

Bishop Line Customer Satisfaction Research (Autumn 2012)

A presentation of findings following research conducted by:

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Section 1

Introduction



Background and objectives

- Jungle Green was asked to conduct **customer satisfaction research** for the Bishop Line. **The Bishop Line CRP** (Community Rail Partnership) actively promotes the Darlington – Bishop Auckland line, an extension of Northern Rail’s busy Saltburn – Darlington service and has a part time Community Rail Officer, Robert Whitehouse. The Line’s CRP was previously named the Heritage Line CRP but was rebranded at the end of 2010 and changed its name to the Bishop Line. The Service on the line was designated by the Department for Transport as Community Rail in January 2011.
- **The Bishop Line serves 6 stations**, Bishop Auckland, Shildon, Newton Aycliffe, Heighington, North Road and Darlington (Bank Top). There are ten trains in each direction Mondays to Saturdays, the journey takes 27 minutes one way. Five trains also run on Sundays.
- The main **objectives of the research** were to establish:
 - General **awareness** of the line
 - Awareness of sources of **information** on tickets and timetables
 - Perception of **service quality** (frequency/punctuality/staff/cleanliness/cost)
 - Perception of **ease of use and accessibility**



Method



2 elements	Number of interviews
Face to face interviews with passengers on board trains on the Bishop Line between Bishop Auckland and Darlington.	320 Users
Face to face interviews with local people who do not use the Bishop Line currently but who travel between Bishop Auckland and Darlington using an alternative means of transport. Interviews conducted in town centres, Bishop Auckland, Shildon, Newton Aycliffe and Darlington.	150 Non users
Total	470

- Fieldwork took place 4th to the 24th October 2012 (*between 7am and 7pm weekdays and weekends, approx 12-15 minute questionnaire*)

Section 2

Findings

2.1 Travel behaviour

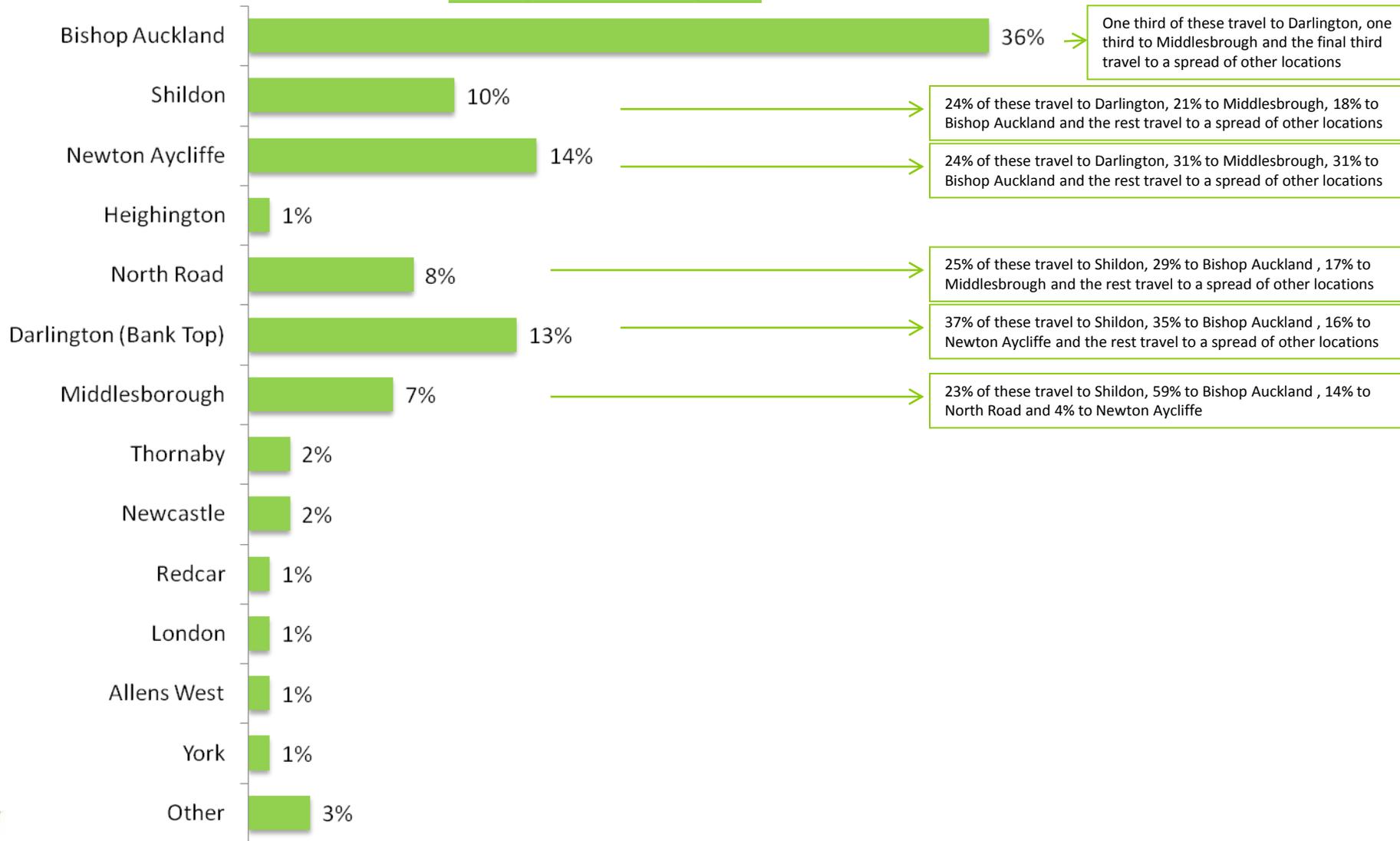


Station at which journey begins

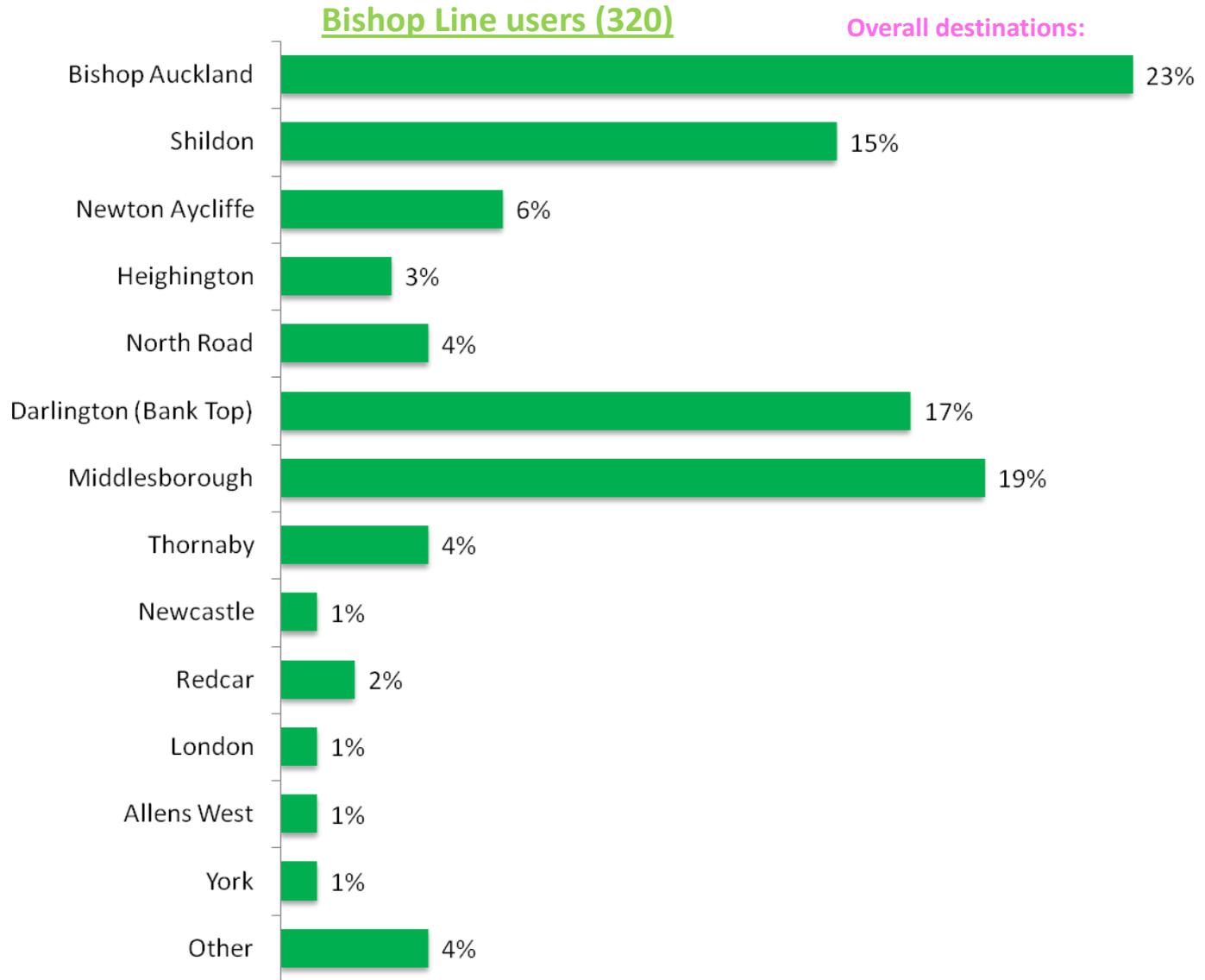


Bishop Line users (320)

Destinations:

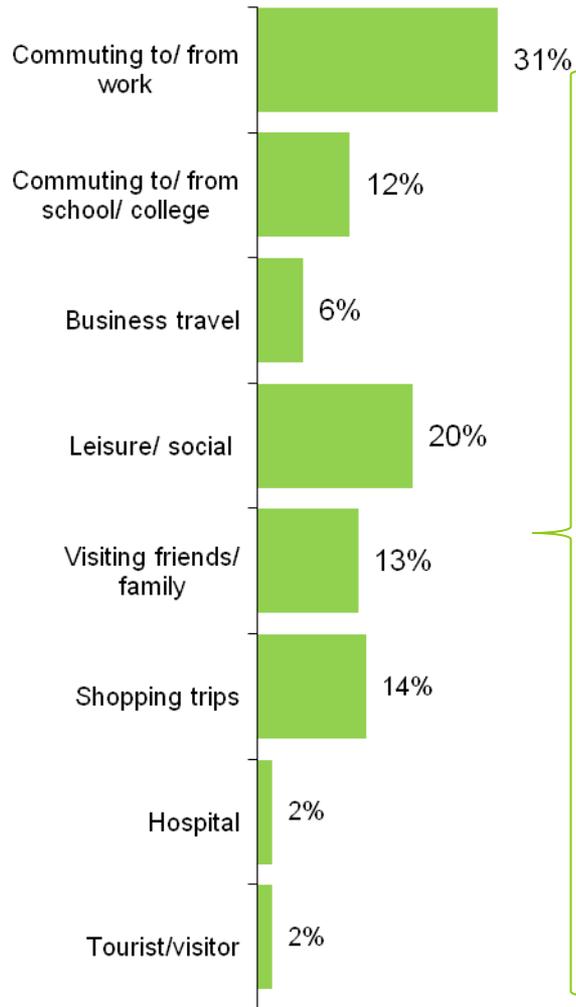


Station at which journey finishes



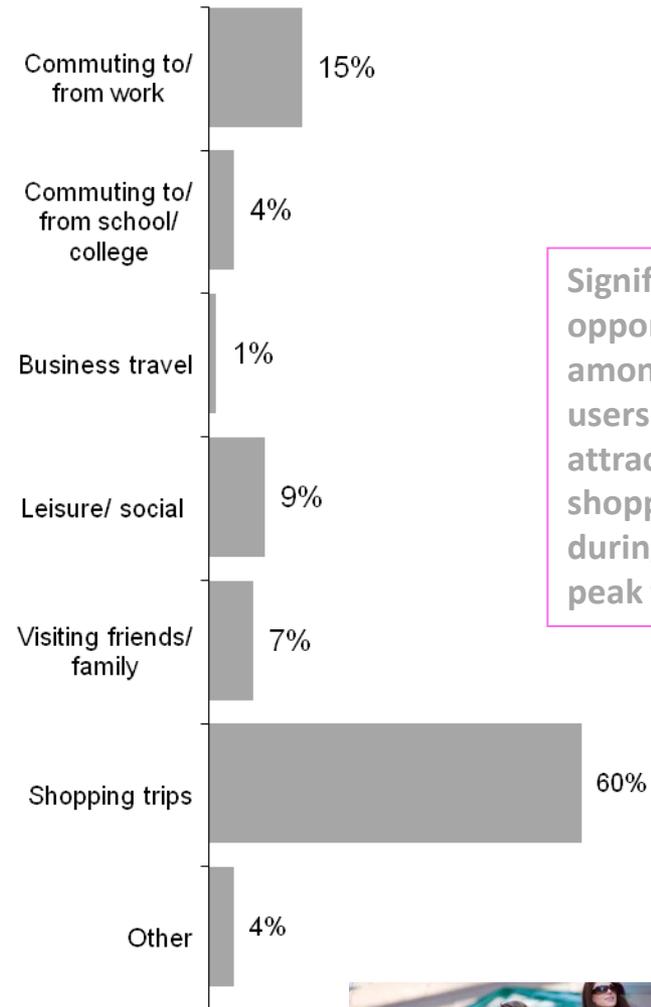
Types of trips made on Bishop Line route

Bishop Line users (320)



This is a very typical Northern rail profile

Non users (150)

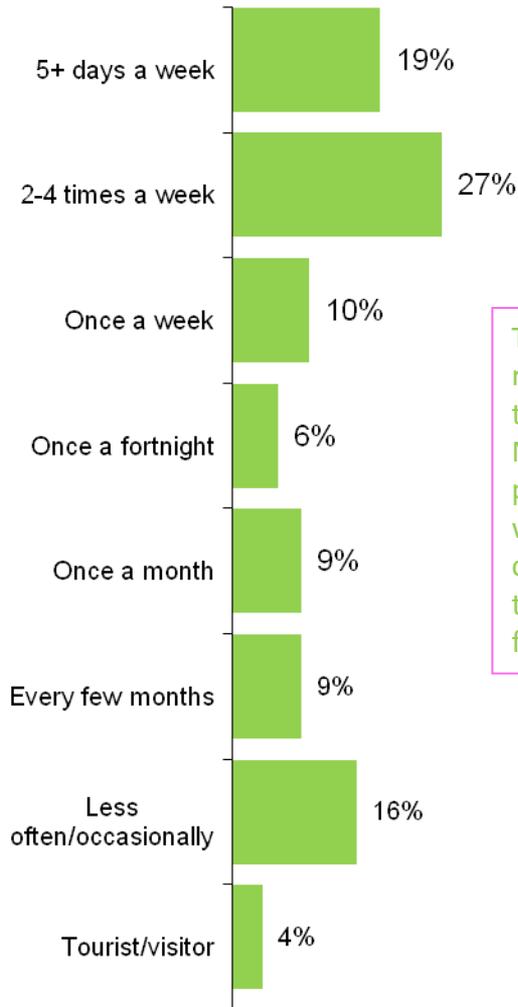


Significant opportunity among non users to attract shoppers during off peak travel



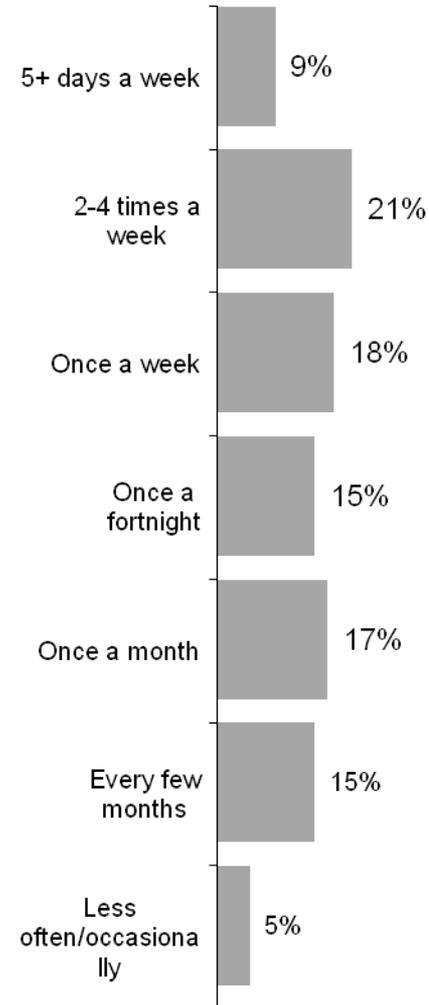
Frequency of trips made

Bishop Line users (320)



This is reasonably typical of the Northern rail profile, but with higher occasional/tourist/visitor figures

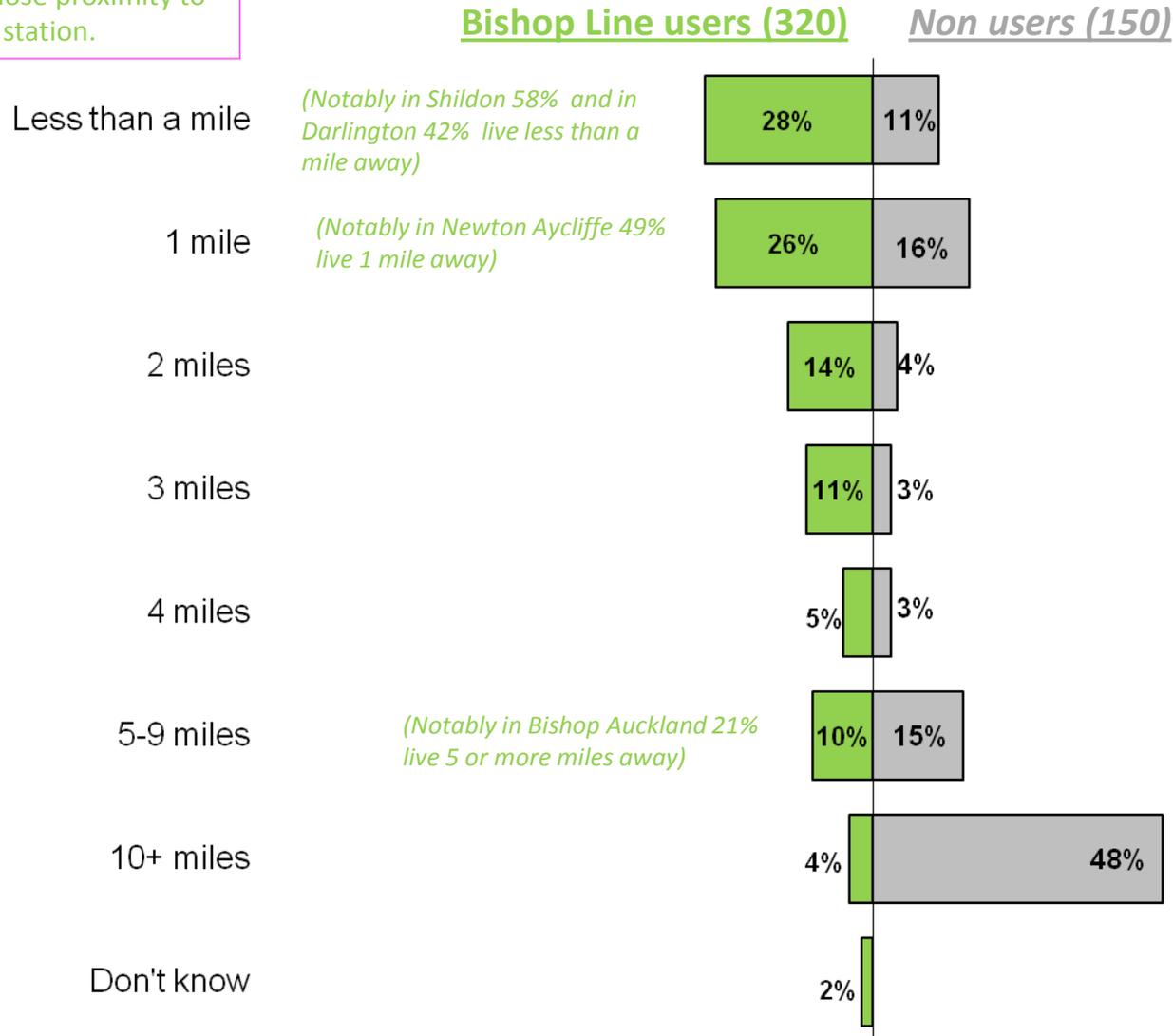
Non users (150)



Non users are travelling reasonably frequently between points on the Bishop Line.

How far away from your **start** / local station do you live?

Majority of users live in close proximity to the station.



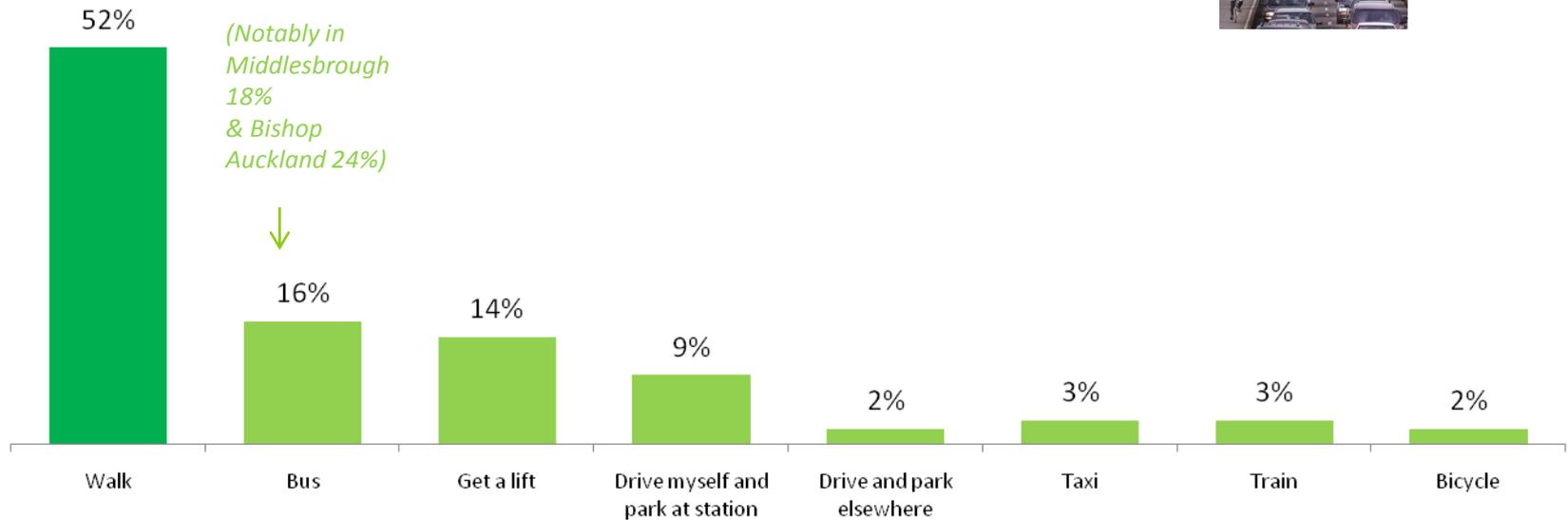
Perhaps unsurprisingly non users live further away from their local station.

Mode of transport used for travelling to start station

Bishop Line users (320)

Over one half walk to the station

NB. One third of users have a car available to them that they could use instead of taking the train on the Bishop Line

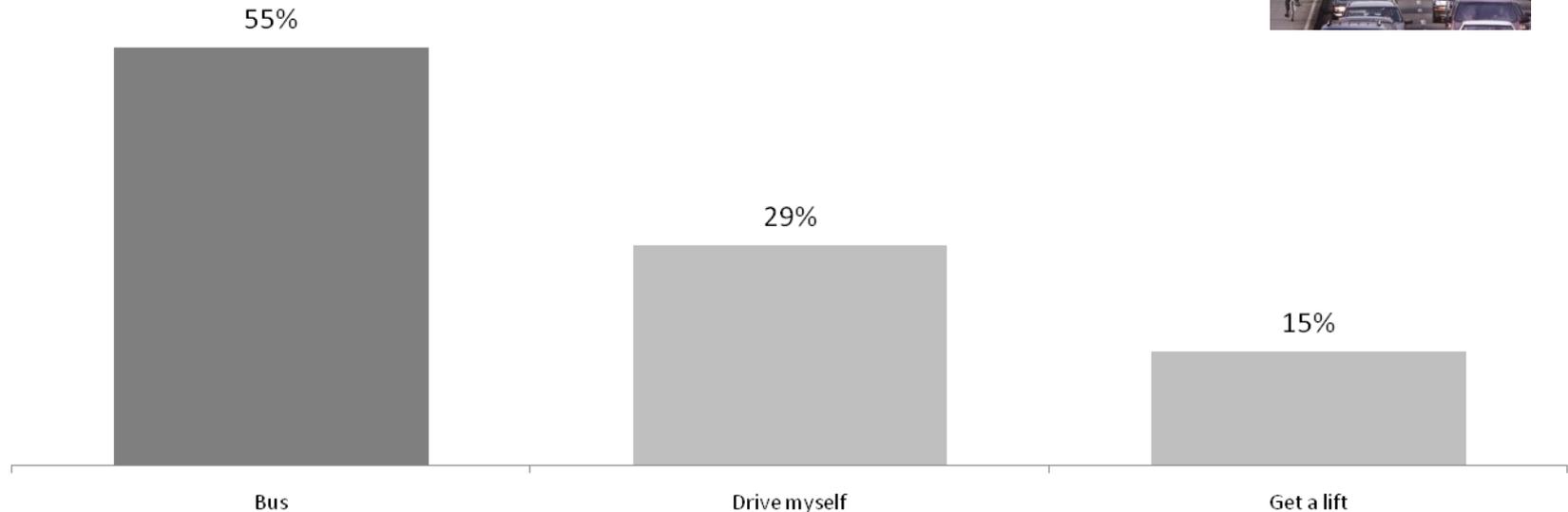


Mode of transport used when travelling along Bishop line route (*using alternative means of transport*)

Non users (150)

(Notably in
Bishop Auckland
66%) ↓

NB. Bus is a popular
alternative among our
non user sample.



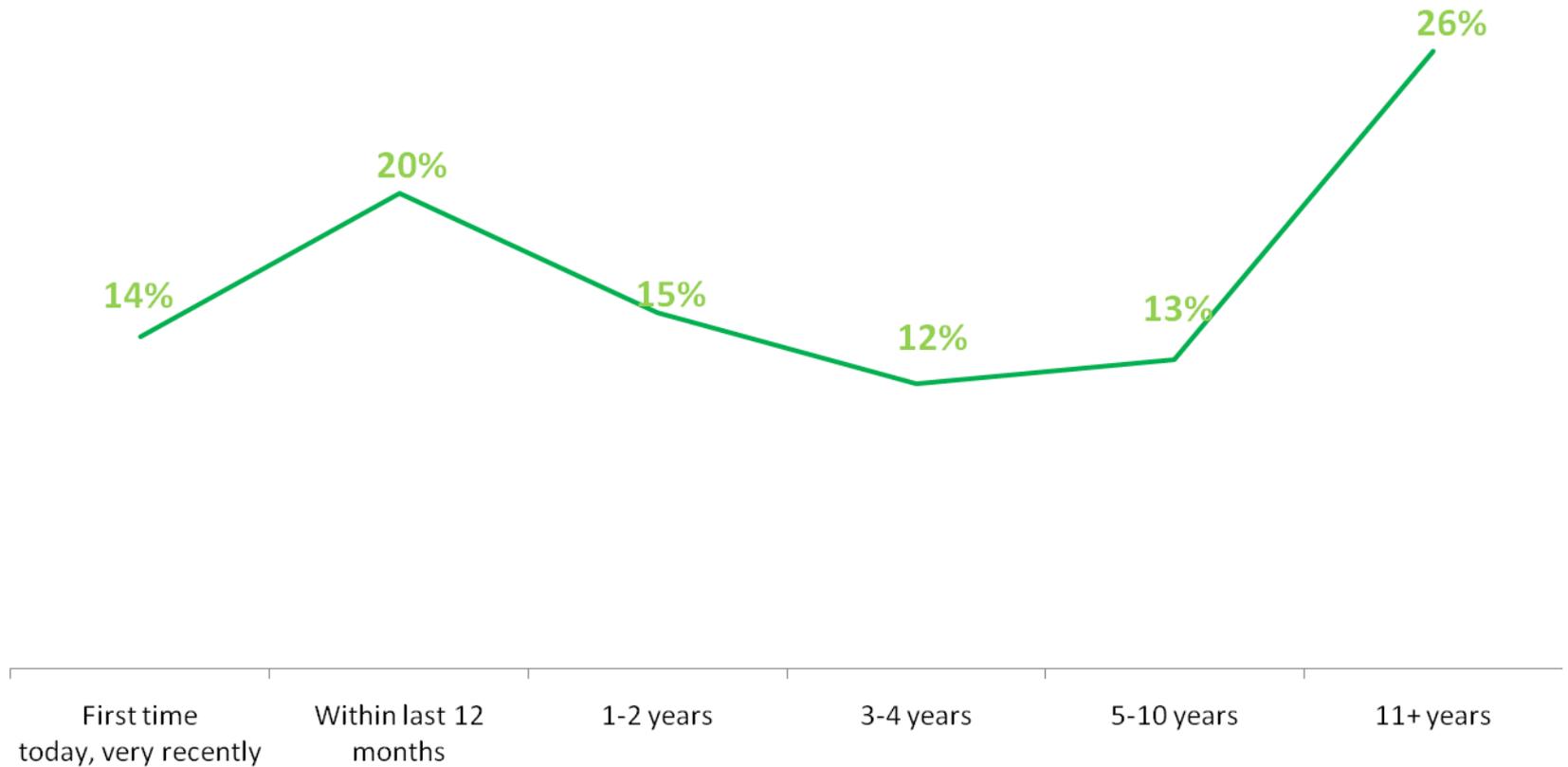
NB. 36% of our non users start their
journey in Bishop Auckland, one quarter
in Shildon and 36% in Newton Aycliffe.
They are almost all travelling to
Darlington.

For how long have you been using the Bishop Line



One third are new users within the last year, one third have been using the Bishop Line for 1 to 4 years and the final third, approx, for 5 years or more.

Bishop Line users (320)

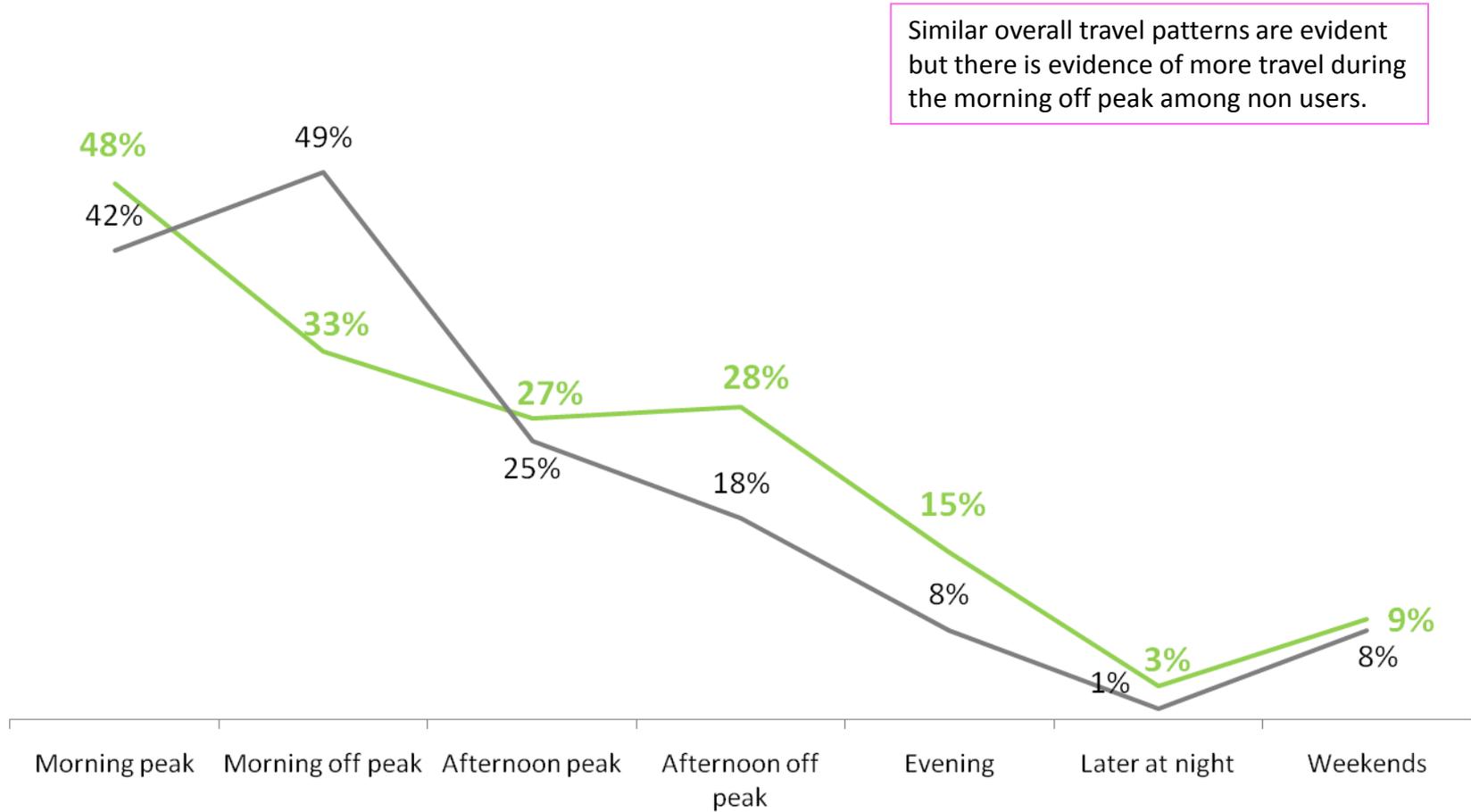


What times of day do you **use the Bishop Line(users)** or *travel along the route (non users)* most often?



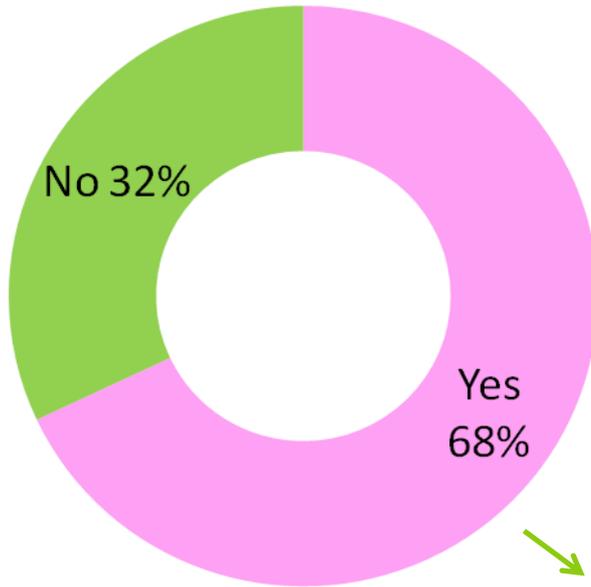
Bishop Line users (320)

Non users (150)



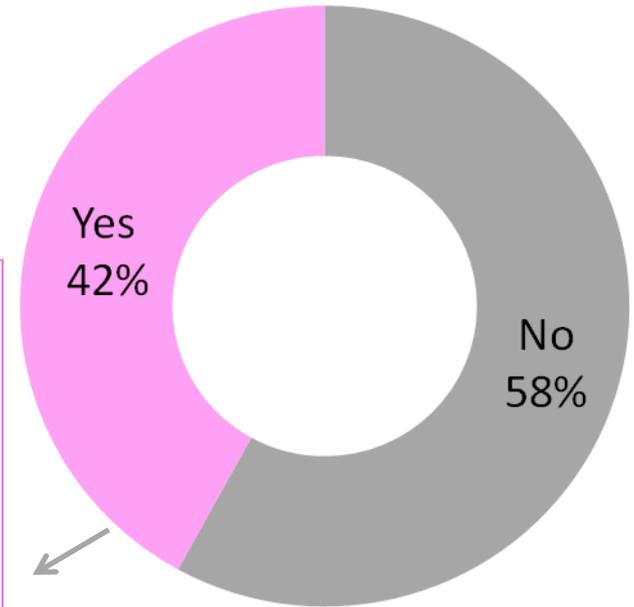
Have you used **the Bishop Line(users)** or *Bishop Line Route (non users)* to travel on to other destinations beyond Darlington during the last year?

Bishop Line users (320)



Two thirds of users have used the Bishop Line (and four in ten non users have travelled along the Bishop Line route) to destinations beyond Darlington in the last year.

Non users (150)



Where have you travelled? (Based on total sample 320 / 150)

- Middlesbrough (27%) (7%)
- Redcar (5%) (4%)
- Thornaby (5%)
- Newcastle (4%) (3%)
- York (4%) (2%)
- London (4%) (3%)
- Saltburn (3%) (1%)
- Leeds (1%) (1%)
- Eaglescliffe (1%)
- Scarborough (2%)
- Various, mixed, one person mentions (19%) (18%)

Section 2

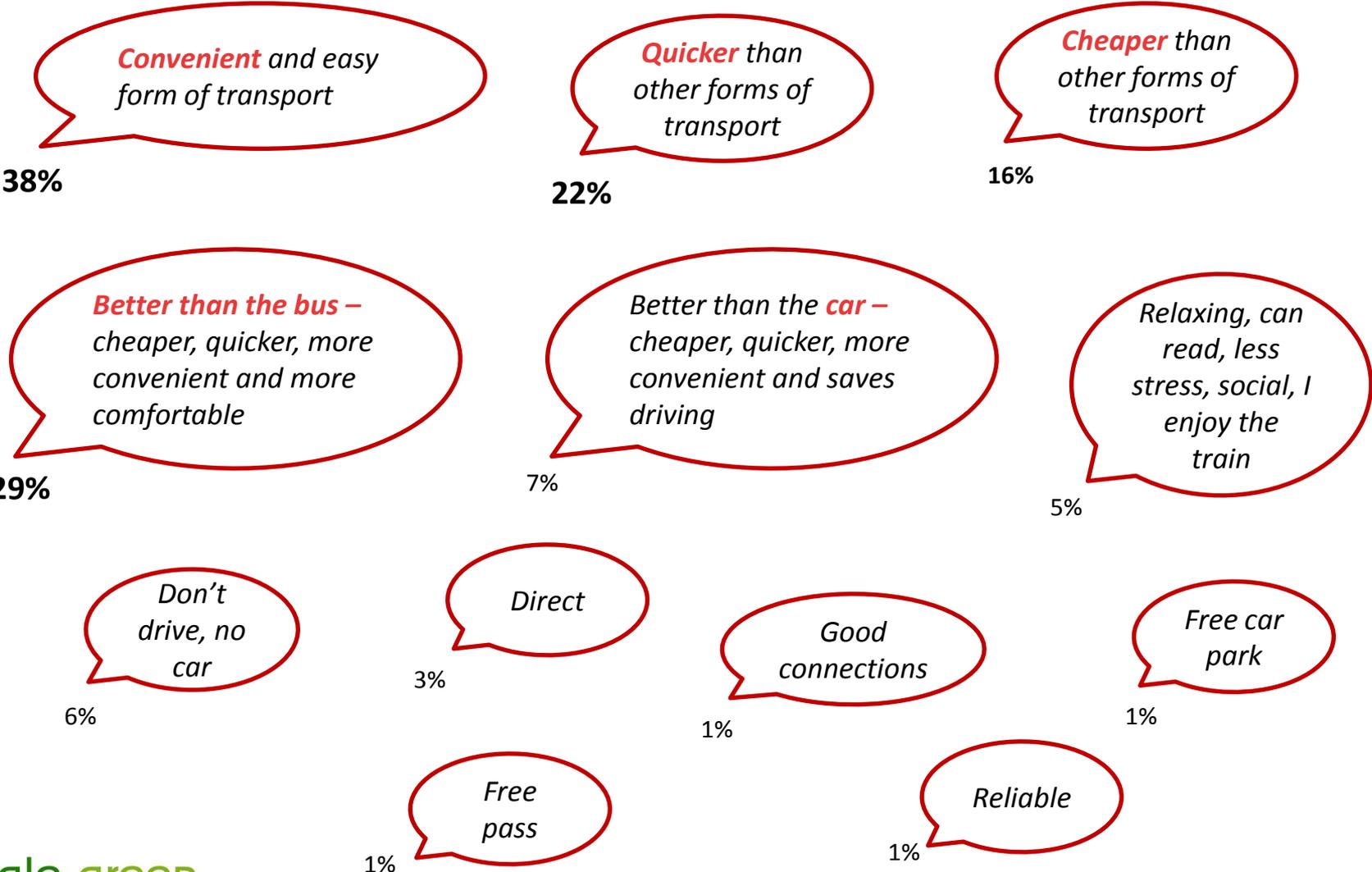
Findings

2.2 Reasons for use / non use of the Bishop Line



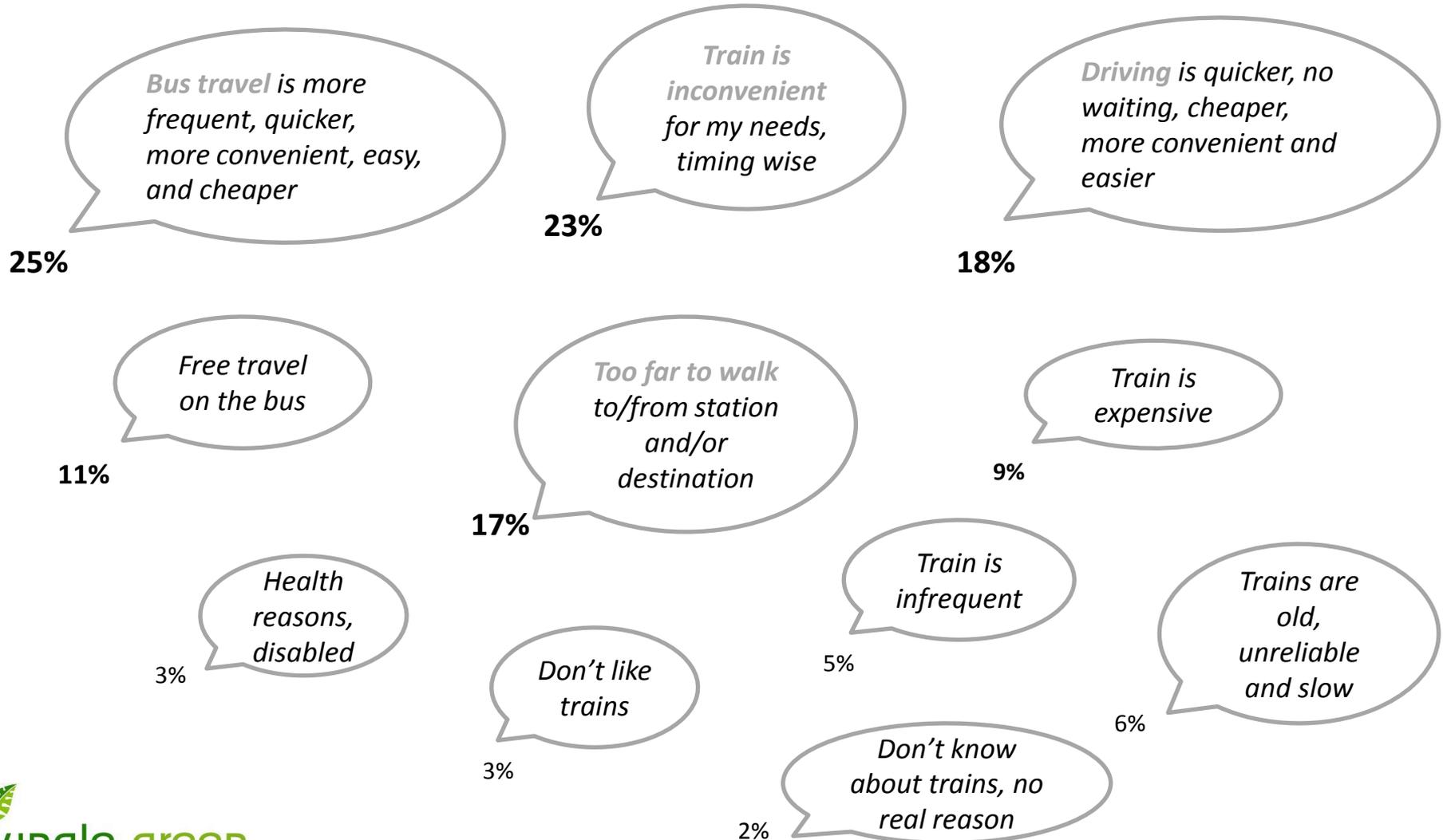
Main reasons for **USING** the Bishop Line, rather than an alternative form of transport? (Unprompted)

Bishop Line users (320)



Reasons for **NOT USING** the Bishop Line, why do you use an alternative form of transport? (Unprompted)

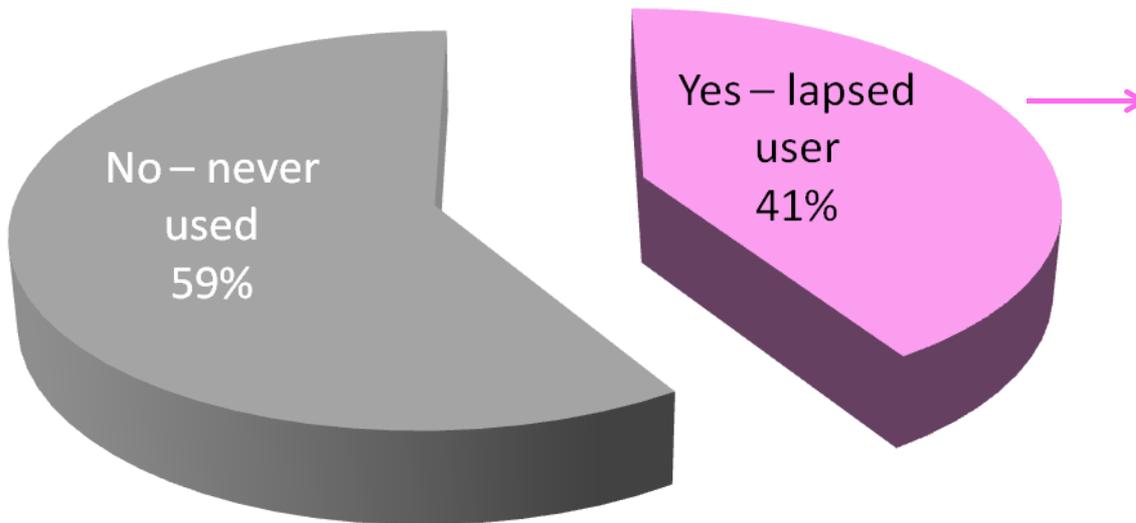
Non users (150)



Never used vs Lapsed Users

Non users (150)

Have you ever used the Bishop Line rail service before?



How long ago did you last use the Bishop Line?

- Within last 2 years (20%)
- 3-5 years ago (14%)
- 6-10 years ago (4%)
- 11+ years ago (3%)

Reasons given for not using the Bishop Line currently were almost identical between lapsed users and those who had never used it (as on previous chart). Just slightly more saying that it is too far to walk to/from station/destination among those who have never tried the Bishop Line.

Findings

2.3 Awareness and overall opinions

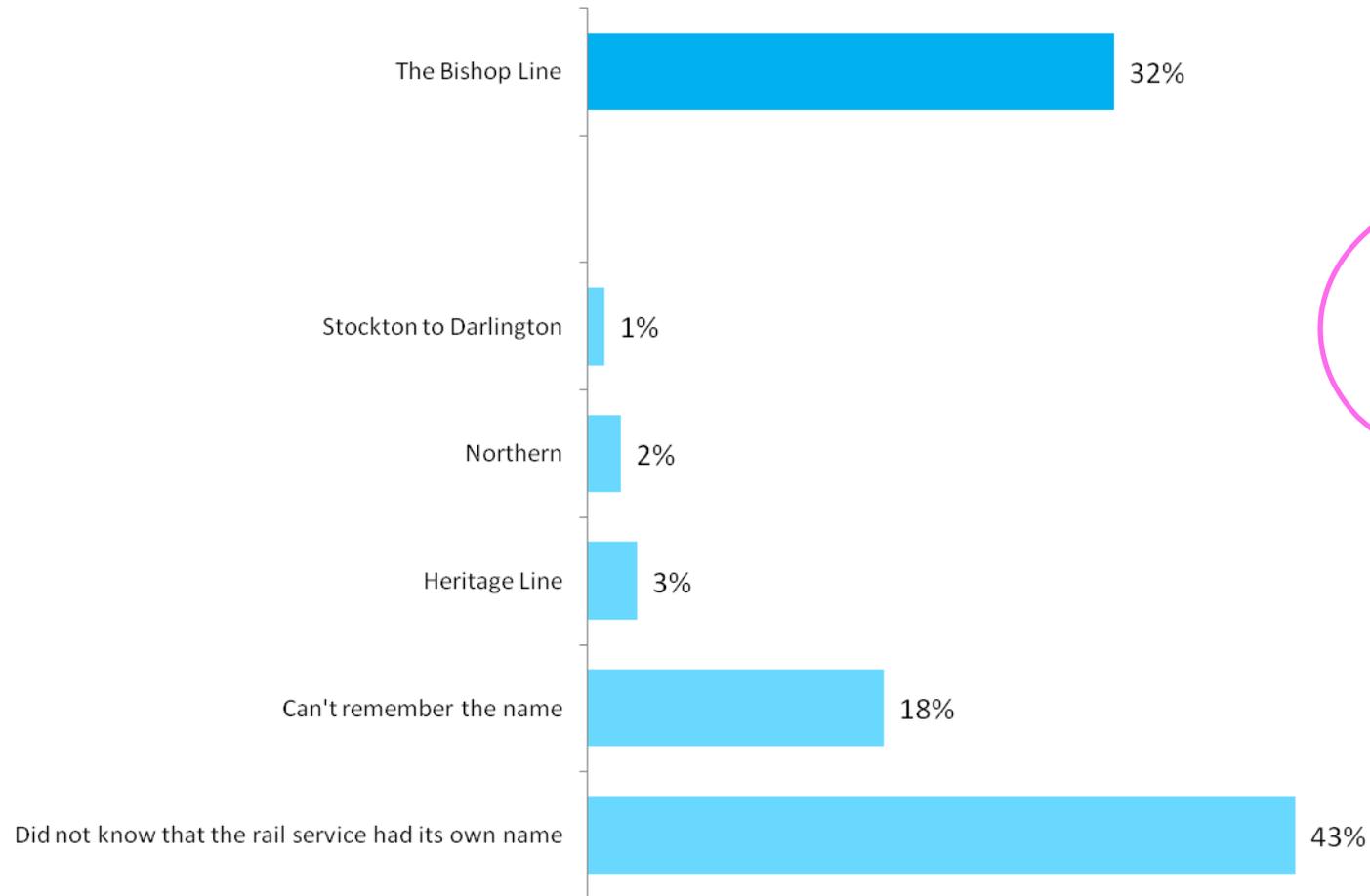


Awareness of the Bishop Line name - Users (Unprompted)

The rail line running between Bishop Auckland and Darlington has its own name, do you recall what it is called.....?

Bishop Line users (320)

(nb. This question was asked early in the survey before any mention of The Bishop Line had been made by interviewers)

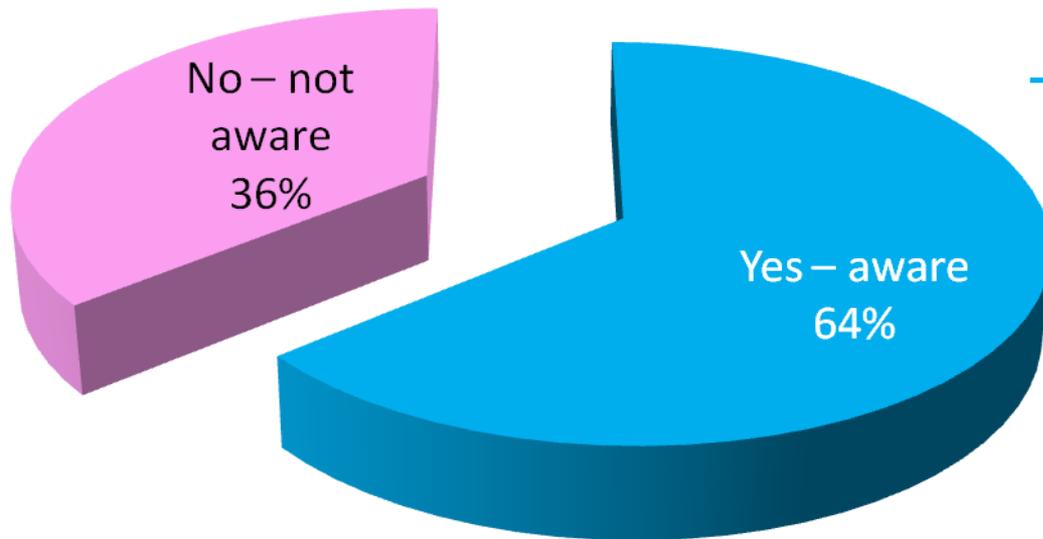


One third of users can recall the name completely unprompted

Prompted awareness of the Bishop Line name - Users

Bishop Line users (320)

Do you recall seeing this logo for the Bishop Line rail service ?

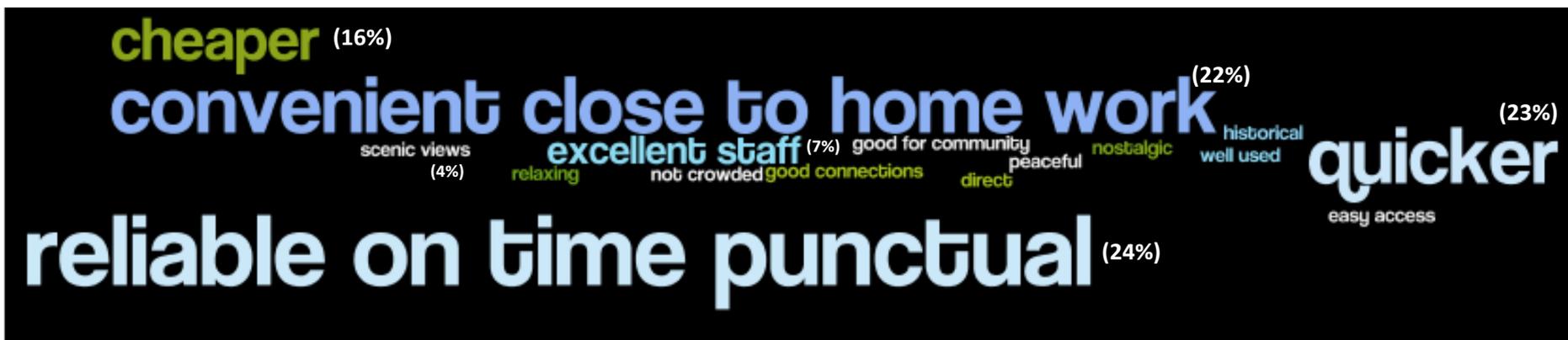


Two thirds of all users are aware of the Bishop Line name on prompting.

This rises to 90% of commuters and drops to 50% of the more occasional travellers.

What are the main strengths/positives of this rail line in your opinion? (Unprompted)

Bishop Line users (320)

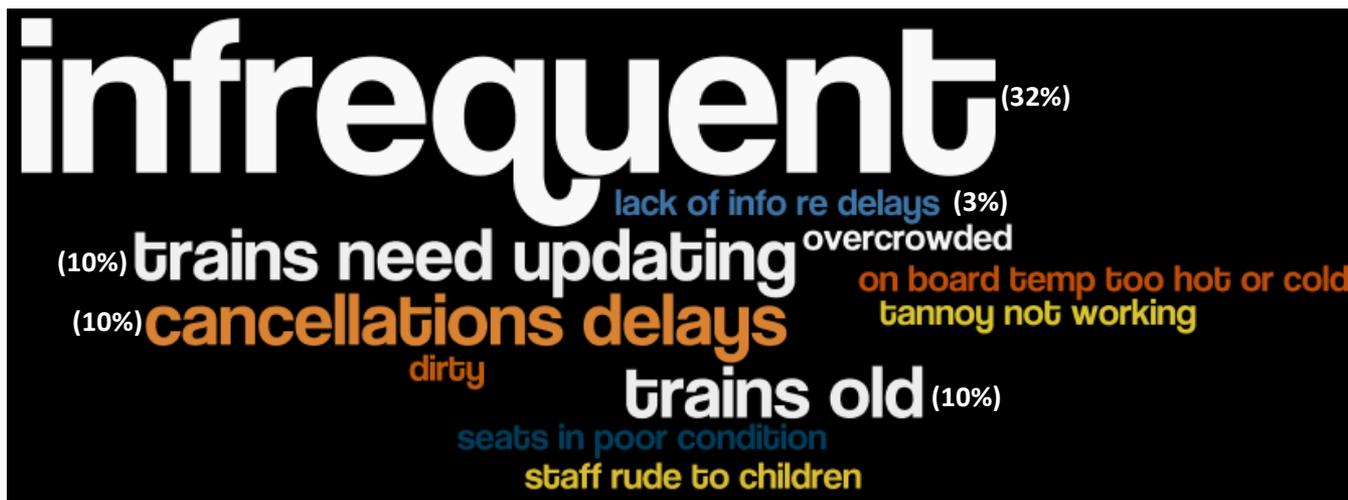


(Word cloud - Size of each word above is in proportion to the number of times it was mentioned)

Users find the Bishop Line to be a convenient, local, quick, cheap and reliable rail service.

What are the main weaknesses/things that need improving in your opinion? (Unprompted)

Bishop Line users (320)



(Word cloud - Size of each word above is in proportion to the number of times it was mentioned)

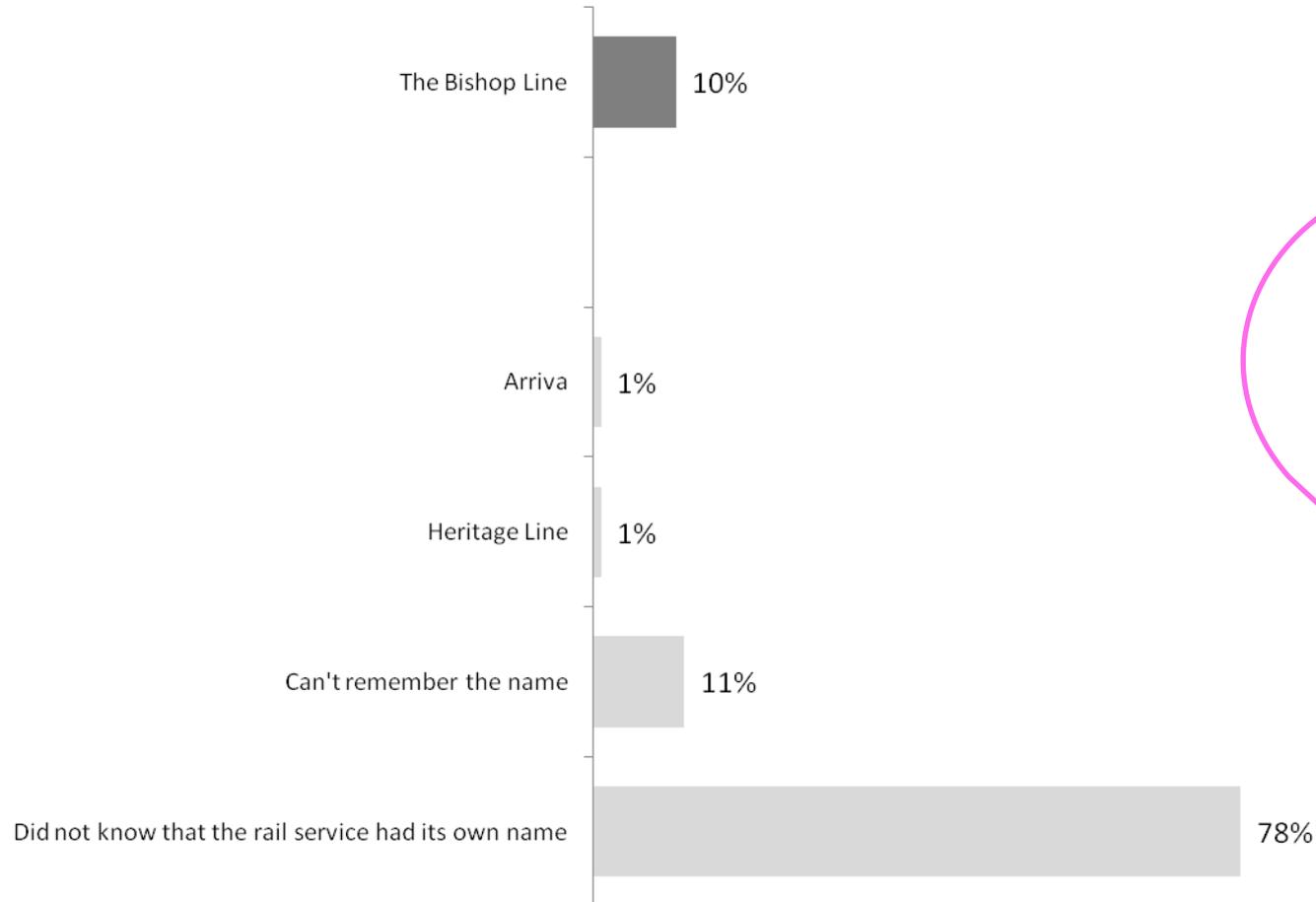
The main improvement that users would like, is for the Bishop Line to be a more frequent rail service, ideally with more modern trains.

Awareness of the Bishop Line name – Non users (Unprompted)

The rail line running between Bishop Auckland and Darlington has its own name, do you recall what it is called.....?

Non users (150)

(nb. This question was asked early in the survey before any mention of The Bishop Line had been made by interviewers)

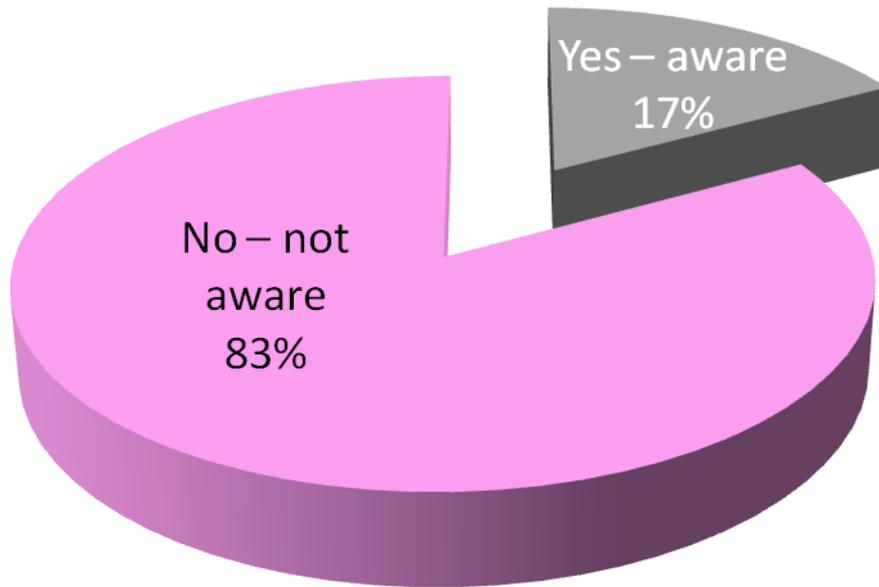


10% of non users can recall the name completely unprompted. This rises to 15% of lapsed users compared with 7% of those who have never used the line.

Prompted awareness of the Bishop Line name – Non users

Non users (150)

Do you recall seeing this logo for the Bishop Line rail service ?



17% of all non users are aware of the Bishop Line name on prompting.

This rises to 26% of lapsed users and drops to 10% of those who have never used the line.

Section 2

Findings

2.4 Satisfaction ratings and perceptions



Ratings of the Bishop Line rail service



– Strongest ratings - Users

(Score of 1 = extremely poor, Score of 10 = excellent)

Bishop Line users (320)

(% scoring 7 or more out of 10)



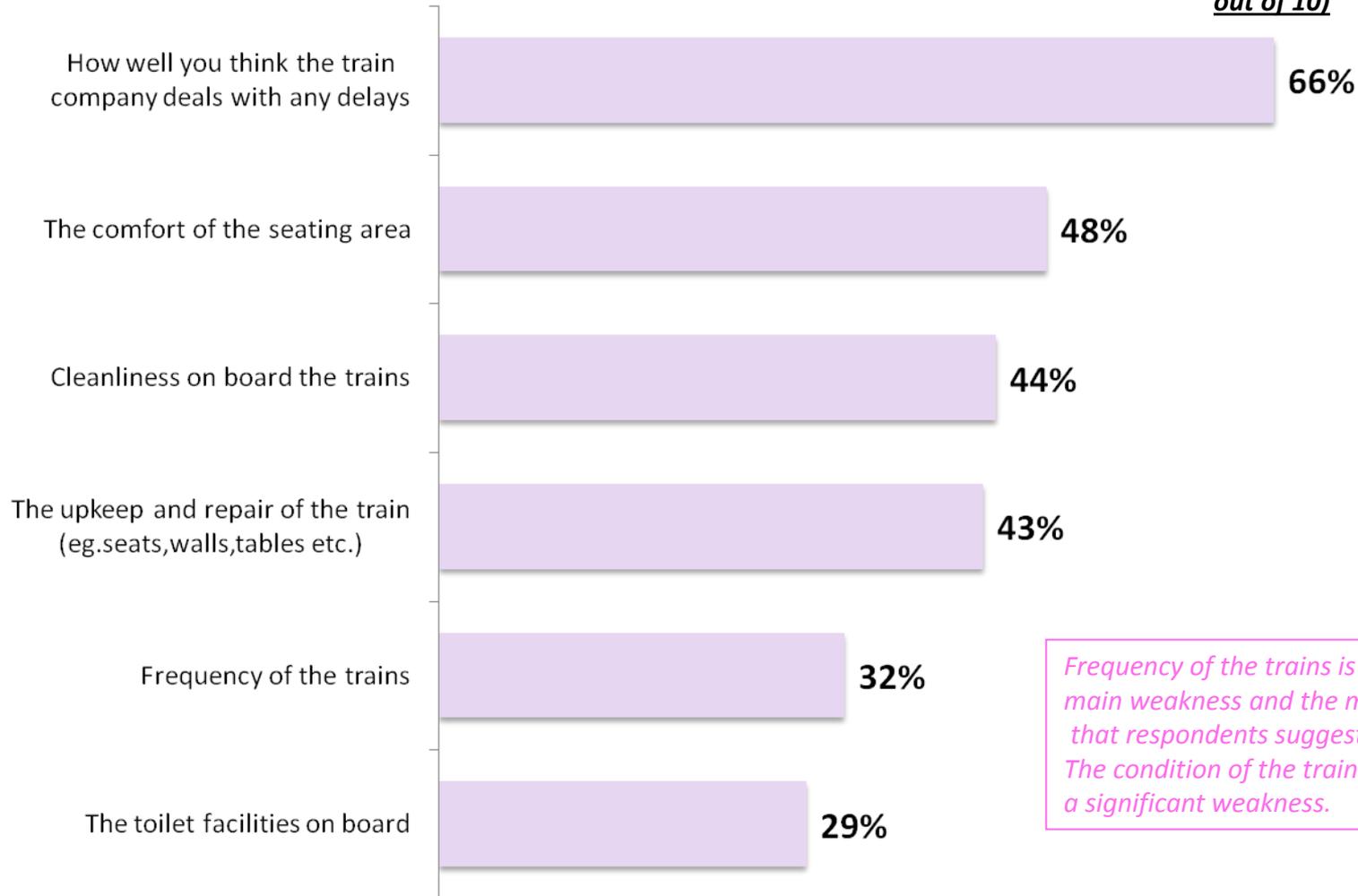
Ratings of the Bishop Line rail service

– Weaker ratings - Users

(Score of 1 = extremely poor, Score of 10 = excellent)

Bishop Line users (320)

(% scoring 7 or more out of 10)



Frequency of the trains is clearly the main weakness and the main item that respondents suggest needs improving. The condition of the trains is also considered a significant weakness.

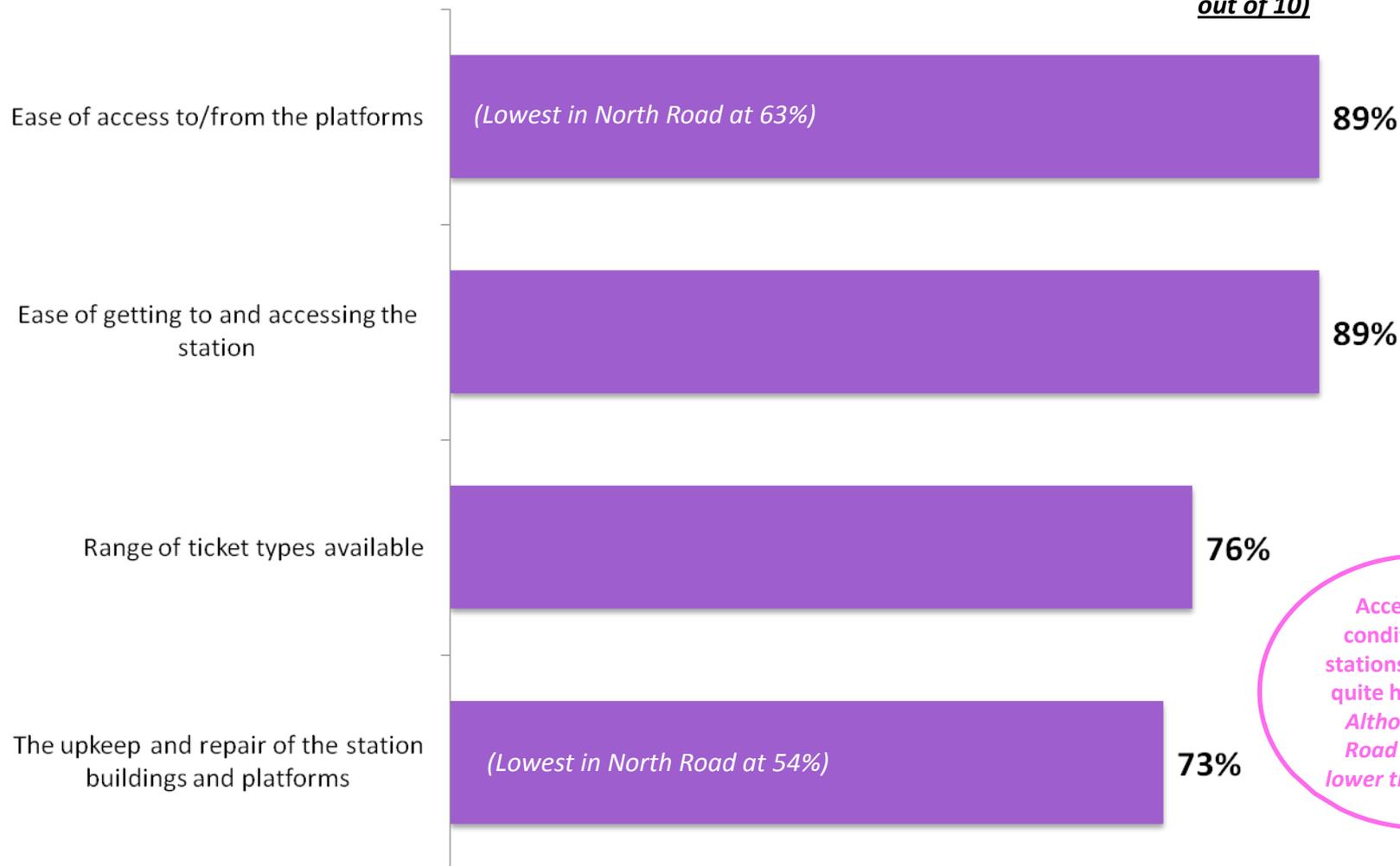
Ratings of the stations and service aspects

– Strongest ratings - Users

(Score of 1 = extremely poor, Score of 10 = excellent)

Bishop Line users (320)

(% scoring 7 or more out of 10)



Access to and condition of the stations seem to be quite highly rated. Although North Road scores are lower than average

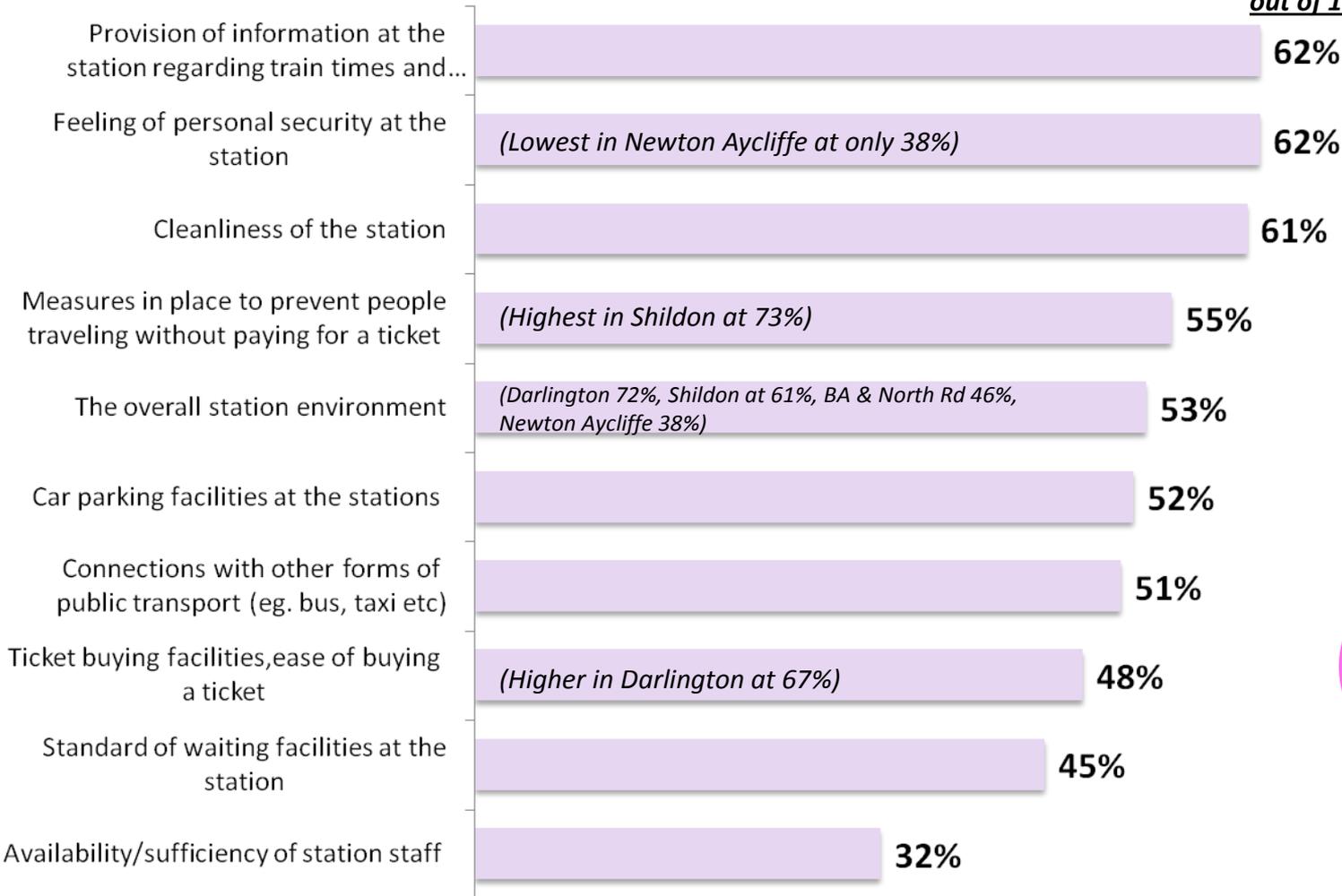
Ratings of the stations and service aspects

– Weaker ratings - Users

(Score of 1 = extremely poor, Score of 10 = excellent)

Bishop Line users (320)

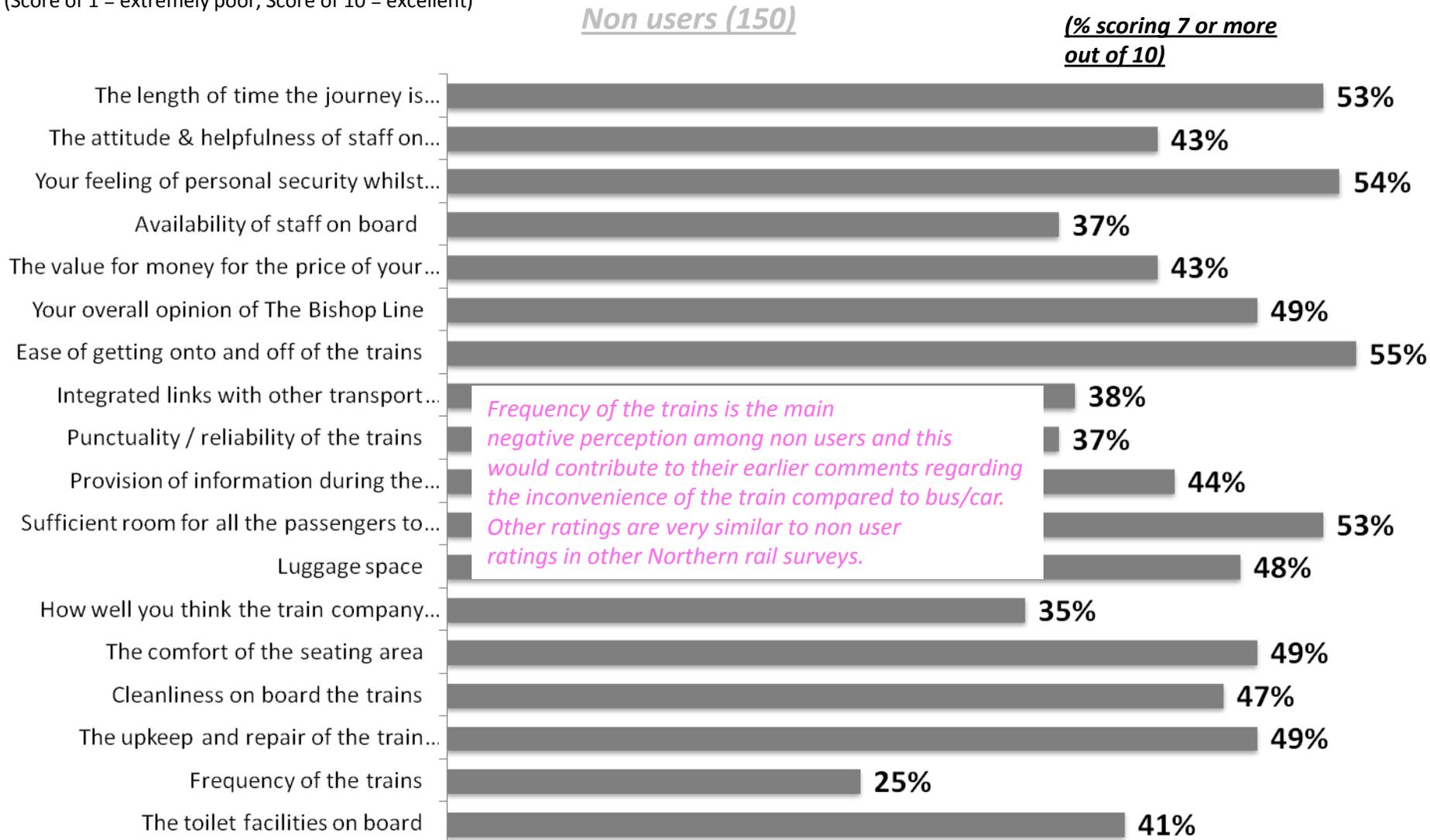
(% scoring 7 or more out of 10)



Ticket buying facilities and waiting facilities at the stations are poorly rated.

Perceptions of the Bishop Line rail service – Non users

(Score of 1 = extremely poor, Score of 10 = excellent)

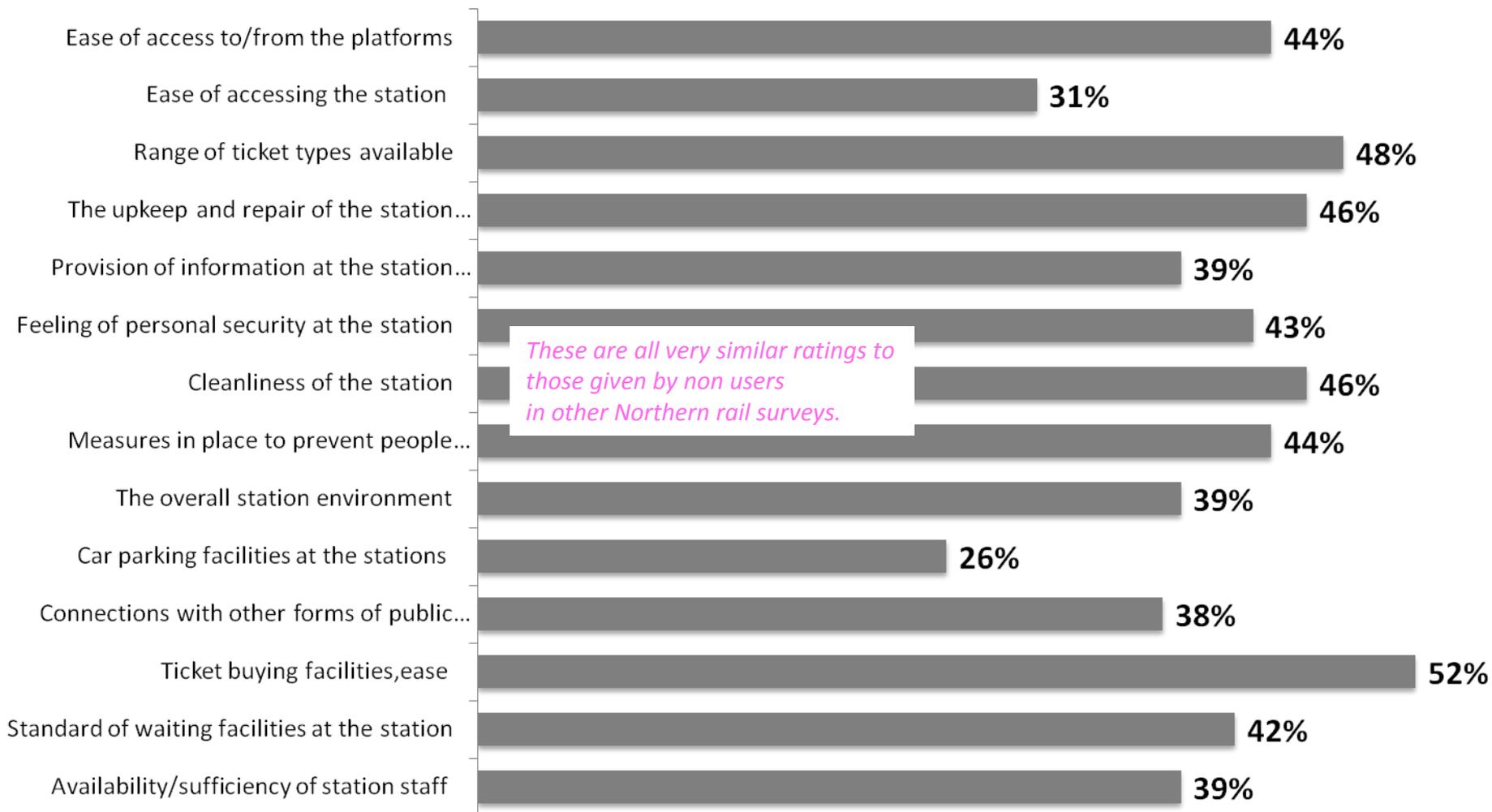


Perceptions of the stations and service aspects – Non users

(Score of 1 = extremely poor, Score of 10 = excellent)

Non users (150)

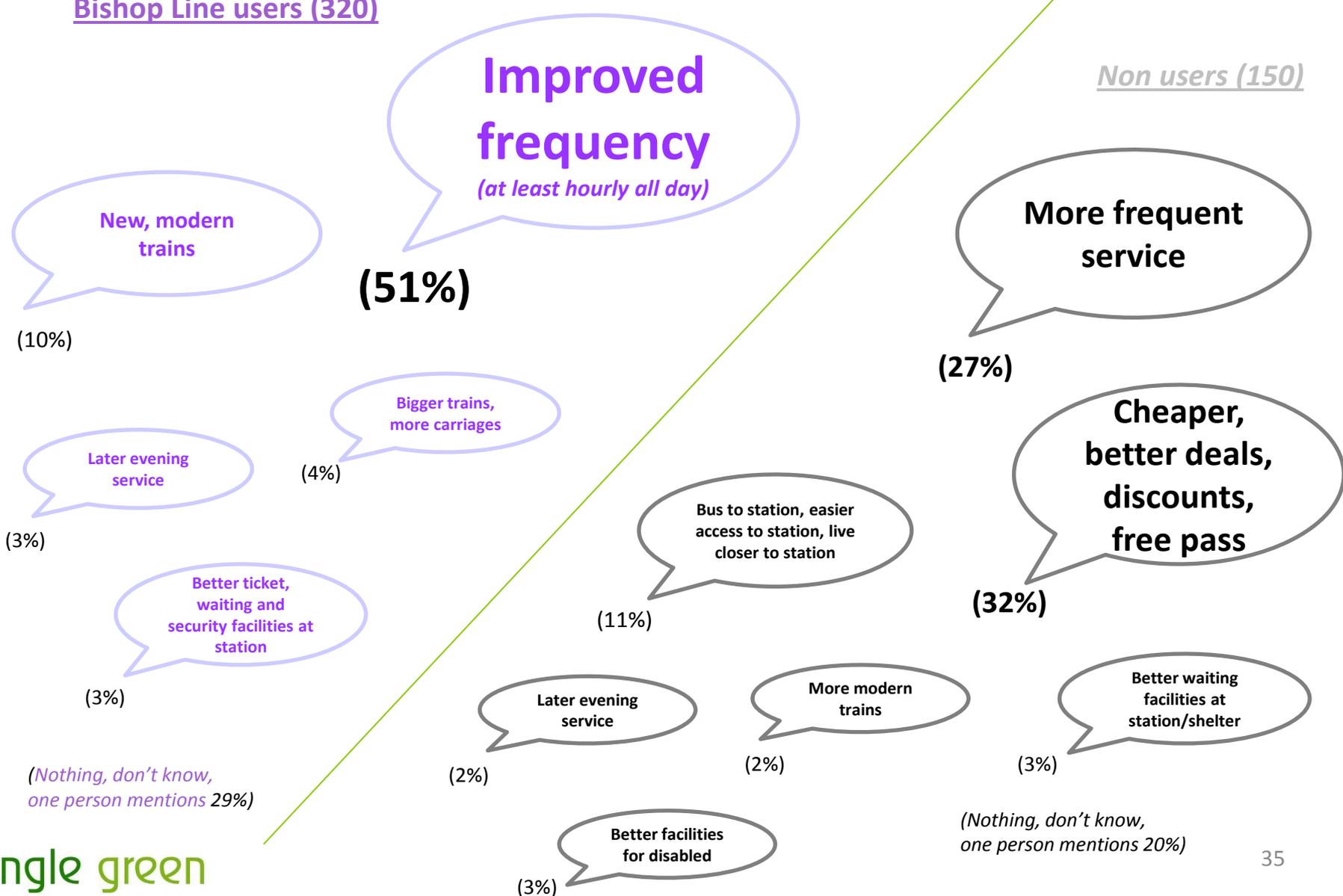
(% scoring 7 or more out of 10)



Of all the aspects you have considered, if you had the opportunity to change just ONE thing about the entire Bishop Line rail service, what would make the biggest difference to you or encourage you to use the Bishop Line more?

Bishop Line users (320)

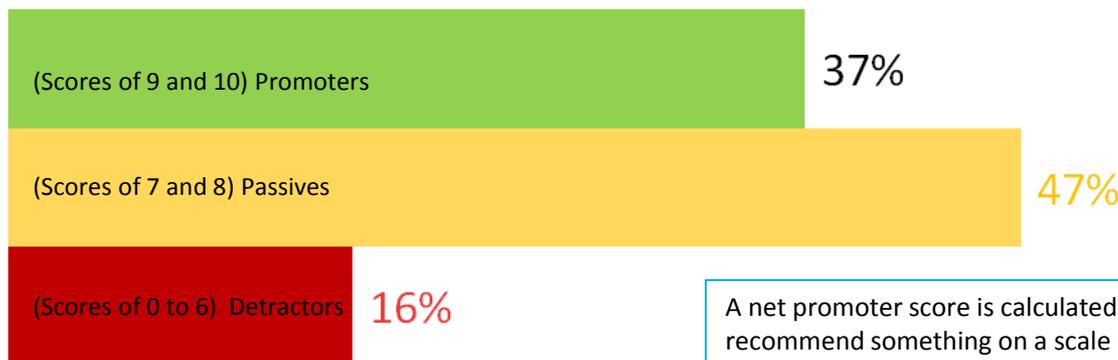
Non users (150)



Promoter Score– How likely would you be to recommend The Bishop Line to other people?

Bishop Line users (320)

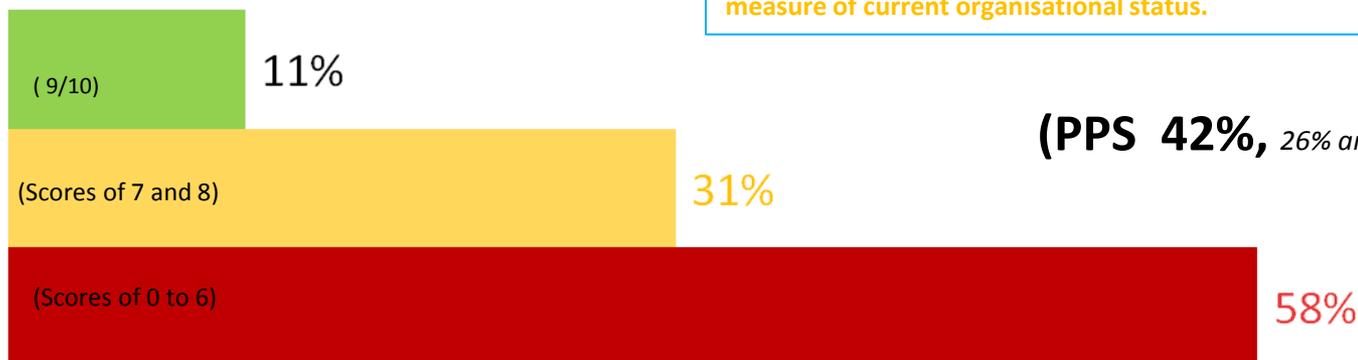
(PPS 84%, Northern overall PPS is 74%)



A net promoter score is calculated by asking respondents how likely they are to recommend something on a scale of 0 to 10. Typically all resulting scores of **0 to 6 [detractors]** are subtracted from scores of **9 and 10 [promoters]**. Scores of **7 and 8** are ignored and considered **'passives'**.

We feel that ignoring those who give scores of 7 and 8 is **unadvisable and therefore use a 'Promoter and Passive Satisfied' score (PPS) as a more reliable measure of current organisational status.**

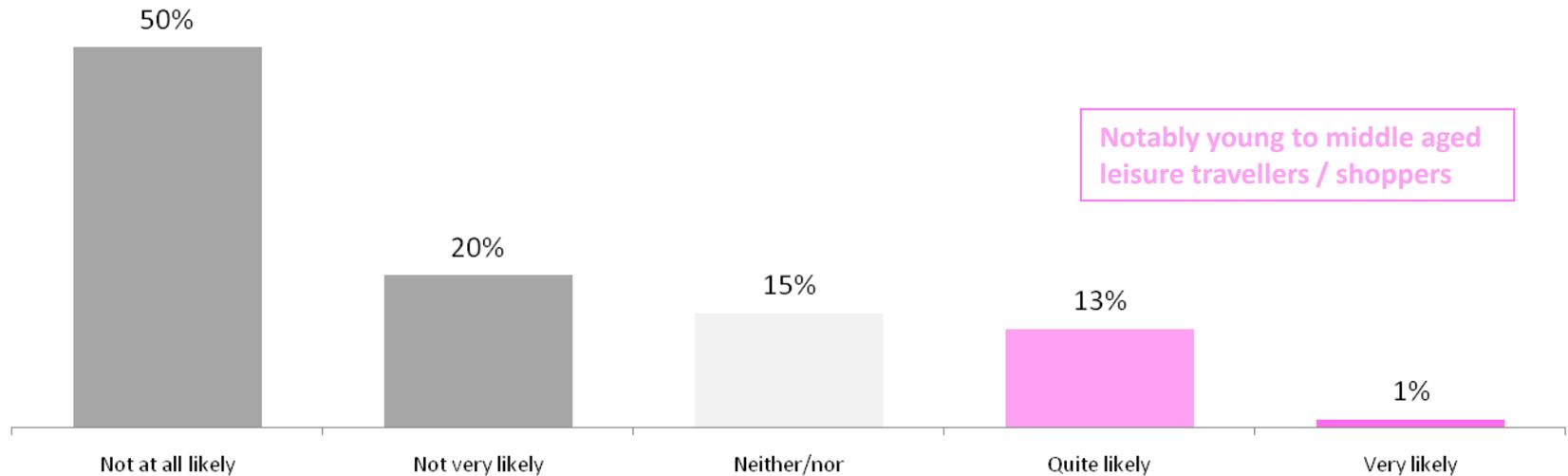
Non users (150)



(PPS 42%, 26% among Northern non users)

How likely is it that you will travel by train on the Bishop Line in the next year or so?

Non users (150)



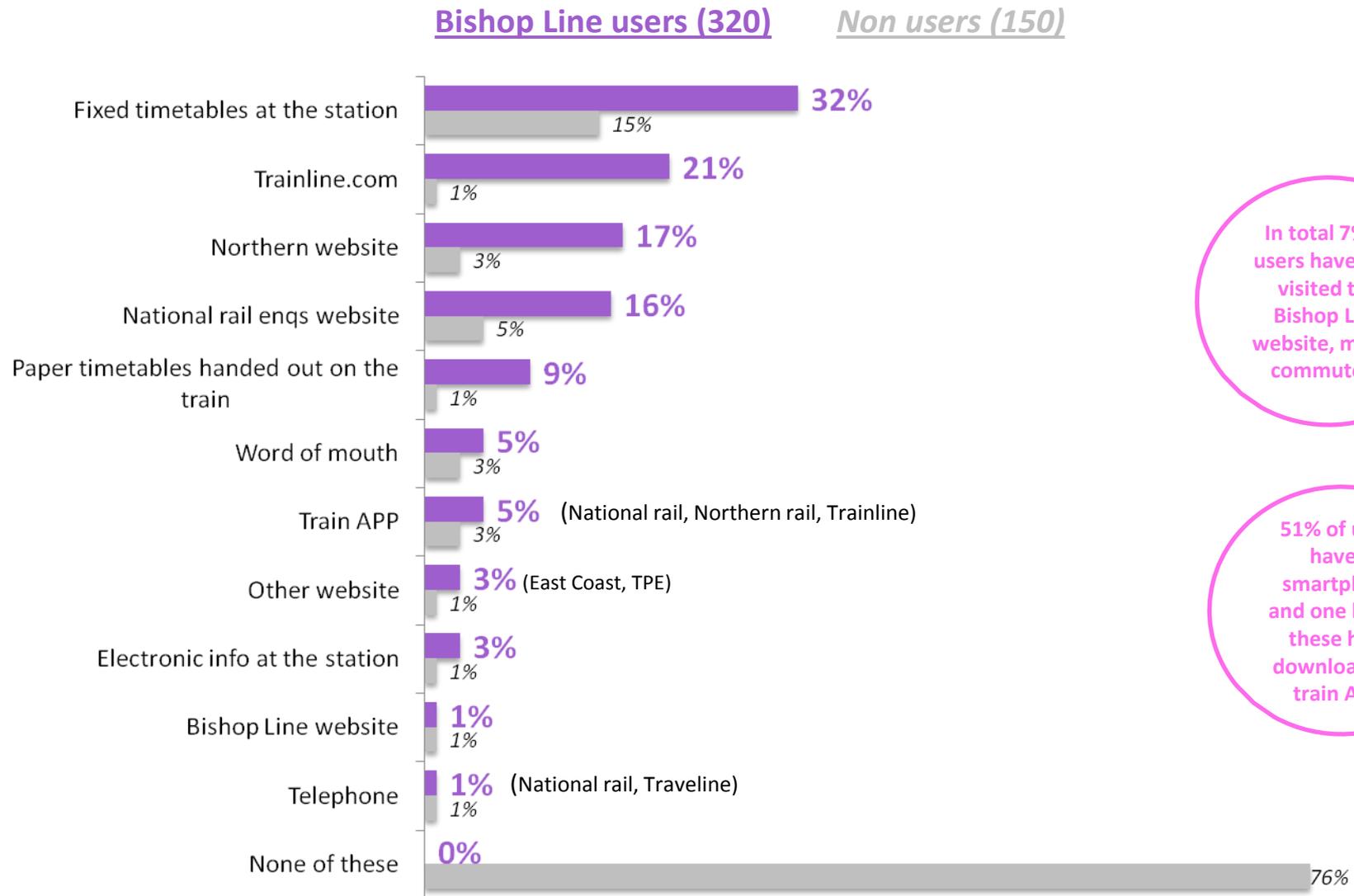
Section 2

Findings

2.5 Sources of information



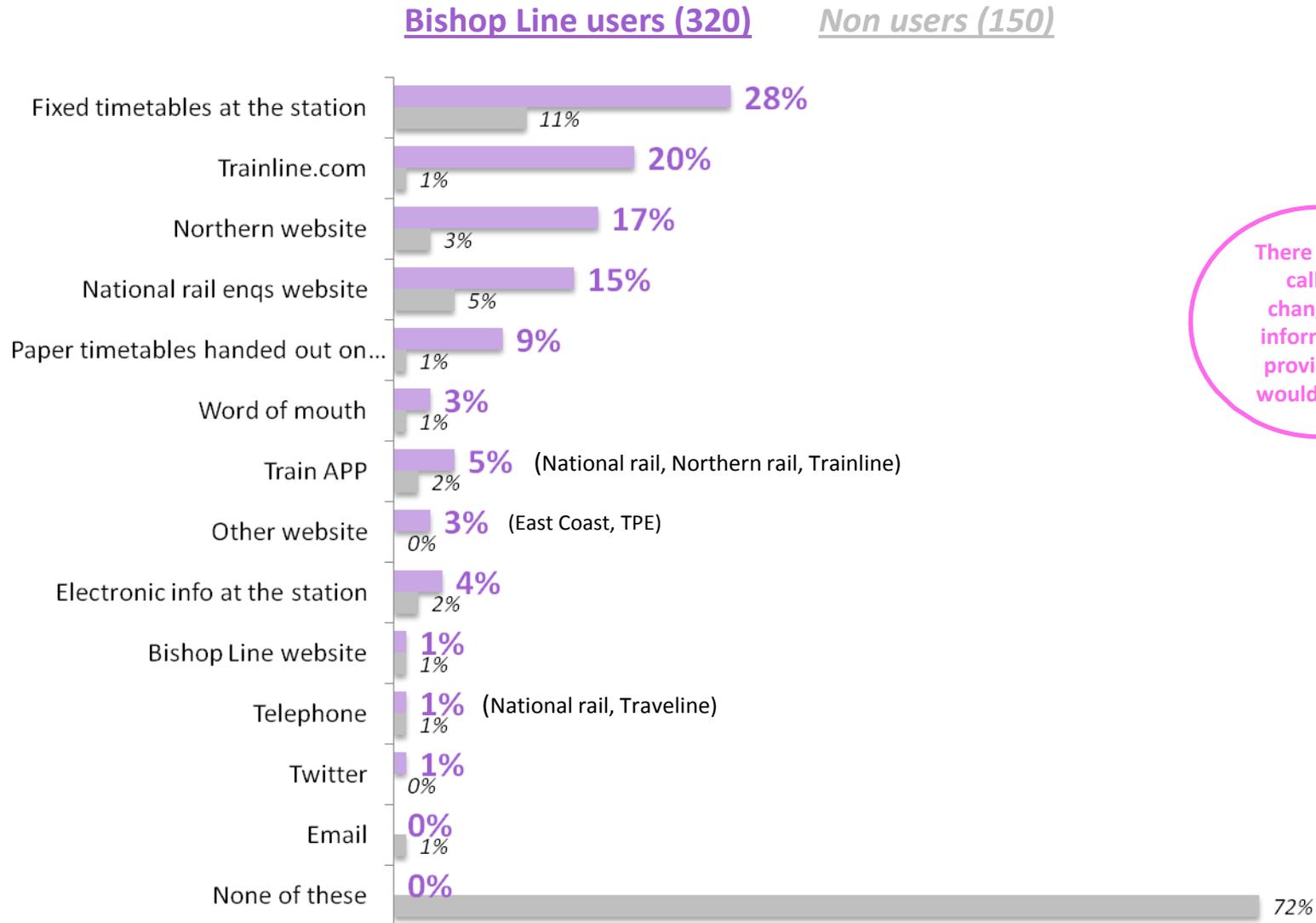
How do you currently source or receive information about the Bishop Line rail services, such as train times and ticket prices?



In total 7% of users have ever visited the Bishop Line website, mainly commuters.

51% of users have a smartphone and one half of these have downloaded a train APP.

And how would you prefer to source or receive such information in the future, ideally?



There is little call for changes in information provision it would seem.

Section 3

Summary and Going forward



Summary points – Reasons for use/non use

Bishop Line users believe that the train is more convenient, easier, quicker and cheaper than other forms of transport. It is also considered reliable and local, with good onward connections.

Approximately one half of users live within a mile of the station and walk to/from the station.

Two thirds of users have travelled on the Bishop Line to destinations beyond Darlington in the last year.



Non users state that the main reason they do not use the Bishop Line is because they find the train inconvenient for their needs. The bus is more frequent (*one half of them use the bus on this route*) or driving is quicker/no waiting and easier. Some think the train is expensive in comparison and some live too far away from the station to be able to walk there.

Almost two thirds of non users who travel along the Bishop Line route, using an alternative means of transport, are doing so for shopping trips. Shopping trips represent the main opportunity for The Bishop Line among non users it would seem.



Summary points – Awareness, future use and information

- One third of users are aware of the Bishop Line name without any prompting, a further third are aware of the name on being prompted. This leaves a final third who are not aware of the name and do not remember seeing the logo



- *10% of non users are aware of the Bishop Line name without any prompting, a further 7% are aware of the name on being prompted. This leaves 83% who are not aware of the name and do not remember seeing the logo.*
 - *Four in ten non users have used the Bishop Line at some point in the past and if the trains were more frequent they may possibly do so again in the future. Deals and discounts are also mentioned as likely to encourage more use of the trains among current non users.*
 - *As it stands though, 13% say they are 'quite likely' to use The Bishop Line in the next year or so, mainly young to middle aged leisure travellers/shoppers.*

Users and non users seem happy with their current level and sourcing of information regarding the Bishop Line. Figures suggest however, that there is room for a push of promotional information to encourage greater usage, especially among non users.

Summary points – Satisfaction and perceptions

There are some excellent scores given by users of the Bishop Line, many reflecting the reasons for use ie, quick, cheap and reliable. In addition, staff on board are praised and valued, customers feel secure and very satisfied. Good transport links, information and space are also evident. The scenic views and nostalgia associated with the Bishop Line are mentioned by some users.

The Bishop Line receives an overall satisfaction rating of 87%, a very healthy score. Frequency of the trains is clearly the main weakness and the main item that respondents suggest needs improving. The condition of the trains is considered a significant weakness too. Ticket buying and waiting facilities receive relatively poor ratings.



- *Frequency of the trains is the main negative perception among non users. Ease of access to the station and car parking facilities also receive lower perception ratings.*

All the satisfaction and perception ratings now provide a useful baseline measure for future comparison.

Section 4

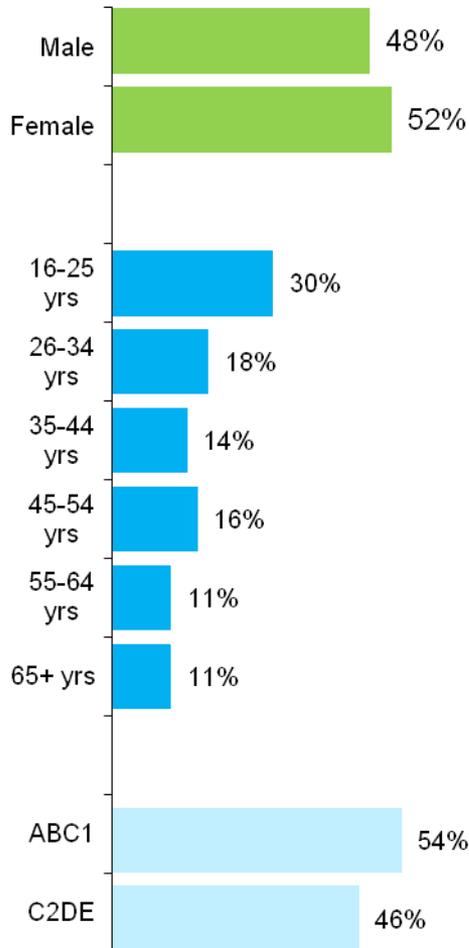
Appendices – Sample profile and ticket purchase



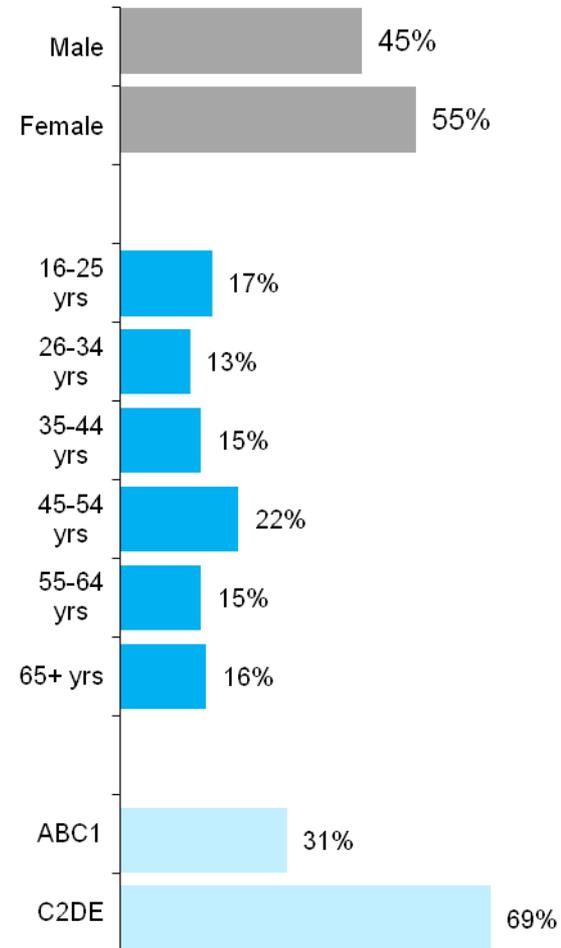
Demographics

Users are from higher social grades overall and a little younger than non users (*as is typical with rail passengers*). This profile is very typical of previous Northern rail sample profiles.

Bishop Line users (320)

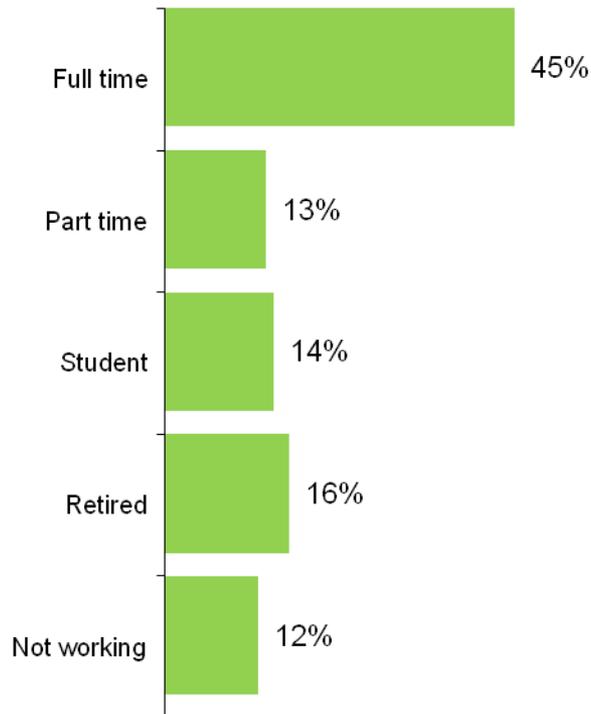


Non users (150)



Respondent profile

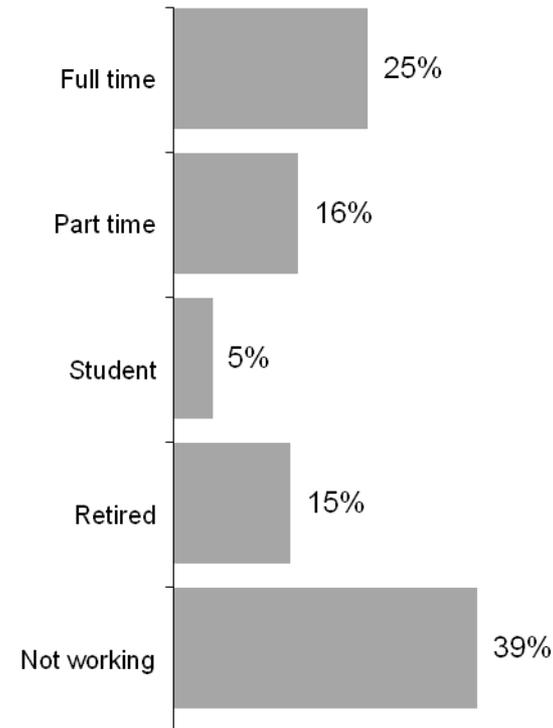
Bishop Line users (320)



97% of users were of White British ethnicity.

5% of the using sample considered themselves to have a long term illness or disability that limits their activities and/or affects their travel choices.

Non users (150)

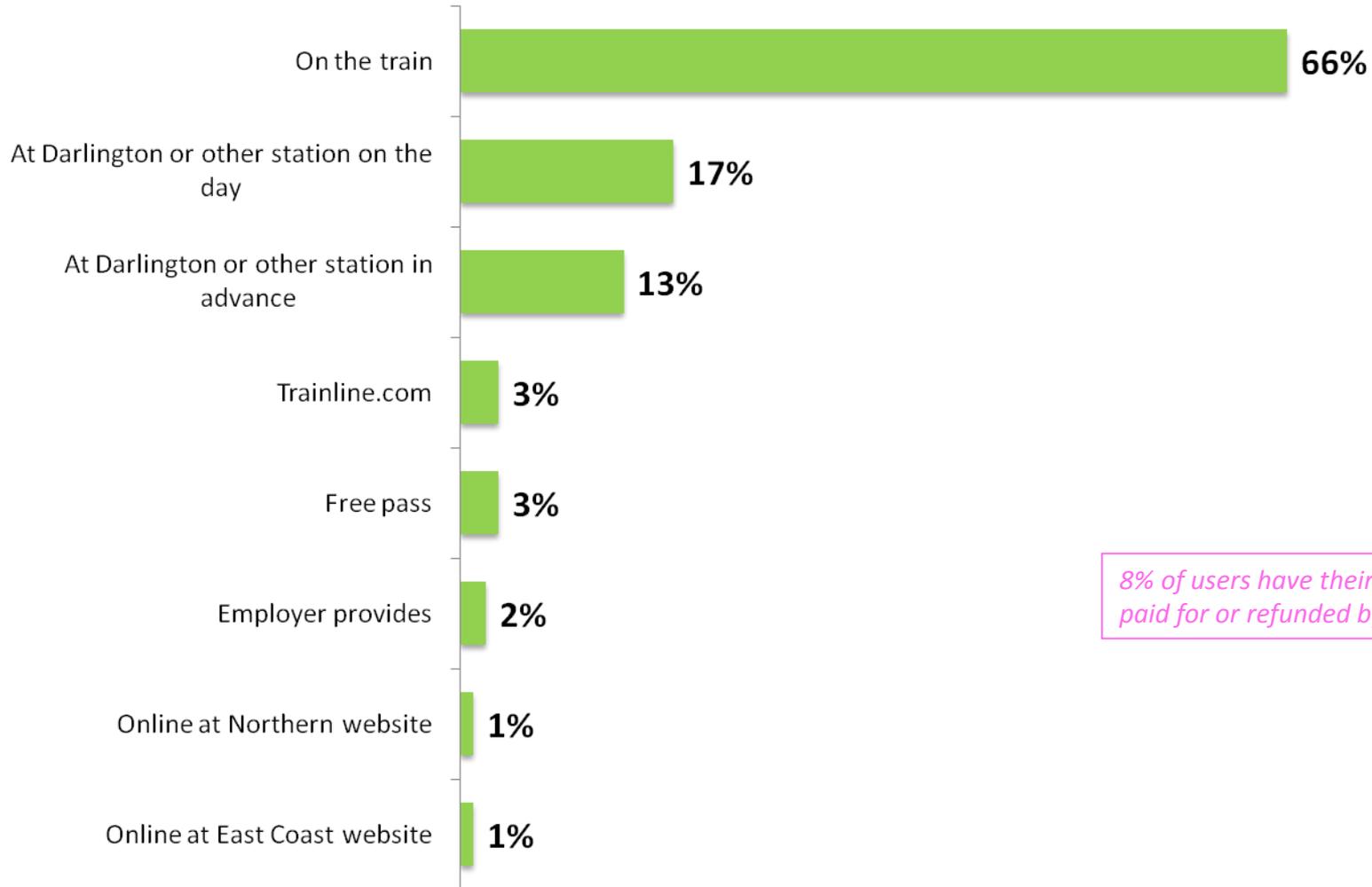


100% of non users were of White British ethnicity.

15% of the non using sample considered themselves to have a long term illness or disability that limits their activities and/or affects their travel choices.

Where do you buy your rail ticket?

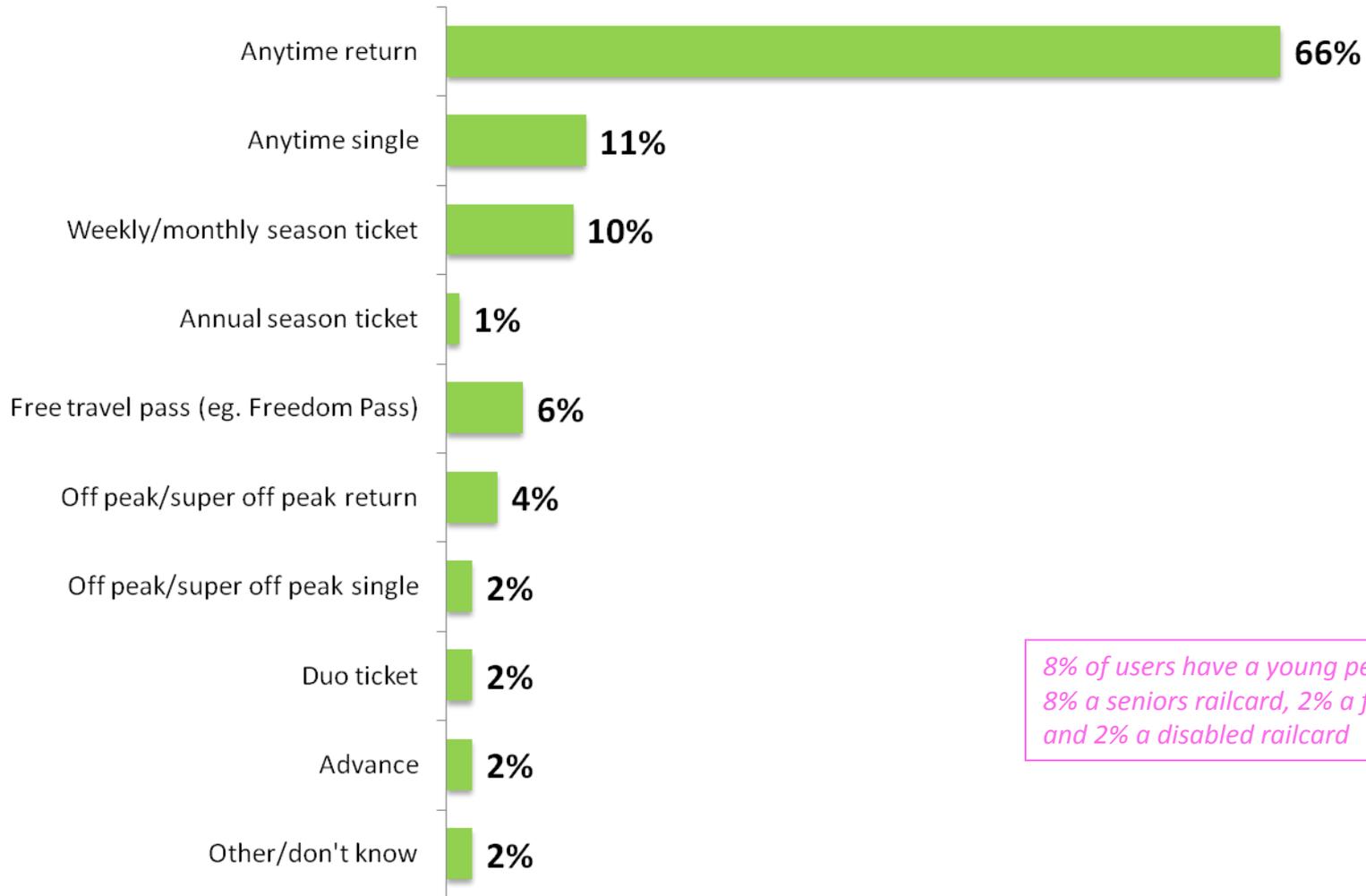
Bishop Line users (320)



8% of users have their travel costs paid for or refunded by their employer

What type of ticket do you buy most often?

Bishop Line users (320)



8% of users have a young persons railcard, 8% a seniors railcard, 2% a family railcard and 2% a disabled railcard