

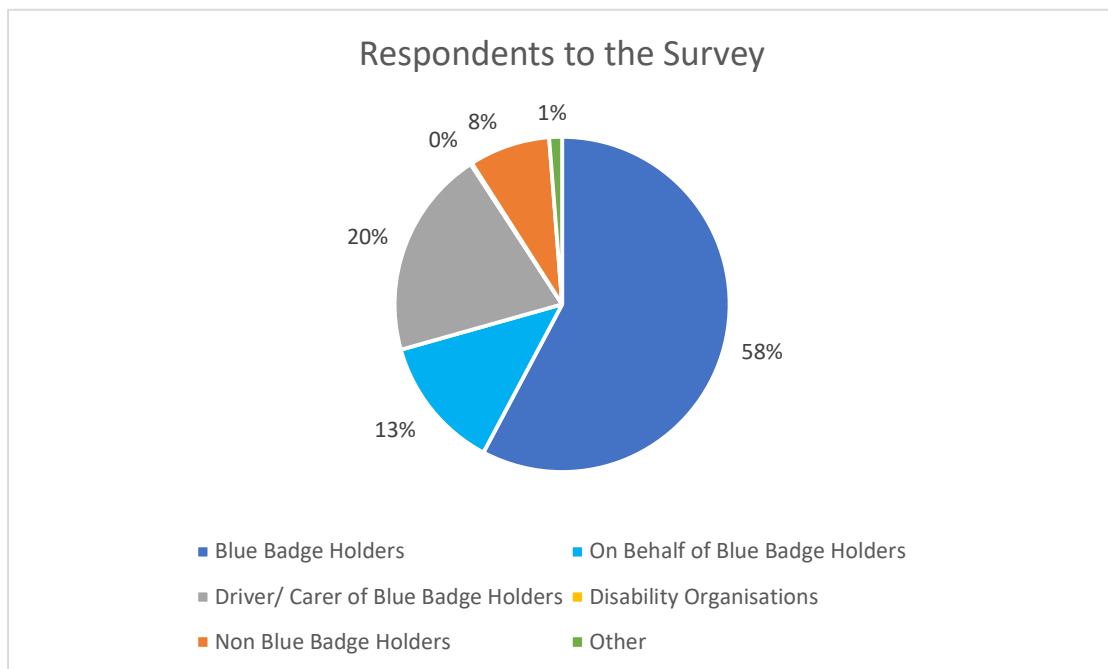


Blue Badge Survey Summary results October 2021

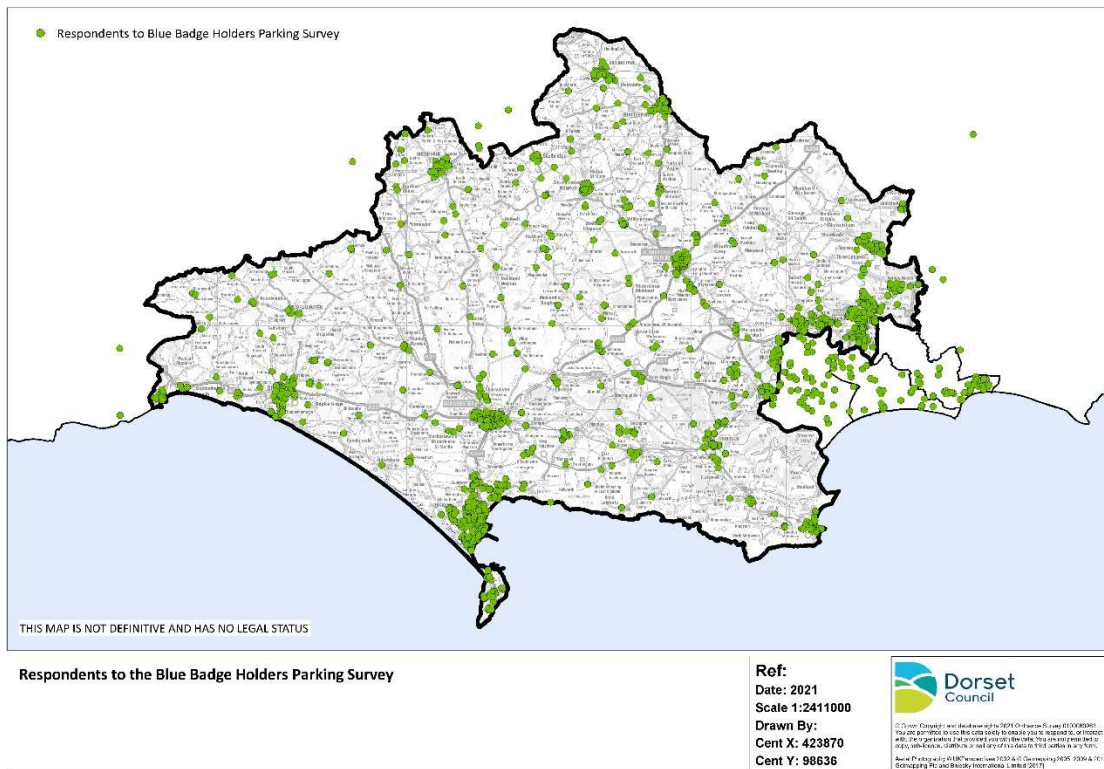
**Mark Simons
Corporate Consultation Officer**

Blue Badge Survey

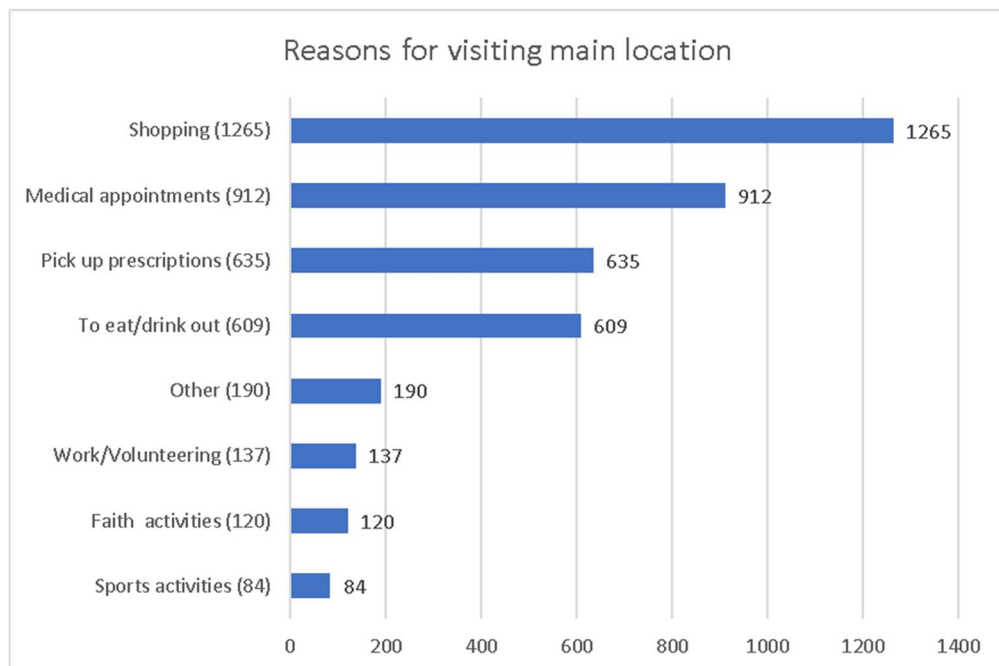
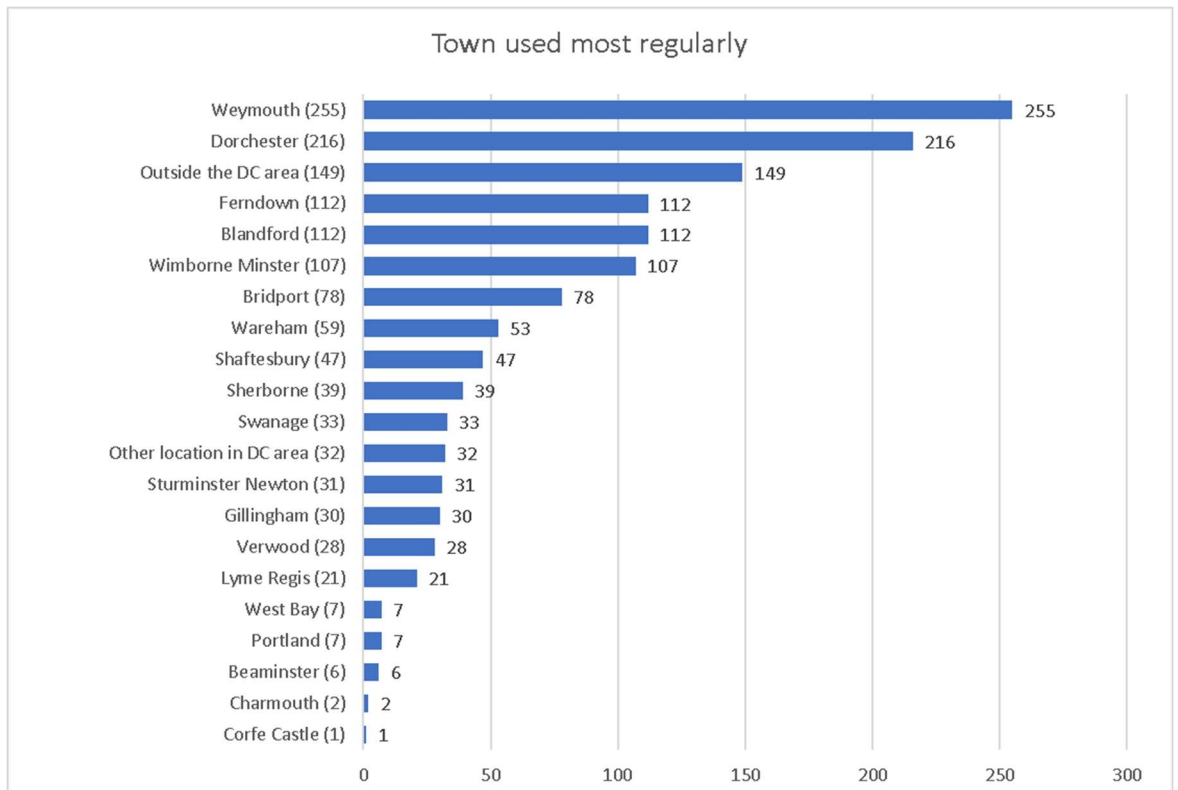
- **1,513 survey responses were received from across the wider area**
- **The survey ran from 13 August to 26 September 2021 inclusive.**
- Respondents came from across the age ranges with 55% aged 65 and older and 42% aged under 65.
- 57% of responses came from women compared to 40% from men – quite usual in council surveys.
- The biggest group of respondents was from Blue Badge holders themselves or people on behalf of Blue Badge holders, with 71% in these categories. A further 20% were drivers/carers of Blue Badge holders. Two disability organisations responded.



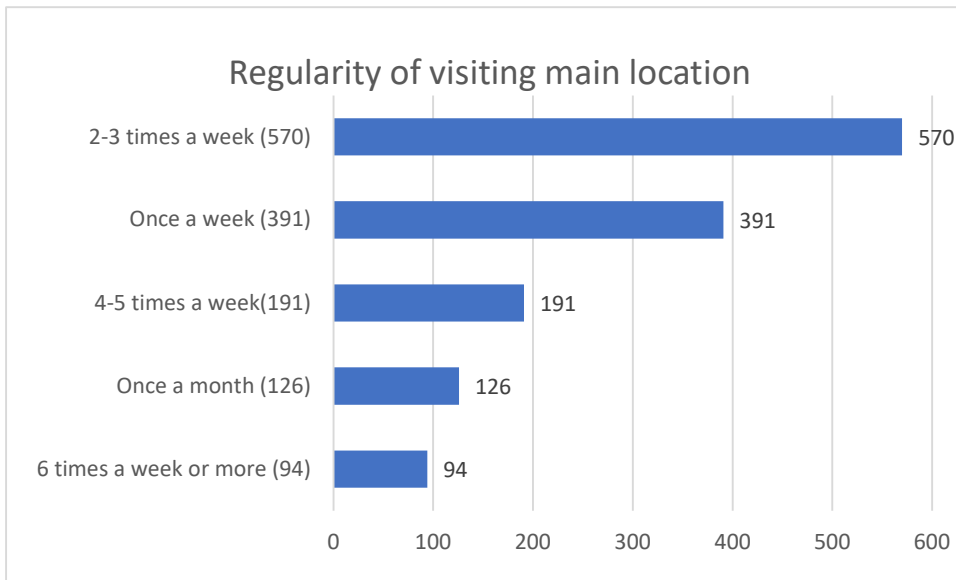
- The map(below) shows the distribution of the postcodes of respondents. The coverage is good, showing responses from right across the Dorset Council area and into Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.



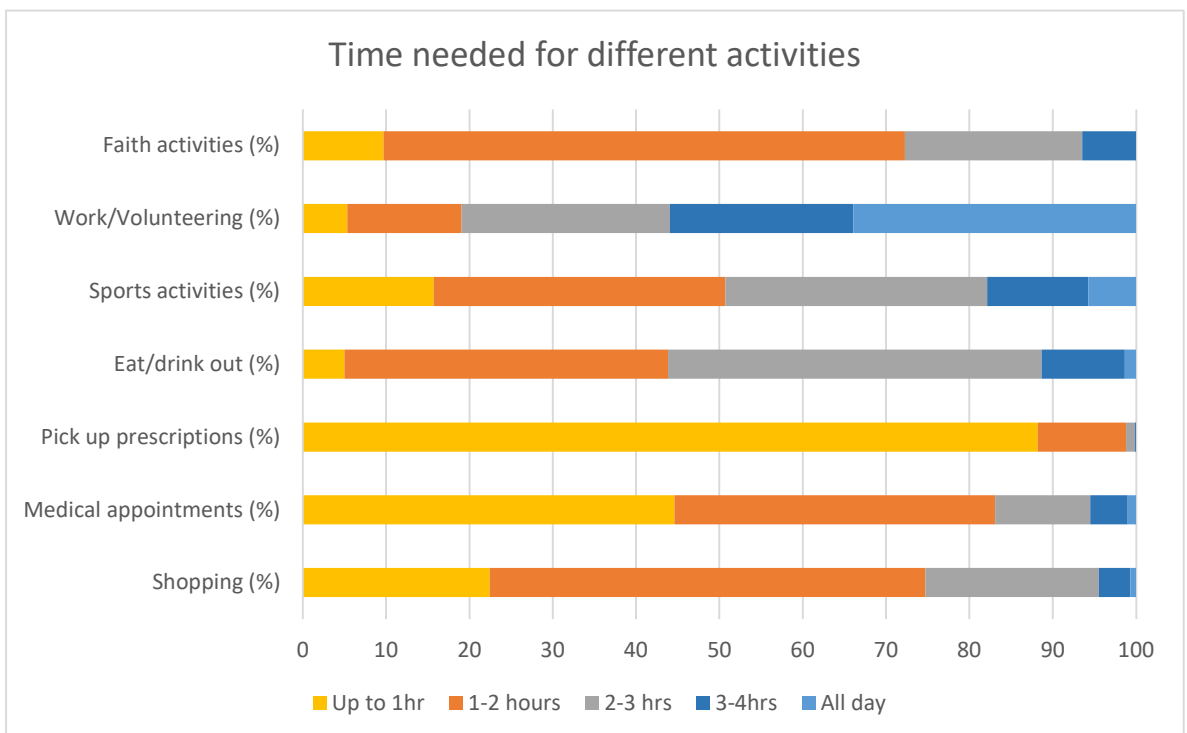
- There were responses from across the Dorset area, but three towns stood out from the other areas as respondents nearest main town they visited. Weymouth was the highest with 19% of responses (255 people) followed by Dorchester (16%). Beneath those was Blandford, Ferndown and Wimborne Minster with around 8%.
- Respondents were asked what towns they visited and which of those they visited the most. These are shown in the following chart.



- People were asked about their reasons for visiting their main location. Their principal reasons were predominately around shopping followed by health, involving medical appointments and prescriptions. Socialising/eating and drinking was the next most popular reason. These are shown in the chart above.



- Looking at how regularly people are visiting their main location it seems people's habits are quite varied. The most popular was 2-3 times a week. The second most popular was once a week. A considerable number (285) visited over 4 times a week.



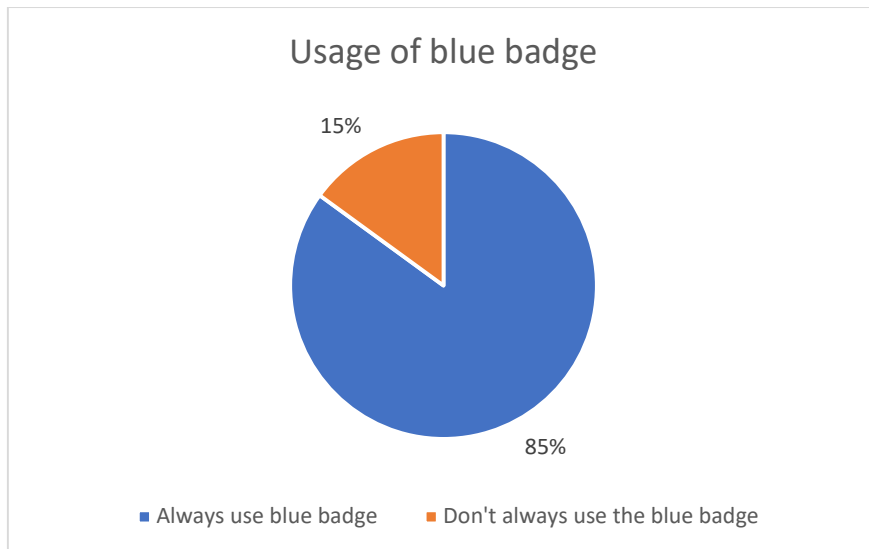
- Looking at the parking time needed for a variety of different activities the results are shown in the chart above and the table

below. We have excluded respondents who don't do these activities.

	Up to 1hr	1-2 hours	2-3 hrs	3-4hrs	All day
Shopping (%)	22	52	21	4	1
Medical appointments (%)	45	39	11	5	1
Pick up prescriptions (%)	88	11	1	0	0
Eat/drink out (%)	5	39	45	10	1
Sports activities (%)	16	35	31	12	6
Work/Volunteering (%)	5	14	25	22	34
Faith activities (%)	10	63	21	6	0

- The shortest time was needed for picking up a prescription and longest for work/volunteering.
- Looking at what could be done within a 2 hour window: 74% could do their shopping, 84% could attend their medical appointment, 99% get their prescription, 44% have a meal out, 51% do their sports activities, 19% could do their work/ volunteering, and 73% their faith activities.
- Looking at what could be done within a 3 hour window: 95% could do their shopping, 94% could attend their medical appointments, 100% could collect their prescriptions, 89% could have a meal out, 94% can do their sports activities, 44% can do their work/volunteering and 100% carry out their faith activities.
- The list of other activities included: Banking, cinema, trips out, exercise, hairdressers, library, school, visiting family, general leisure

Looking at whether Blue Badge holder/driver/carer, always use your/their Blue Badge when parking showed:



- Looking at the reasons for people not always using their Blue Badge showed the main reason was the lack of disabled spaces or the fact that the spaces were full.
- The second most common reason was people not using it as the badge holder themselves was not in the vehicle. Quite a few people mentioned that there were often more convenient spaces that were not specifically for disabled users.
- The table below shows the full analysis of the responses.

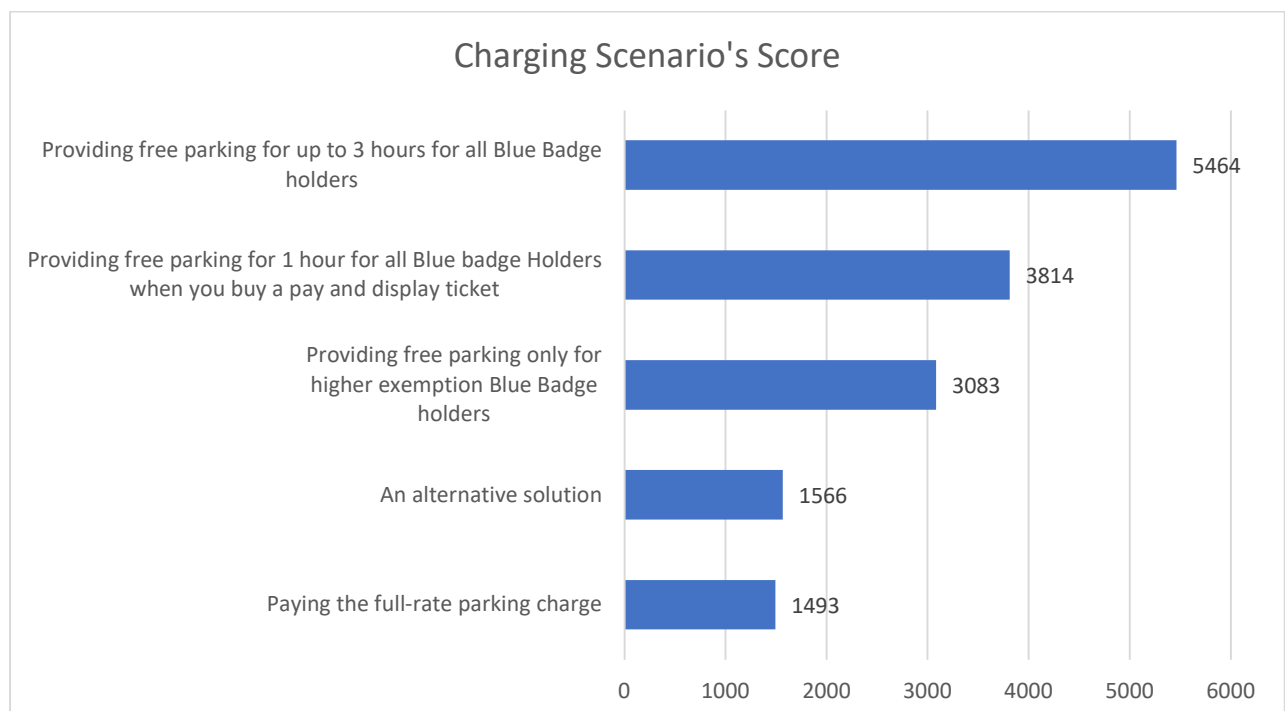
Issue	Mentions
No disabled spaces available/ Spaces full	76
Blue Badge holder not in the car	58
Other spaces are more convenient for destination	29
Have to pay anyway so not necessary	20
Leave disabled spaces to others who may need them more	11
Other parking options	8
Used to drop off only	3
Forget to take it	2
Happy to pay	1
3hrs is not enough	1
Stigma to using	1

- Respondents were asked where they usually parked with their Blue Badge, with up to two selections possible. The table below shows the results:

Parking location	Numbers
In a car park	1,018
On-street on yellow lines - as permitted	601
On-street in free parking bays	485
On-street in a pay & display bay	318

- Whilst the majority chose to park in car parks, parking on double-yellow lines (as permitted) was the second most popular location.
- At present, the majority of Blue Badge holders pay when they park in car parks in the Dorset Council area but get one-hour free parking. On-street parking is free for Blue Badge holders.

Four parking charging options (plus a user specified solution) were proposed for consideration and users were asked to rank the proposals by preference.



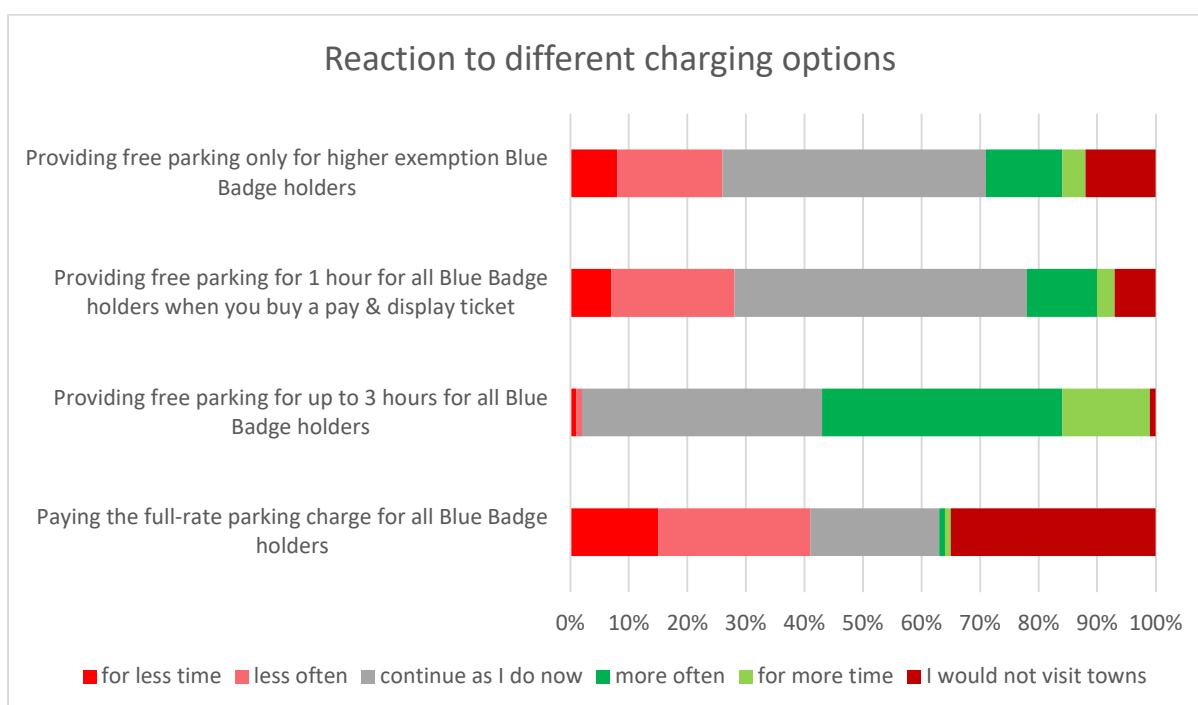
- The analysis method used was allocating 5 points for a first place down to 1 point for a fifth place when respondents were ranking.
- The chart above shows considerable support for free parking for 3 hours for Blue Badge holders. The second most popular choice was 1 hour free when Blue Badge holders buy a ticket. The third

most popular was free parking for high exemption Blue Badge Holders. Paying the full parking charge was the least popular option.

- Free parking at all times for Blue Badge holders was not a specific option and was not proposed and supported in a big way as an alternative option by respondents.

Respondents were asked how they felt they would react to the different charging options. The table below shows their responses (%).

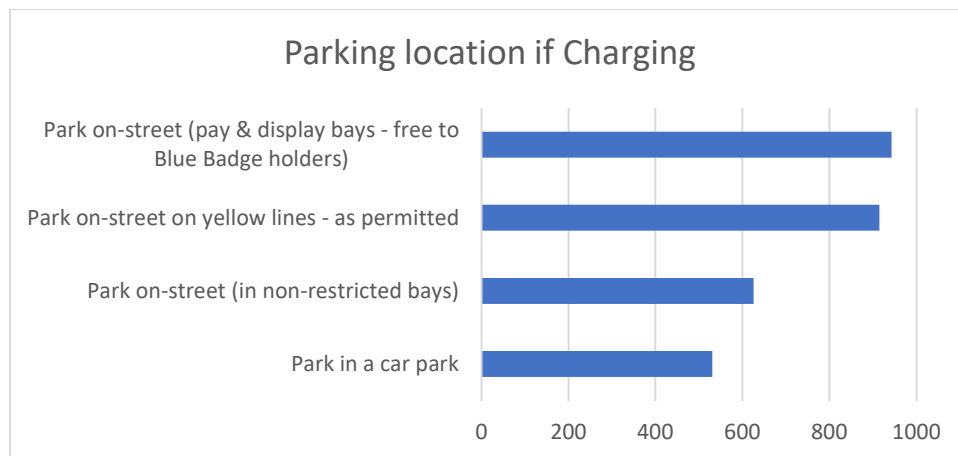
%	for less time	less often	continue as I do now	more often	for more time	I would not visit towns
Providing free parking only for higher exemption Blue Badge holders	8	18	45	13	4	12
Providing free parking for 1 hour for all Blue Badge holders when you buy a pay & display ticket	7	21	50	12	3	7
Providing free parking for up to 3 hours for all Blue Badge holders	1	1	41	41	15	1
Paying the full-rate parking charge for all Blue Badge holders	15	26	22	1	1	35



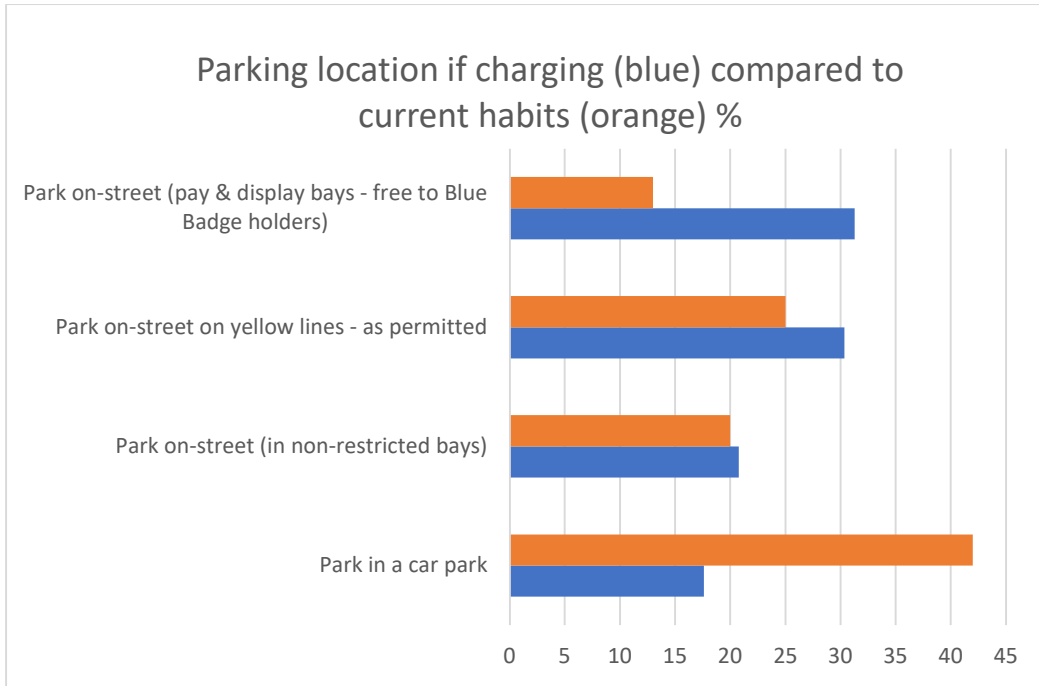
- The graph tries to highlight respondents reaction with red colours being a negative reaction and green colours more positive. The grey show no change in activity.
- So, for a number of people, whilst no change is the most popular choice, the option of 3 hours free parking would change behaviour bringing more people into town, and for longer. On the other hand charging full fees was felt to have the opposite effect.
- Other options such as free parking for higher exemption permits and providing an hour free with a ticket purchased both had limited effect. Many people would continue as they do now and a number would come into town for longer and more often.

Respondents were asked if parking charges were extended across Dorset Council car parks for all Blue Badge holders, how would this affect where they parked.

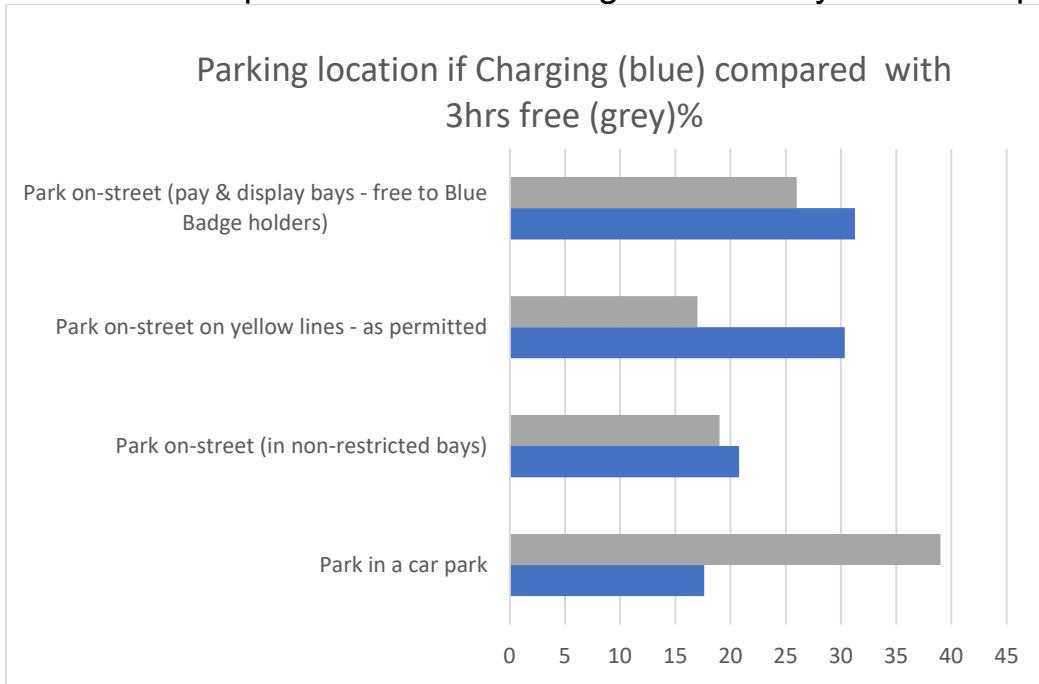
Parking location (could choose multiples)	responses
Park on-street (pay & display bays - free to Blue Badge holders)	943
Park on-street on yellow lines - as permitted	915
Park on-street (in non-restricted bays)	626
Park in a car park	531



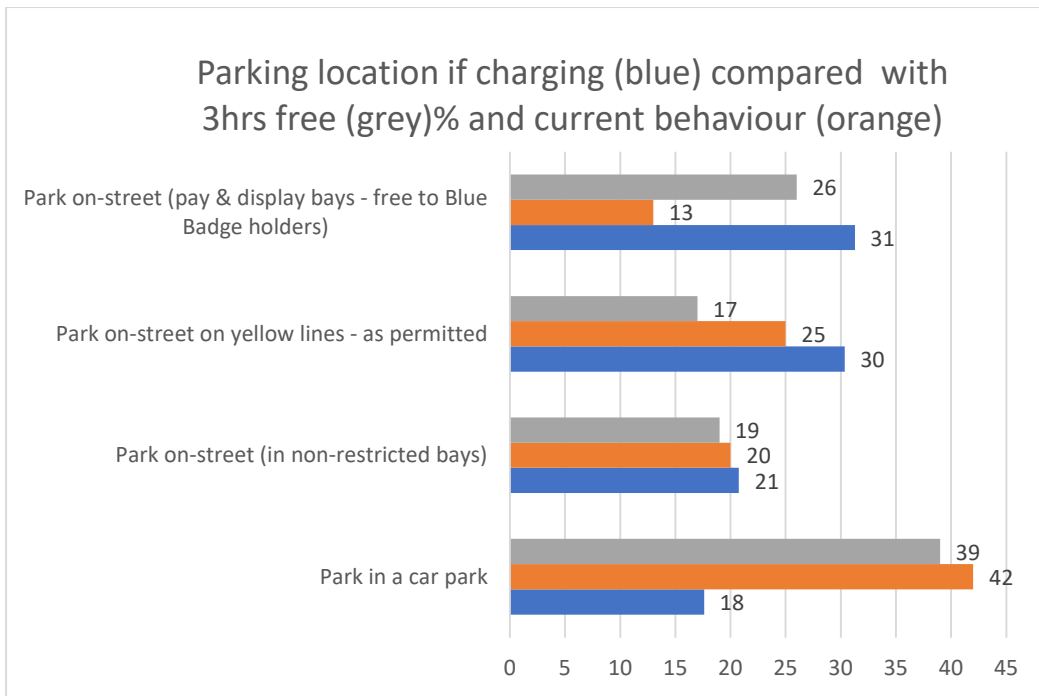
- As the table and chart shows if charging was applied across the area there would be a shift away from normal use, where Blue Badge holders mainly parked in car parks, to on street parking.
- All on-street parking methods increased for Blue Badge holders with charging at the same time as parking in car parks fell.



Respondents were then asked if car parking was free for 3 hours across Dorset Council car parks for all Blue Badge where they choose to park.



- So comparing the option of full charging to 3hrs free parking in car parks, you now find car park use is high. On street parking (in free bays), on street (pay and display), and parking on yellow lines all reduce. The reduction in yellow line parking is the most noticeable.



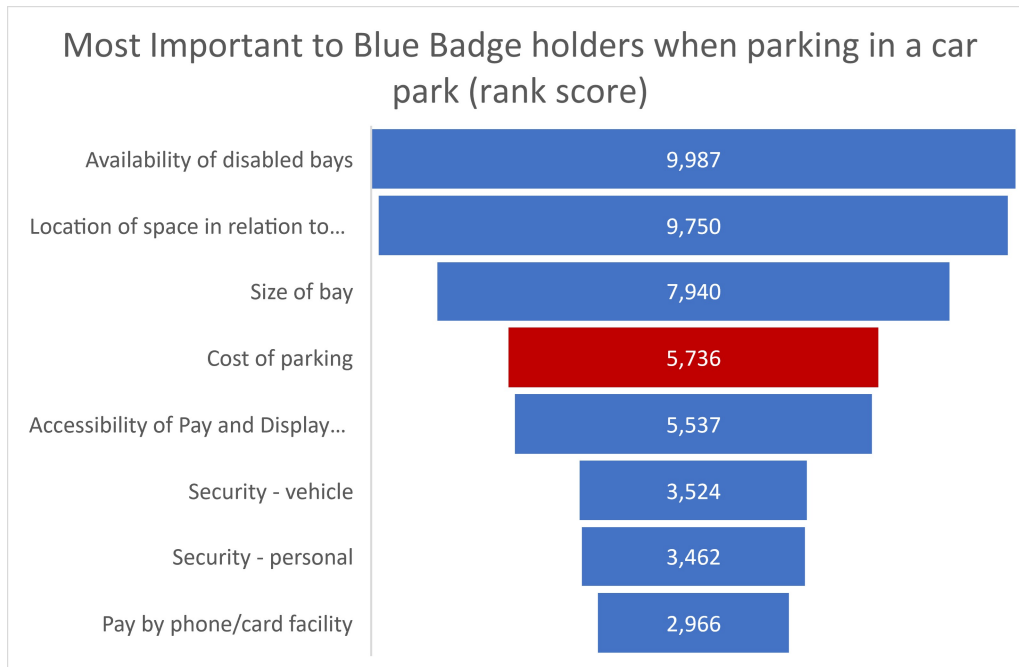
- The chart above compares parking location as suggested by respondents depending what parking regime is in place
- Current behaviour is shown in orange
- The situation when parking is charged for is shown in blue
- The situation when 3 hours free blue badge parking is offered shown in grey
- It is clear that introducing full charging would reduce car park use.
- Introducing 3 hours free would have a limited impact on car parking in car parks

- The table below shows the scores from the question about what was most important to a Blue Badge holder when parking in a car park
- The top three items all relate to the space itself: availability, location in relation to facilities and the size of the space

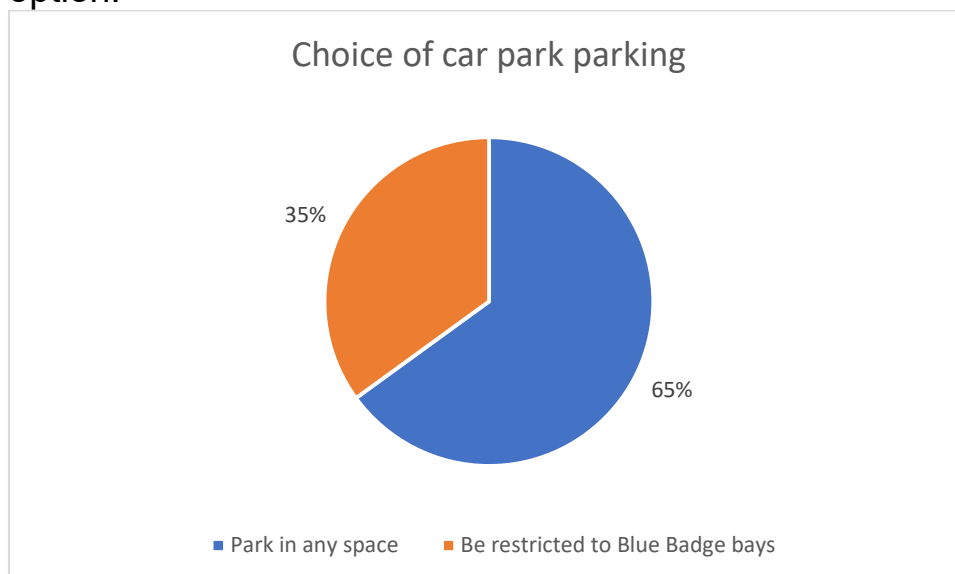
Most Important to Blue Badge holders when parking in a car park	score
Availability of disabled bays	9,987
Location of space in relation to local facilities	9,750
Size of bay	7,940
Cost of parking	5,736
Accessibility of Pay and Display machines	5,537

Security - vehicle	3,524
Security - personal	3,462
Pay by phone/card facility	2,966

- The cost of parking wasn't one of the most important issues



- When asked would you prefer to be able to park in any bay in a Dorset Council car park using your Blue Badge rather than be restricted to Blue Badge bays there was clear support to be able to park anywhere in the car park, with 65% supporting that option.



- 1,111 people explained why they chose either to use a disabled bay or would rather have the option to park elsewhere in the car

park. Many of those who chose to be restricted to disabled bays did so because they needed the extra access that those spaces normally brought. A typical comment was “I need a wider bay in order to open my door wide enough to get out of my car and also to get my wheelchair out of the car.”

- However, many respondents felt they didn't need the extra space the disabled space gave and would be happy to use any space, as often they could get closer to their destination. Also, some end spaces gave them the necessary space they needed to access their vehicle. The shortage of disabled bays was a regular theme throughout the responses. A typical comment was "There are very few disabled spaces in most car parks so it's hard to guarantee a space which is stressful when with a disabled person".
- There were 581 further comments. These covered a very wide ranges of issues affecting blue badge holders, often re-iterating views already expressed. The comments demonstrate the range of issues faced with many asking for whatever scheme is proposed to ensure it brought fairness, clarity and simplicity.

Diversity Data - Key points

Age

- 55% of respondents aged 65+
- 38% aged 35-64
- 4% aged under 35

Gender

- 40% male
- 57% female

Disability

- 68% with a disability – most with a physical disability and/or long standing illness
- Even a third of all drivers/carers had a disability themselves.

Ethnicity

- 93% white British

Religion

- 57% Christian
- 28% no religion