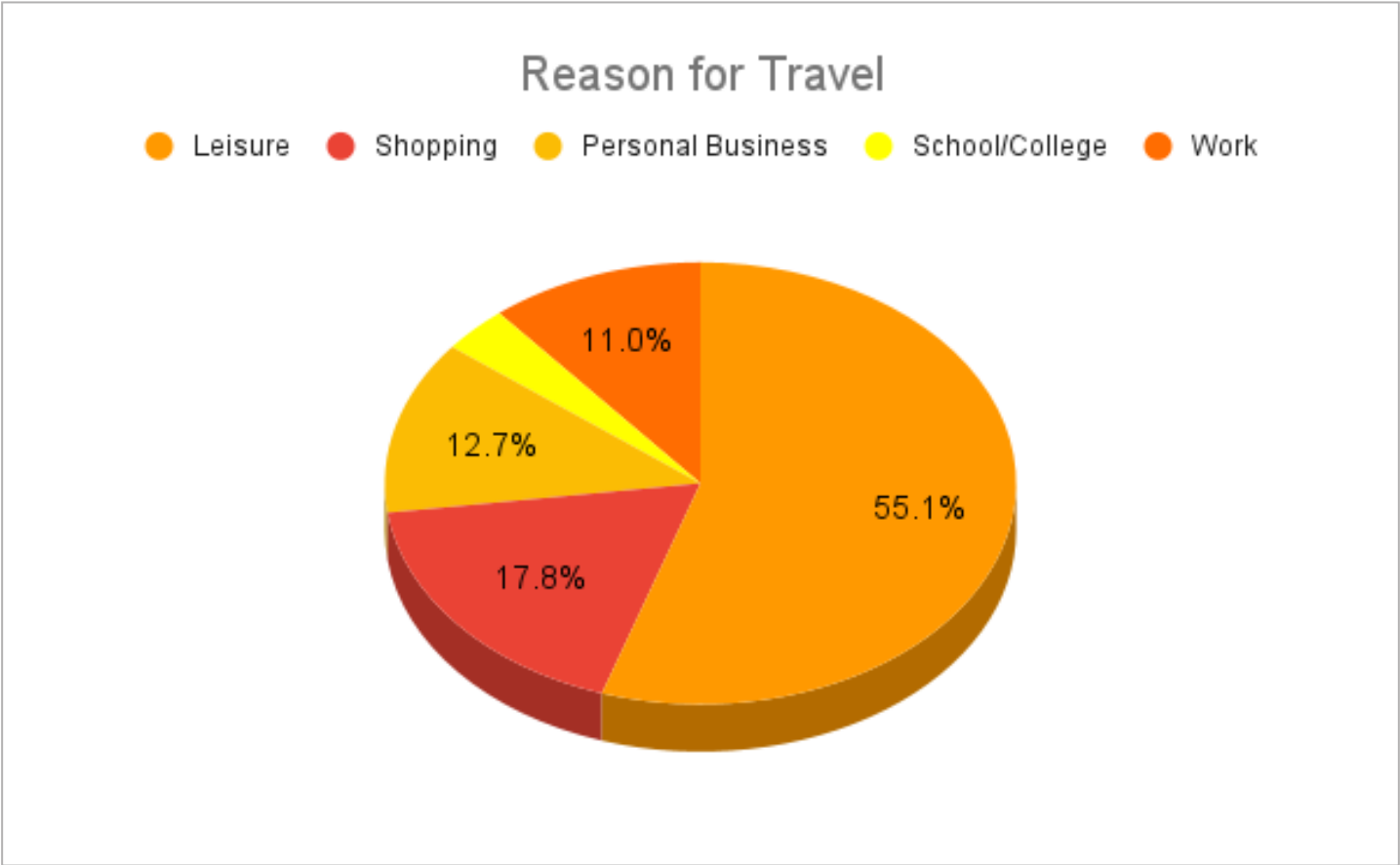
Frequency of Travel



Modal Shift



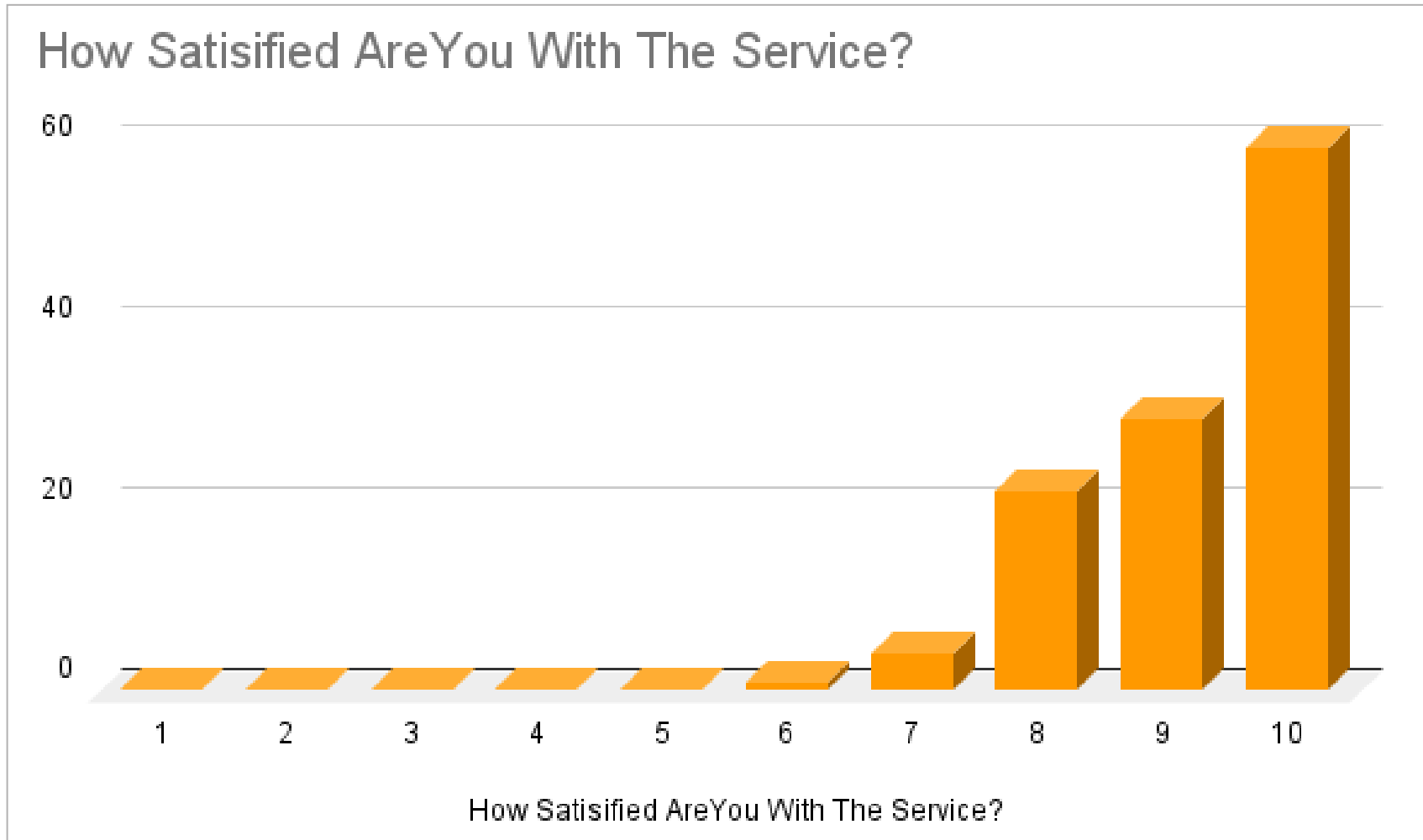
Purpose of Journey



Passenger Spend



Passenger Satisfaction



Passenger Satisfaction

Way too many cars on the road. We use the bus because it makes more sense

If it wasn't for this bus I'd be stuck. I care for two elderly parents so I really need this. The drivers are great...they go the extra mile.

This has been a God send. 12 out of 10 on the scale. People moved out of the village when they took the buses off. DRM drivers are kind and polite.

We are looking after our two grandchildren today. The children love the higher seats and this bus is ideal. We live in the Forest of Dean.

It was awful before this bus. People really struggled. Used to catch a taxi which cost me £15 into Ross. Not good.

We work at Castle Farm. There are a group of around 25 workers and everyone is using the bus once or twice a week.

This is the first time we have had a Sunday service for a very long time. We are going to the Newent Car Show then we'll continue to Ross for the day out.

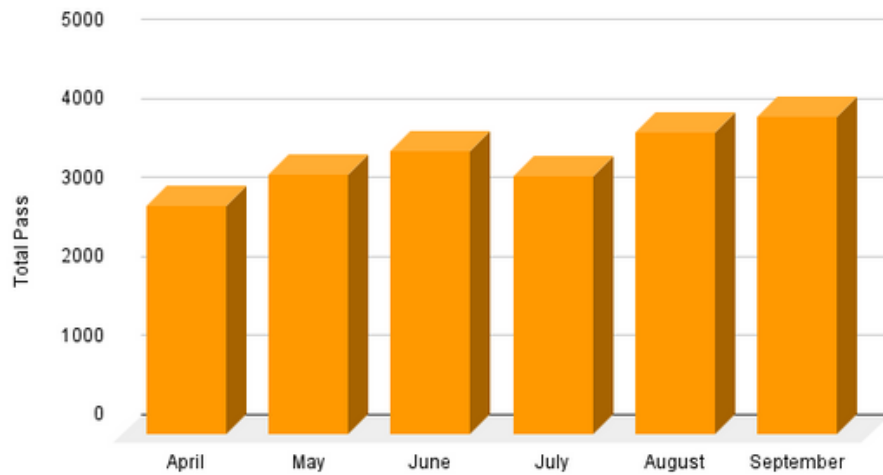
We are visitors to the area, have bus passes and travel on buses a lot. We like walking too. Like to shop local, staying at Broad Meadows campsite, Ross.

It is not often that you loose a service and then it gets replaced with something better than before.

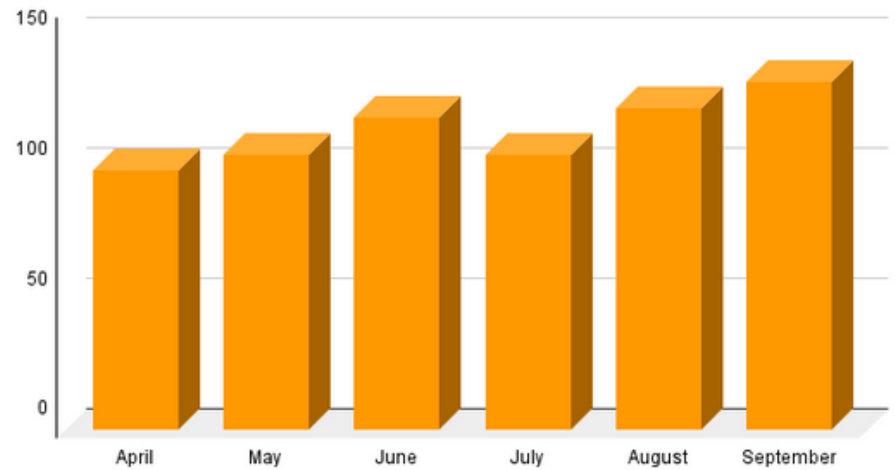
I'm going for an interview at Westons Cider and will use the bus if I get a job there.

Passenger Numbers

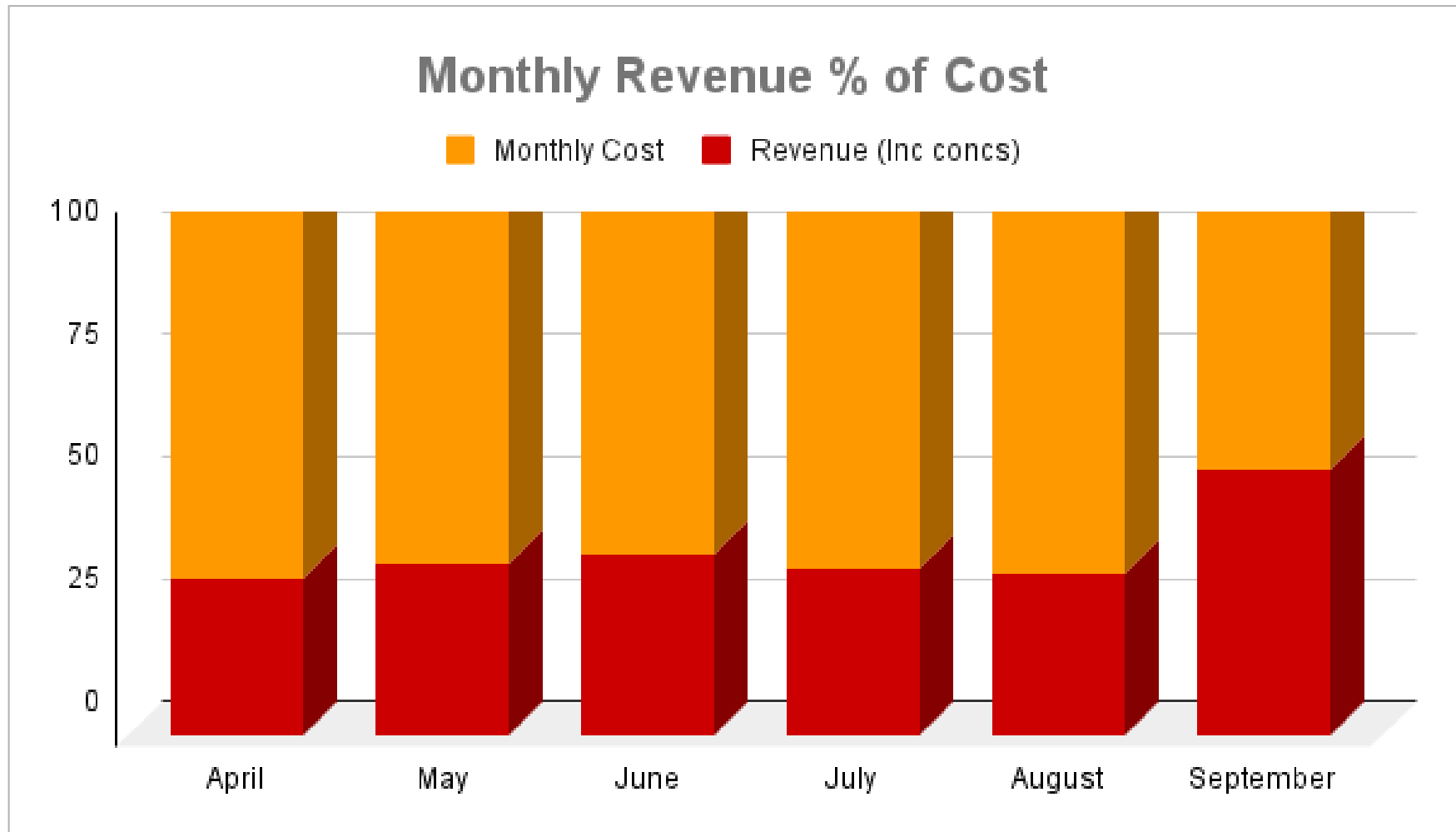
Total Pass by Month



Average Passengers per Day



Revenue



Increasing Passenger Numbers In Year 2 and Beyond

Increasing passenger numbers is key to success:

Retain existing passengers.

- By monitoring and maintaining service levels and passenger satisfaction.
- Maintaining low fares policy, ensuring affordability for all.

Increase usage by Existing Passengers.

- By providing more reasons to travel through the promotion of events, attractions, and business on the route.
- Promoting adult weekly and monthly season tickets.
- Securing funding to repeat “Kids Go Free” during all school holidays.
- Service tweaks to improve convenience and connectivity.

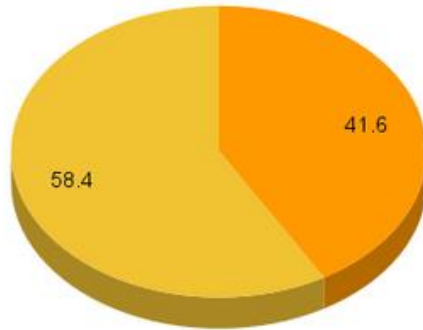
Attract New Passengers

- Raise awareness in locals by recruiting town and village champions.
- Liaise with local groups particularly walkers, CAMRA, U3A, and lunch clubs.
- Liaise with event organisers to ensure cross-promotion.
- Capture more of the “day trip” market from neighboring connected towns: Hereford, Malvern, Gloucester, Monmouth, Cinderford, Coleford, Worcester, and the West Midlands.
- Promote the environmental benefits of choosing bus travel “Ditch the car, catch the bus.”

Year 2 Funding Requirements

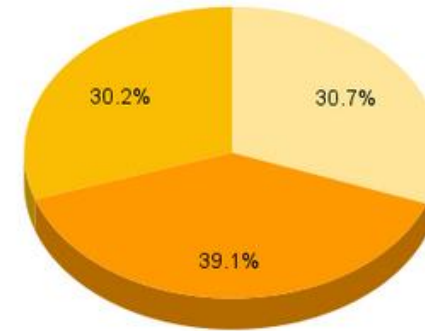
Year 1 Funding %

● Transport Authorities ● TC's PC's + donors



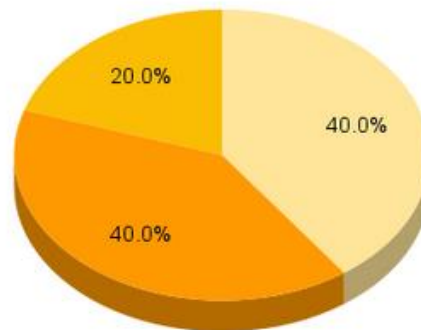
Year 2 Funding %

● Revenue Carried forward ● Transport Authorities ● TC's PC's + donors



Year 3 Projected

● Revenue Carried forward ● Transport Authorities ● TC's PC's _donors



Year 2 Funding Requirements

Buses4Us aims to secure full funding for the 232 Daffodil Line Service for its first 3 years of operation.

In **year 1** the full cost of the service was covered by contributions from the Transport Authorities (Gloucestershire and Herefordshire County Councils) and contributions from Town and Parish Councils, grants, donors, and business sponsors.

In **year 2**, the transport authorities have already committed to maintaining their level of support. And we have year 1 ticket sales revenue to carry forward. So the contribution requested from town and parish councils is reduced by one third.

Both transport authorities have indicated their intention to continue support into **year 3**. Increased ticket sales will mean that levels of support required from TCs or PCs and donors should fall to around 20% of the total by year 3, with no support required beyond that point.

Suggested Year 2 contributions from town councils. c30p per month, per average household.

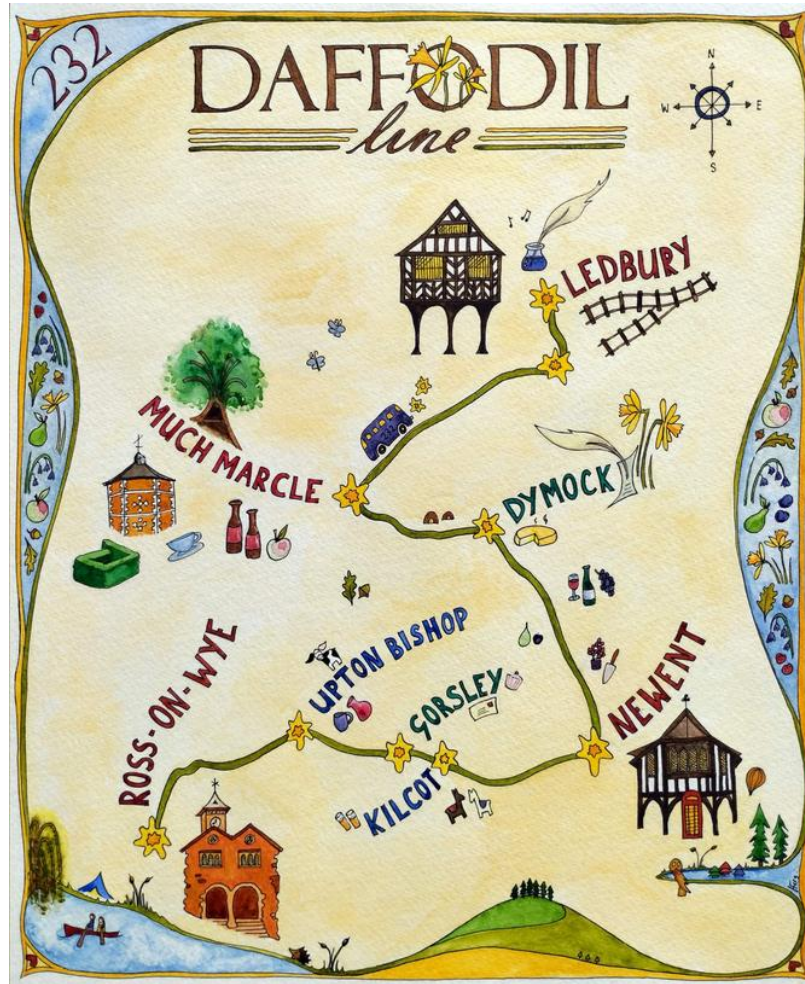
Ross Town Council £17,300 (year 1, £26,000)

Ledbury Town Council £16,000 (year 1, £24,000)

Newent Town Council £10,000 (year 1, £15,000)

Thank you for your support so far. We hope that the impacts delivered in our first six months will give you confidence that your continued support for the Daffodil Line represents a worthwhile and value-for-money investment in people, places and the planet.

THANK YOU



FOR YOUR SUPORT