

**Wisbech Market Place Consultation**

**January 2010**

**Prepared For: Cambridgeshire County  
Council/ Fenland District  
Council**

Prepared By: CELLO **mruk** research  
9 Northburgh Street  
London EC1V 2AA  
Tel : 0845 676 0078  
Email : [south@mruk.co.uk](mailto:south@mruk.co.uk)  
[Web : www.mruk.co.uk](http://www.mruk.co.uk)

## Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Research Background</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3 Methodology</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4 Notes to Figures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>5 Travel to the Market Place</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>6 Options for the Market Place</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7 Blue Badge Holders</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>8 Further Comments</b>	<b>16</b>

## 1 Introduction

Cambridgeshire County Council and Fenland District Council commissioned CELLO **mruk** research, an independent market research organisation, to conduct a telephone survey with business in Wisbech to explore their views on proposed plans for the Market Place.

In addition to the telephone survey, Cambridgeshire County Council and Fenland District Council asked residents and businesses their views at road shows about the plans. The survey was available online on the Cambridgeshire County Council website.

This report summarises the findings from all elements of the research.

## 2 Research Background

Two options have been developed for the future of Wisbech market place. The survey aimed to establish views on each option and which option respondents prefer.

### Option 1

Access to the market place will be by foot.

Access for vehicles will be restricted to residents with off-street parking rights, delivery drivers and emergency vehicles by signs and physical barriers.

The parking for blue badge holders at one end of the market place will be unchanged and additional parking will be provided in some nearby streets.

There will be no parking on the market place.

### Option 2

The Horsefair side of the market place will be closed to traffic.

On non-market days, shoppers will be able to park on the south side of the market place. There will be one-hour parking bays on the south side of the market place, which people will have to pay for.

There will be the same parking for blue badge holders at one end of the Market Place as there is at the moment, but these spaces will also be restricted to one hour.

Additional blue badge parking will be provided in some nearby streets.

Delivery drivers will be able to park on the south side of the market place in unloading bays.

Evening parking will be free.

During market and event days there will be no access for general vehicles, including delivery drivers.

Both sides of the market place will stay closed to traffic, keeping this area reserved for pedestrians.

### 3 Methodology

The questionnaire was developed by the client for consultation on the plans.

Cambridgeshire County Council were responsible for administering the survey at the road shows and for the online survey.

For the telephone interviews, the questionnaire was programmed onto CELLO **mruk** research's CATI (computer-assisted telephone interviewing) system. The fieldwork was conducted via the CATI unit at CELLO **mruk** research. Interviews were conducted using the latest CATI technology and CELLO **mruk** research used its own fieldwork team of social interviewers.

The sample was provided by Cambridgeshire County Council. All businesses with a telephone number were included in the sample. Interviewers worked through the sample list and, where necessary, made appointments with respondents to call them back at a time convenient to them.

The telephone survey was conducted between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of December 2009.

CELLO **mruk** research were responsible for combining the results from all elements of the consultation.

#### 3.1 Response

A total of 44 telephone interviews with businesses were achieved. This is a response rate of 47%.

A further 410 questionnaires were completed at road shows and online.

### 4 Notes to Figures

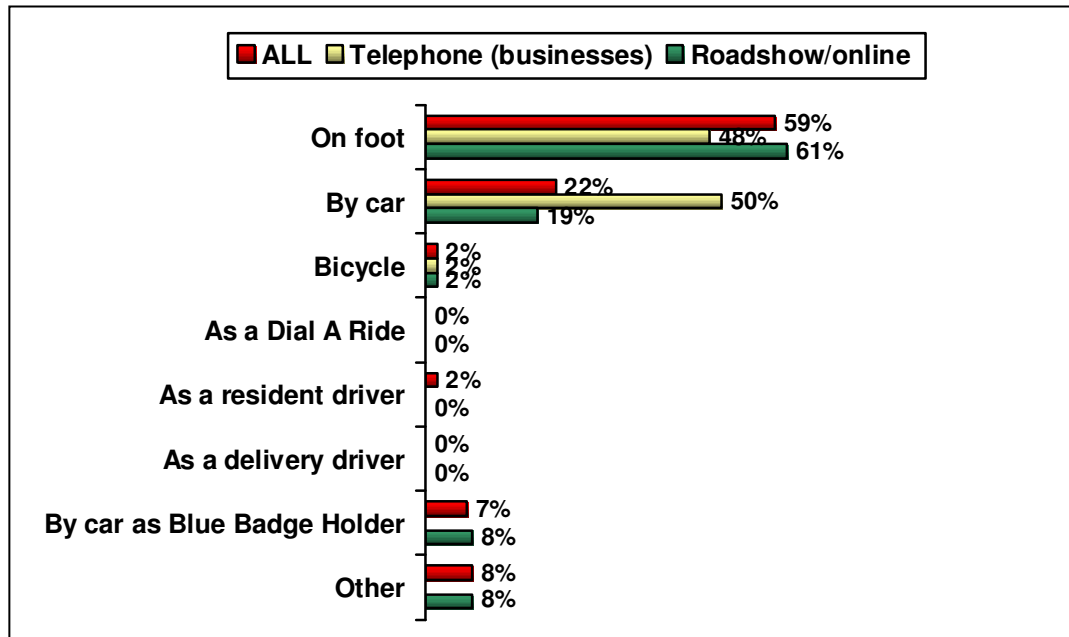
Throughout this report, the figures show the results as percentages. Base numbers are shown where appropriate. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number, and for this reason may not in all cases add exactly to 100.

In the figures and tables, respondents who answered 'don't know' are excluded and we have excluded those who were not eligible to respond to a particular question.

## 5 Travel to the Market Place

Respondents were asked to how they travelled to the market place most often.

Figure 1: How travel to market place most often

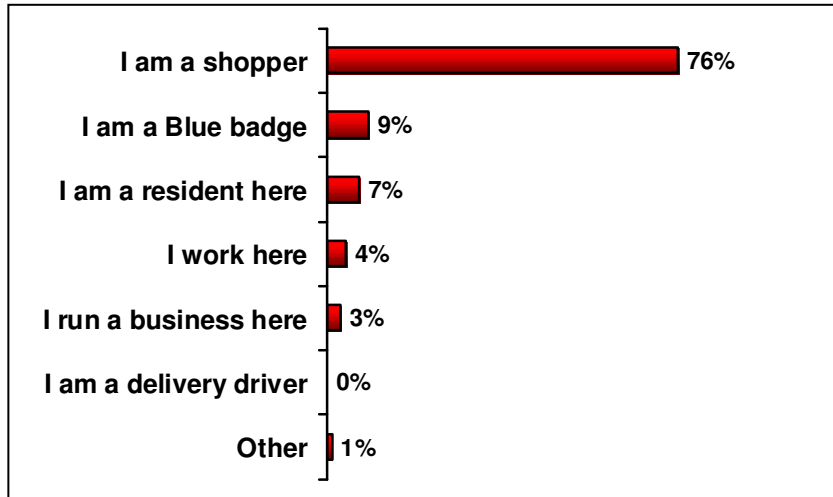


Base: 454 respondents

- The majority of respondents travelled on foot to the market place (59%). This was followed by car (22%).
- Half the business respondents travelled by car (50%) or by foot (48%).
- Just 2% travelled by bicycle.
- Less than one in ten respondents (7%) travelled by car as a Blue Badge Holder.

Road show and online respondents were asked to give their main reason for using the market place.

**Figure 2: Main reason for use of market place**

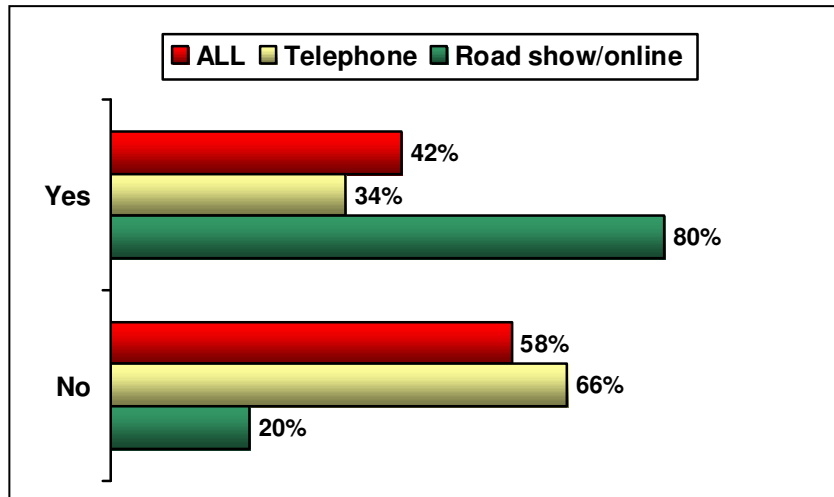


*Base: 410 respondents (Online and road show respondents only)*

- The majority of respondents were shoppers (76%).
- Around one in ten said they were a Blue Badge holder (9%) or a resident (7%).

Businesses were asked if they had Saturday deliveries made to them between 8am and 4pm.

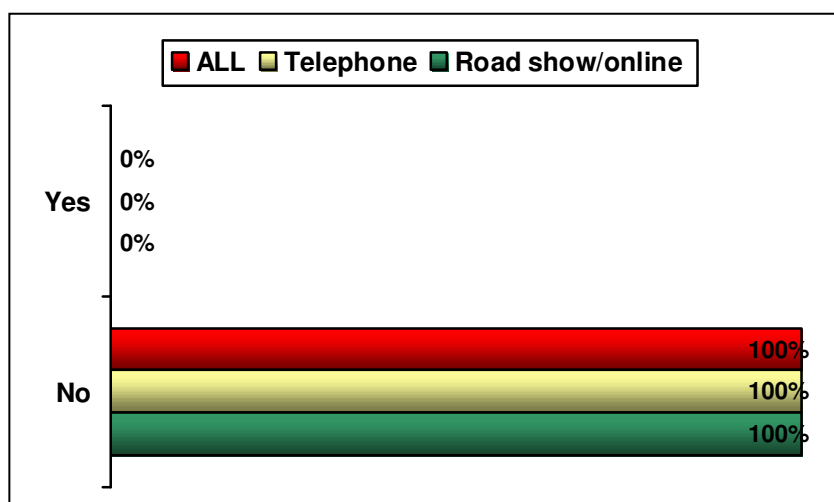
**Figure 3: Whether business has Saturday deliveries made between 8am and 4pm**



Base = 54 respondents (Business respondents only)

- Two fifths of business respondents have deliveries on Saturdays (42%).
- Respondents to the road show/online surveys were more likely to have Saturday deliveries: 80% compared to 34% of businesses who responded to the telephone survey.
- Of those who have a Saturday delivery, all said they would not be able to change the delivery times to before 8am or after 4pm.

**Figure 4: Whether it is possible to change delivery times to before 8am or after 4pm**

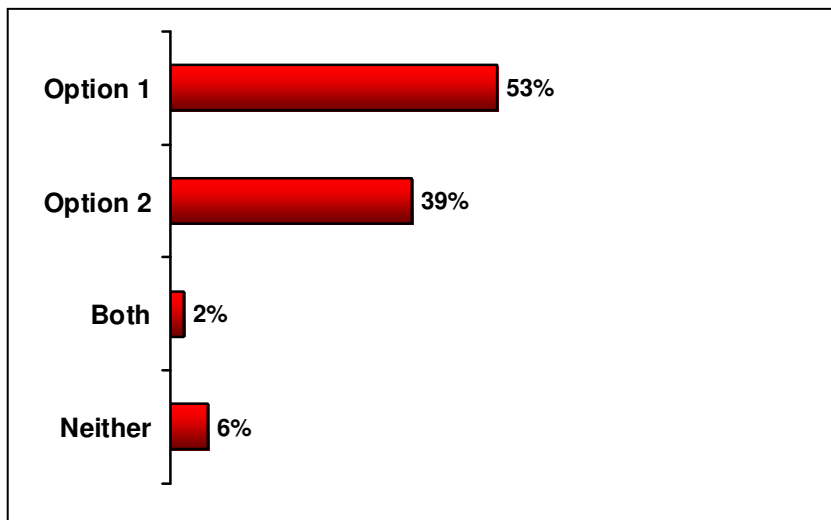


Base = 24 respondents (All businesses who have Saturday deliveries)

## 6 Options for the Market Place

Respondents were then read out the two options for the Market Place. Residents to the online and road show surveys were asked which option would make they feel safer when walking around the market place.

**Figure 5: Which option would make respondent feel safer when walking around the market place**

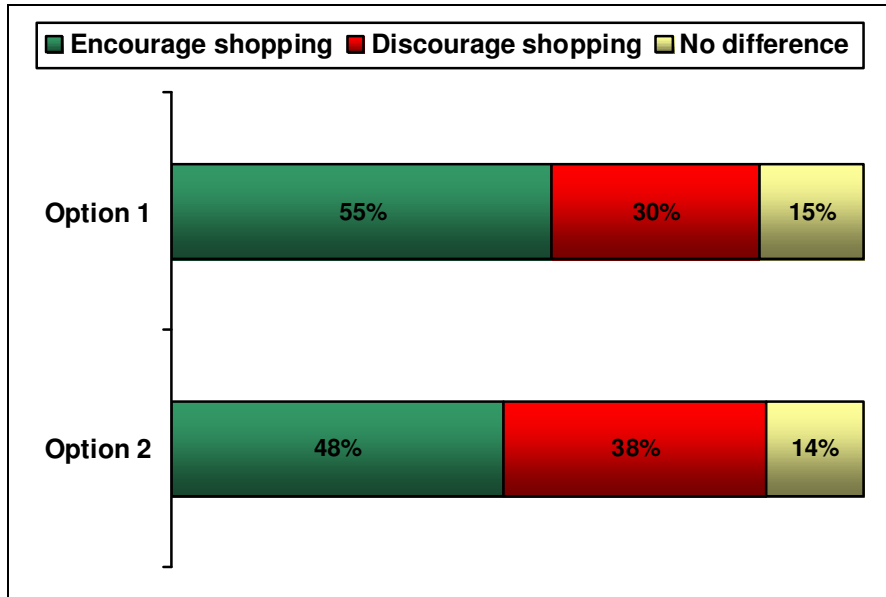


*Base = 304 respondents (Road show/Online respondents only)*

- Half the respondents said Option 1 would make them feel safer (53%).
- Two fifths said Option 3 would make them feel safer (39%).
- Six percent said neither option would make them feel safer.

Respondents to the online and road show surveys were asked whether either option would affect their decision to shop in Wisbech.

**Figure 6: Whether options would affect respondent’s decision to shop in Wisbech**

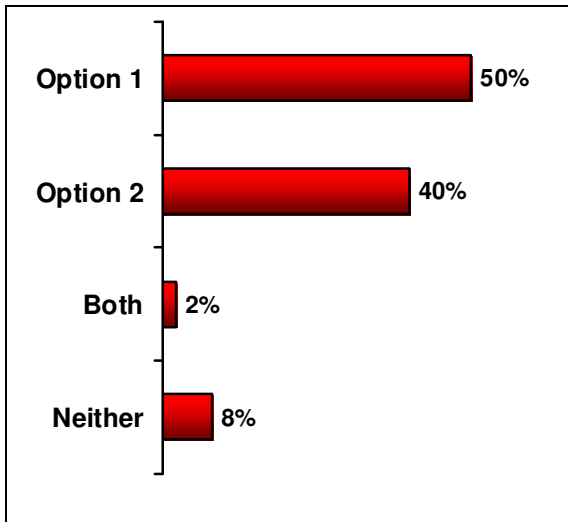


Base: Option 1 = 271 respondents; Option 2 = 243 respondents  
(Road show/Online respondents only)

- Respondents were more likely to say Option 1 would encourage them to shop (55% compared to 48% for Option 2).
- Just over one in ten said the options would make no difference to their shopping.

Respondents to the online and road show surveys were asked which option would make their shopping experience more convenient.

**Figure 7: Which option would make shopping experience more convenient**

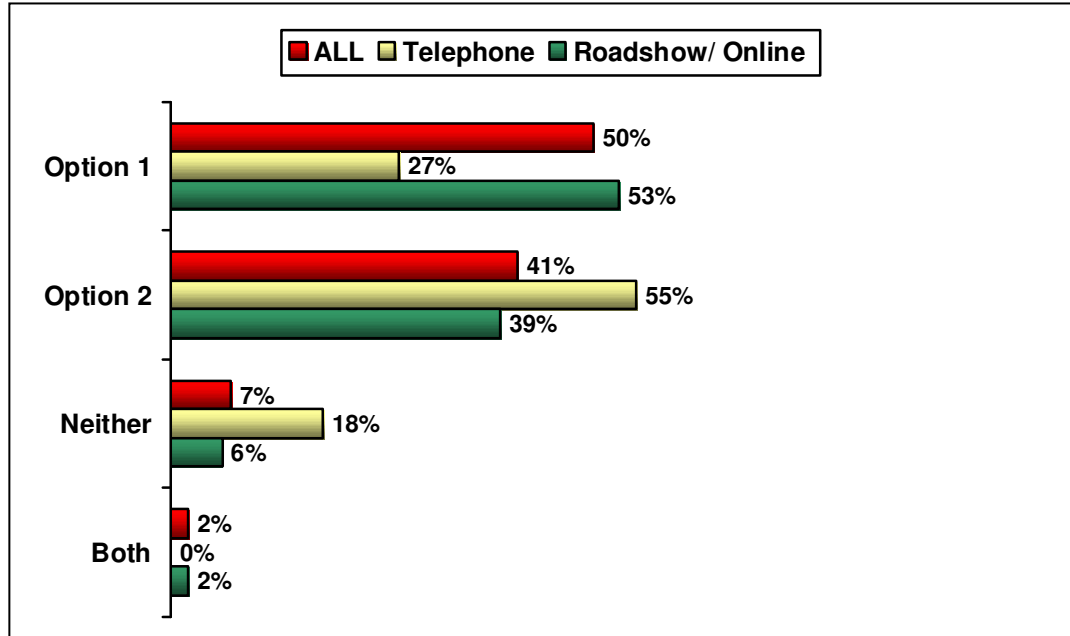


*Base = 304 respondents  
(Road show/Online respondents only)*

- Half the respondents said Option 1 would make their shopping experience more convenient (50%).
- Two fifths (40%) said Option 2 would make their shopping experience more convenient.
- One in ten (8%) said neither option would have an impact on their shopping experience.

Respondents were asked which option they felt would encourage more shoppers

**Figure 8: Which option businesses feel would encourage more shoppers**

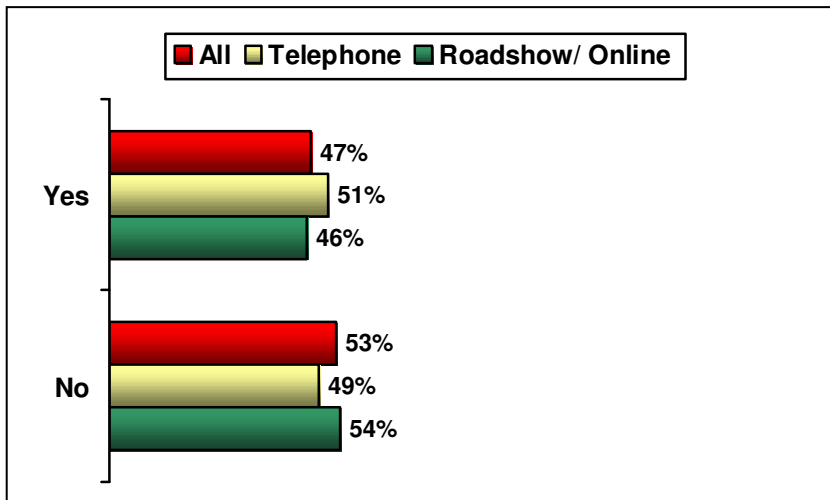


Base = 348 respondents

- Half the respondents said Option 1 would encourage more shoppers (50%).
- Two fifths said Option 2 (41%).
- Businesses who took part in the telephone survey were more likely to say Option 2 would encourage more shoppers – 55%. Just a quarter (27%) thought Option 1 would encourage more shoppers.

All respondents were asked if they would be prepared to pay for parking on the market place on non-market days.

**Figure 9: Whether respondent would be prepared to pay for parking on the market place on non-market days**

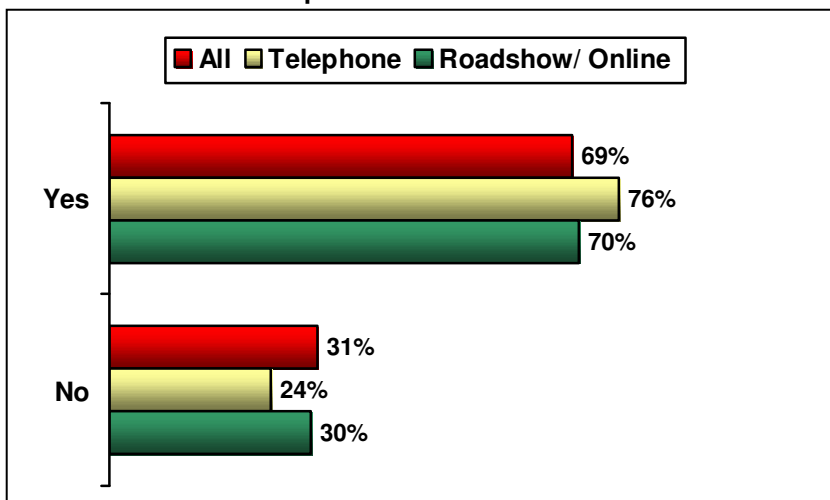


Base = 186 respondents

- Just under half the respondents (47%) would you be prepared to pay for parking on the market place on non-market days.
- There was little difference in the views of respondents by survey methodology.

Respondents were asked if they would like to see the Horsefair side of the market place free of cars at all times except for essential vehicles and deliveries.

**Figure 10: Whether respondent would like to see the Horsefair side of the market place free of cars at all times except for essential vehicles and deliveries**

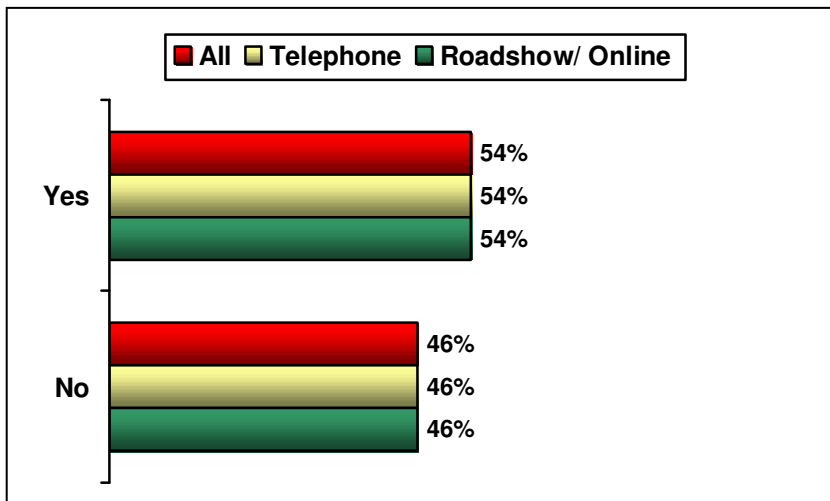


Base = 370 respondents

- Seven in ten respondents would like to see the Horsefair side of the market place free of cars (69%).
- Businesses which took part in the telephone survey were more likely to say they wanted to see the Horsefair side of the market place free of cars compared to respondents to the road show and online surveys (76% and 70% respectively).

Respondents were asked if they would like to see the majority of the market place largely free of cars at all times, except for essential vehicles and deliveries.

**Figure 11: Whether respondent would like to see the majority of the market place largely free of cars at all times**

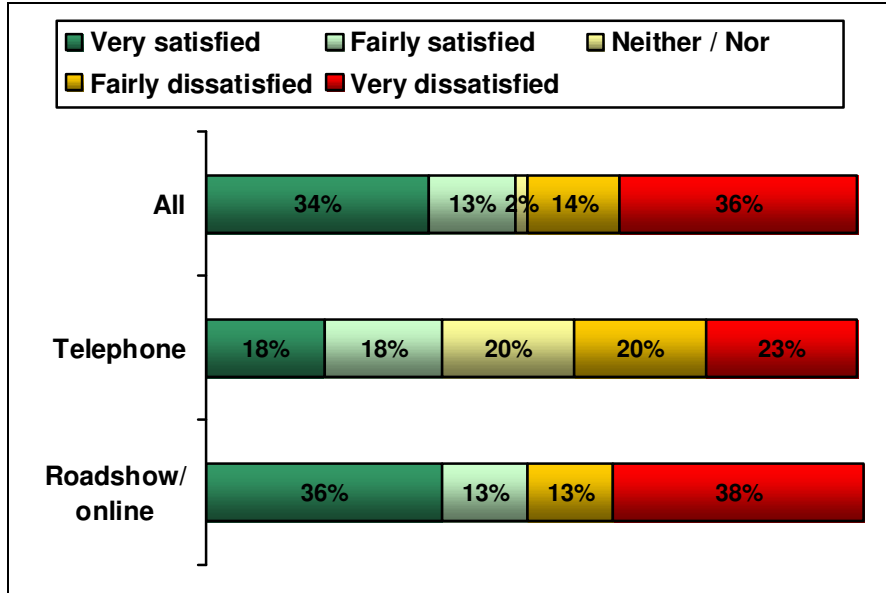


*Base = 402 respondents*

- Just over half the respondents (54%) would like to see the majority of the market place largely free of cars at all times.
- There was no difference in the results by methodology.

Respondents were to rate their satisfaction with each option.

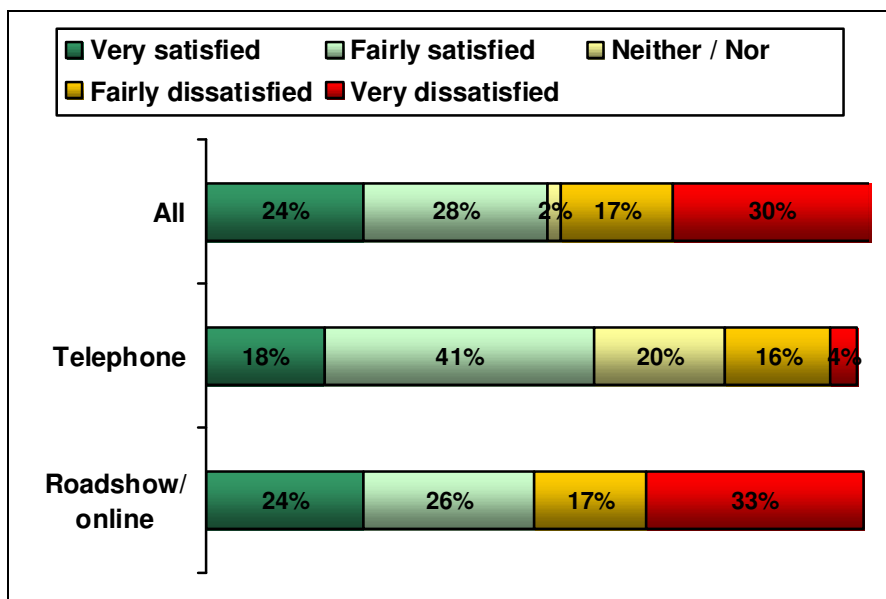
**Figure 12: Satisfaction with Option 1**



Base = 402 respondents

- Just less than half the respondents (47%) were satisfied with Option 1. Half said they were dissatisfied with this option (50%).
- Respondents were slightly more satisfied with Option 2 – 52% were satisfied with this option and 47% were dissatisfied.

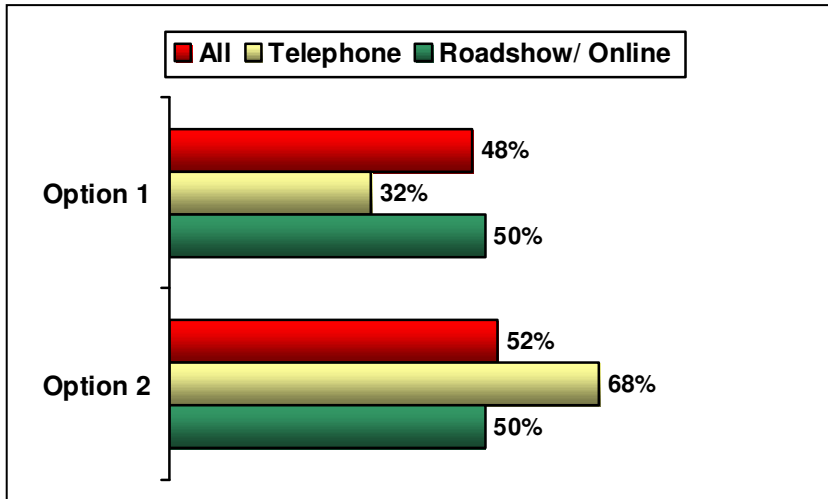
**Figure 13: Satisfaction with Option 2**



Base = 402 respondents

Respondents were asked which option they preferred.

**Figure 14: Preferred Option**



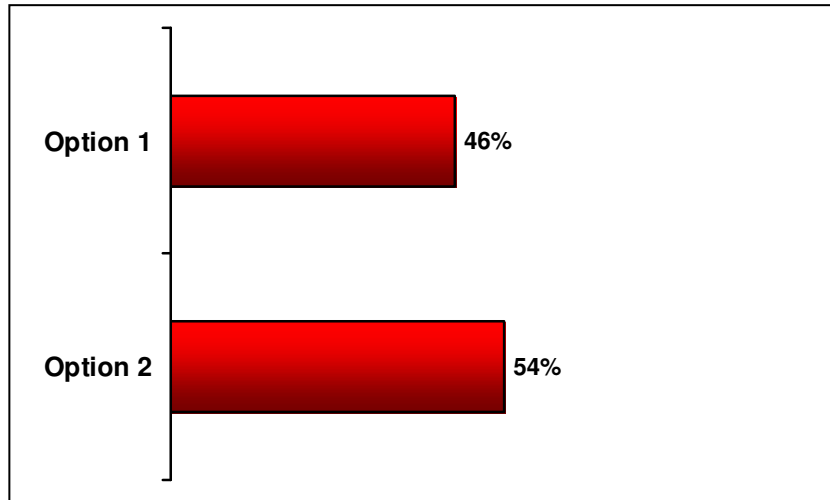
*Base = 398 respondents*

- Overall, the preferred option was Option 2 (52%). Results were close with 48% supporting Option 1.
- Businesses who took part in the telephone survey were more likely to support Option 2: 68% compared to 50% of respondents to the road show and online surveys.

## 7 Blue Badge Holders

Blue Badge holders were asked some specific questions. Firstly they were asked which option they preferred.

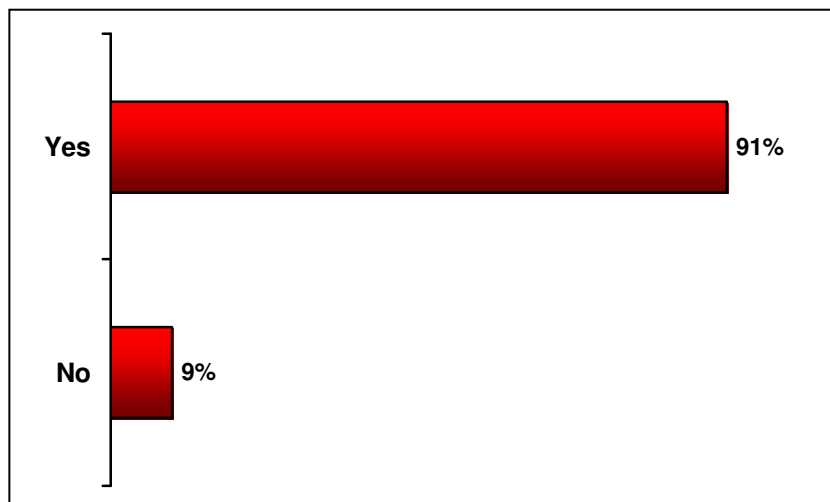
**Figure 15: Option preferred by Blue Badge Holders**



*Base = 35 respondents*

- Blue Badge Holders preferred option was Option 2 (54%) however results were close with 46% preferring Option 1.

**Figure 16: Whether respondent would like to see improved Shopmobility made available**



*Base = 35 respondents*

- Blue Badge Holders were asked whether they would like to see improved Shopmobility. Nearly all respondents would like to see improved Shopmobility made available.

Comments from Blue Badge Holders included:

- Need more curbs lowered to allow for wheelchairs especially on the old bridge as the town side is easy to cross but on the old market side if you wish to go down the north brink there are no curbs lowered so you can cross.
- Wider parking spaces are needed in St Peters car park for disabled drivers.
- This presumes that blue badge holders are all confined to wheelchairs - WE ARE NOT!!! I am one of the 63% WALKING DISABLED. Parking for only an hour is of no use AT ALL as it takes me an hour to get to WH Smith from the disabled bay, do shopping, then get back to my car. Walking disabled will NEVER be able to attend events on the market place!!
- I choose Option 1 only because it would be safer than 2 but you will lose my custom as have Kings Lynn out of town shops where I do not have to PAY.
- If Option 2 goes ahead this will lead to serious traffic congestion, just as it is now.
- Generally the market area is wheelchair friendly but it would be helpful to look at Wisbech streets as a whole so that improvements can be made as and when repairs are made. We have our own wheelchair but for anyone with limited mobility but no chair Shopmobility is a very useful service.
- One hour parking for blue badge holders is NOT LONG ENOUGH, if the one hour becomes the rule, I and many other blue badge holders will not enjoy shopping and lunch in the market place any more, remember we are DISABLED, we are slow, we cannot whizz round like the able bodied, please increase the time for us to 2 hours.

## 8 Further Comments

Respondents were asked if they had any specific concerns with either option proposed.

Comments to the telephone survey included:

- Need to ensure access for deliveries (7 respondents);
- Need to enforce parking laws (3 respondents);
- People will still park there and break the rules (3 respondents);
- People do not want to pay for parking and will therefore stay away from town (2 respondents);
- Don't think it will work (2 respondents);
- Need access for disabled residents (1 respondent);
- It will cause congestion on one side of town (1 respondent);
- Need to think about safety for pedestrians (1 respondent);
- Need parking on the market place (1 respondent);
- Parking should not be payable but should have time restrictions (1 respondent);
- Need to build more car parks before a decision is made (1 respondent);
- Not keen on either option (1 respondent).

Comments to the road show and online surveys included:

### General Comments

- I have lived in Wisbech for 20 years. The market place is not large enough to allow parking and is nicer and safer when it is pedestrianised. I believe that the number of disabled bays should be restricted so that cars don't just park anywhere.
- The market place should be left without the cars in the market place so that people can have a pleasant shopping experience. Additional markets/stall/events can then be encouraged to come to Wisbech.
- Option 2 is the best option, However I believe that this option is being used to bring pay parking into Wisbech.
- There is no need for parking in the market place as it spoils the appearance of the area and is totally unnecessary.
- All cars should be banned from the market place.
- My concern for option 1 would be that it would continue to be used as it is at present.
- I consider the market place to be a vital social meeting space and therefore it should be kept free of traffic.
- I would like to see the market place completely opened up to vehicles to park except on Saturday because of the market. Bring the parking back in and town centre shops will do a lot more trade.
- I would not shop if cars allowed, makes it difficult for children/disabled to walk through town.
- I think there should be no access except emergency and essential vehicles.
- Neither option provides the optimum solution, despite over 20 years of consultation and discussion.
- Would prefer it to be left as it is!
- Option 2 would not sort out the problem of people parking on Hill St and High Street.

- Stop parking on Hill Street and High Street.

#### **Concerns about local businesses**

- As a retailer here in the town I feel complete pedestrianisation would kill the Market Place and drive custom straight into the out of town retailer.
- Stopping general parking as per option 1 could prove detrimental to the town centre shops and businesses.

#### **Safety**

- With option one I'll feel safer, and feel that my children will be safer.
- As a shopper in Wisbech i think the market square as it is is so unsafe.
- If cars are allowed it is not safe for elderly and young pedestrians.

#### **Deliveries**

- Please put time restraints on all deliveries into the market. Say not between 10.00 and 16.00.

#### **Enforcement**

- Option 2 would require enforcement which would have cost implications.
- There needs to be strict enforcement of any rules decided on otherwise all this is a complete waste of time and money.

#### **Increase to parking time**

- Limited parking time to 1 hour. This should be at least 2 hours.
- Most people who shop in Wisbech, of all ages, shop in a 2 hour span, and then leave.
- I don't think that Blue badge holders should be limited to one hour. Obviously they are going to require more time to do their shopping or business.

#### **Delivery**

- I am concerned about access for delivery vehicles. This should be restricted to certain times of the day. Preferably outside the main shopping times.

#### **Enforcing**

- Option 1 is not enforceable.
- Parking needs to be policed and checks made on blue badge holders.
- Both options need full time to be policed.