

Results of survey of Wairarapa train passengers

Introduction

Greater Wellington Regional Council carried out a survey of passengers on the Wairarapa trains on 22 June 2011 as part of the Wairarapa Public Transport Service Review.

A survey form was given to all passengers (including those boarding at Petone, Waterloo and Upper Hutt) on all north-bound Wairarapa train services on 22 June. The forms were then collected as passengers left the train. A copy of the survey form is attached as Appendix A. The survey form asked that it be completed by Wairarapa residents only.

A total of **725** completed survey forms were returned.

Travel patterns and preferences (Q1-14)

This section covers the travel patterns and preferences of passengers as covered by questions 1-14 of the survey form.

Residential location and travel to station (Q1, Q2)

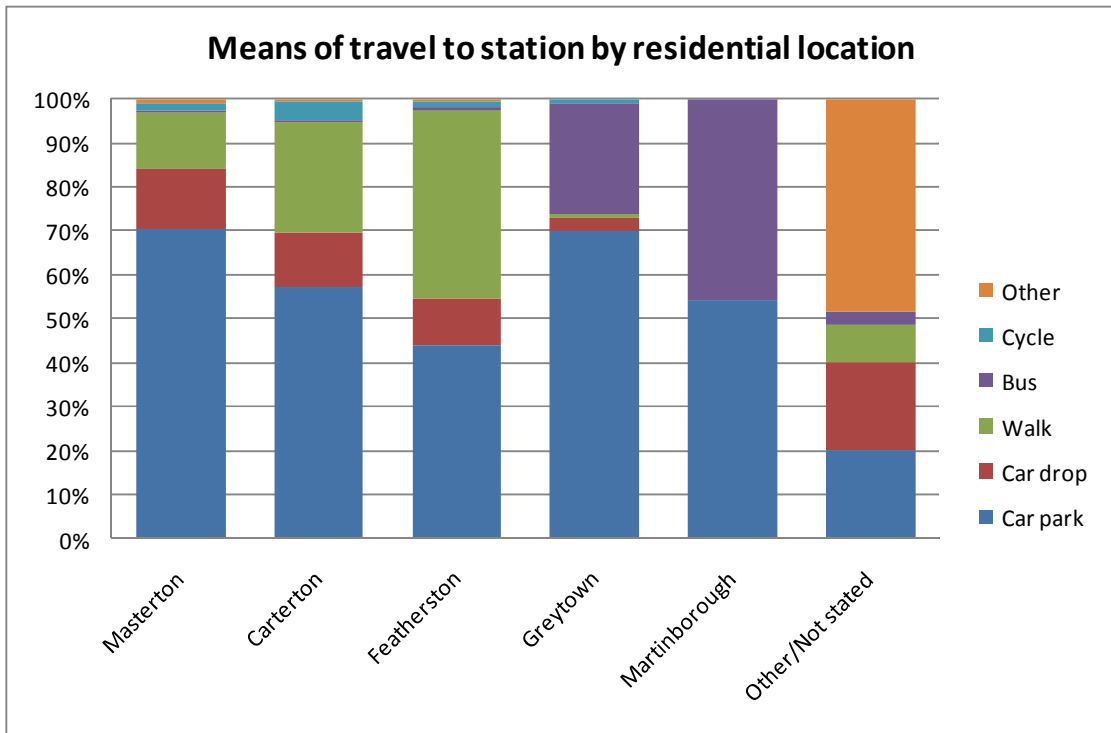
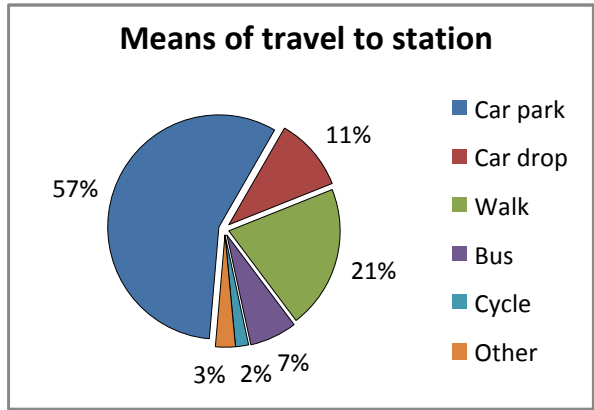
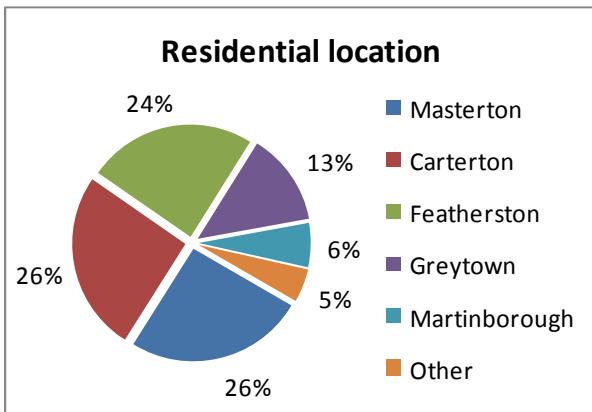
About 25% of passengers lived in each of Masterton, Carterton or Featherston. A further 13% of passengers lived in Greytown and 6% in Martinborough.

Car was the most popular means of access with 68% of passengers travelling to the station by car (57% parking their car at the station and 11% being dropped off). A further 23% of passengers walk or cycle to the station and 7% use the bus.

The use of walking and cycling was particularly high in Featherston where 44% of passengers walk or cycle to the station, and Carterton where 30% of passengers walk or cycle. 15% of passengers in Masterton walk or cycle.

The bus is more popular for people from Martinborough (46%) and Greytown (25%).

Residential location	Means of travel to station (number of responses)						Grand Total
	Car park	Car drop	Walk	Bus	Cycle	Other	
Masterton	131	25	24	1	3	2	186
Carterton	106	23	47	1	8	1	186
Featherston	77	19	75	2	2	1	176
Greytown	67	3	1	24	1	-	96
Martinborough	25	-	-	21	-	-	46
Other/Not stated	7	7	3	1	-	17	35
Grand Total	413	77	150	50	14	21	725

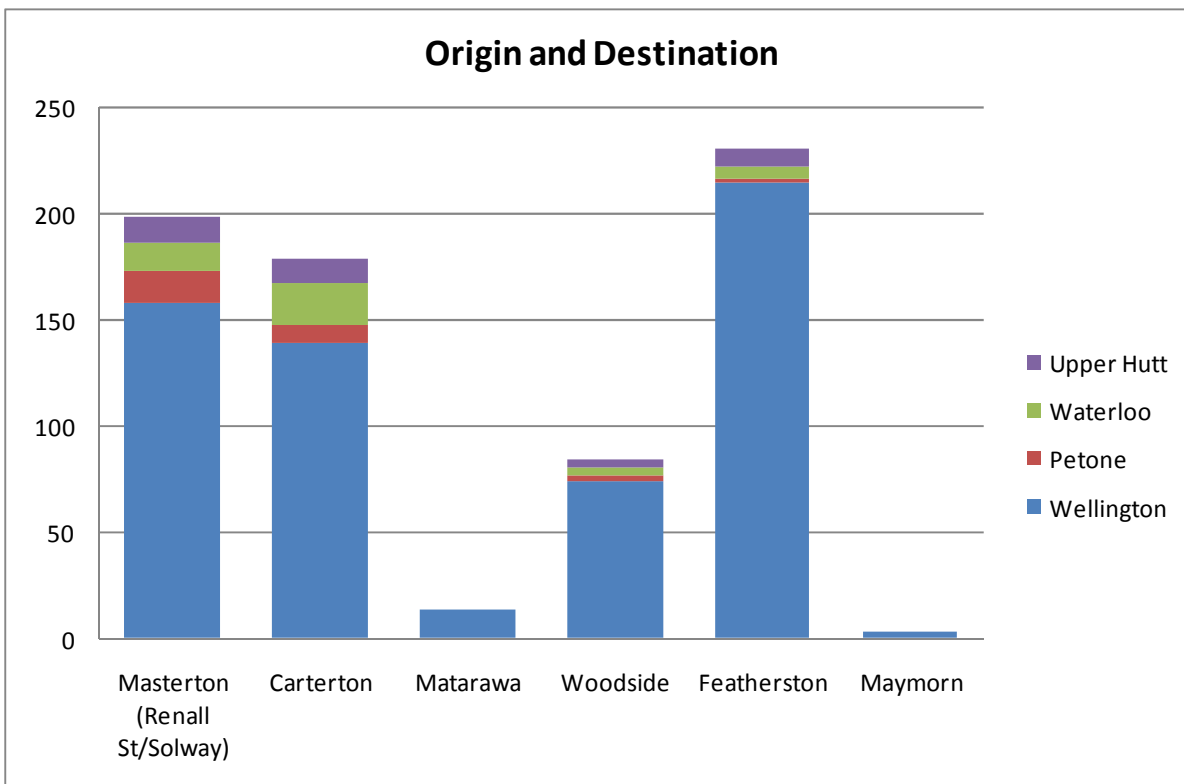
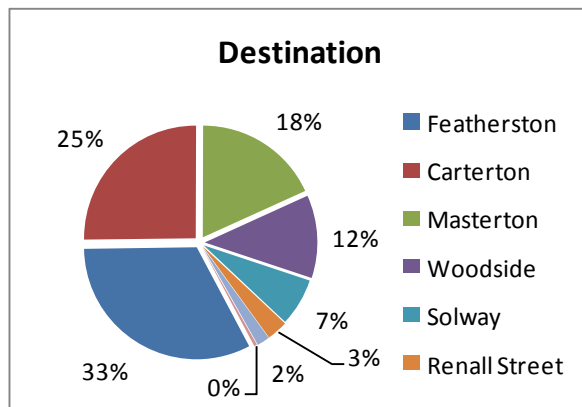
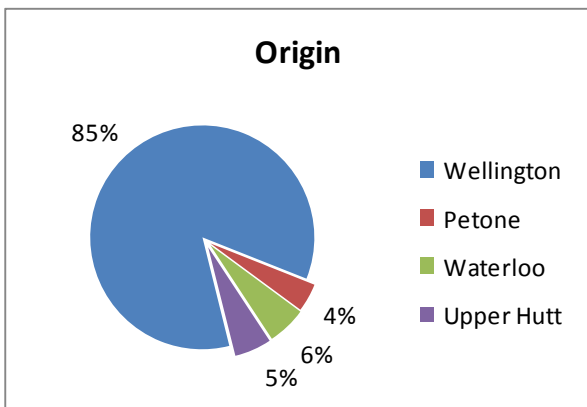


Trip origin and destination (Q3, Q4)

Most passengers (85%) catch the train from Wellington Station with the rest (15%) from the three Hutt Valley stations. Put another way, 85% of Wairarapa people are going to Wellington, with 5% to Upper Hutt, 6% to Waterloo and 4% to Petone. A significant number (21%) of passengers travelling to Masterton or Carterton are boarding in the Hutt Valley.

The main destination (or, put another way, the boarding point for the morning trains) is Featherston with 33% of passengers travelling to this station, followed by Masterton (28%), Carterton (25%) and Woodside (12%).

Destination	Trip origin				Grand Total
	Wgtn	Petone	Waterloo	Upper Hutt	
Masterton (Renall St/Solway)	158	15	13	13	199
Carterton	139	9	19	12	179
Matarawa	13	-	-	-	13
Woodside	74	3	3	4	84
Featherston	215	2	5	9	231
Maymorn	3	-	-	-	3
Grand Total	602	29	40	38	709



Why people use the train and frequency of travel (Q5, Q6, Q13)

The main reason people said they use the train is because it is cheaper than taking the car (56% of passengers) and a significant number also said it is quicker than driving (29% of passengers). Comfort (45% of passengers) and ability to work on the train (47% of passengers) were also important reasons. 26% of passengers also indicated that it's environmentally responsible and 20% said they had no other transport option.

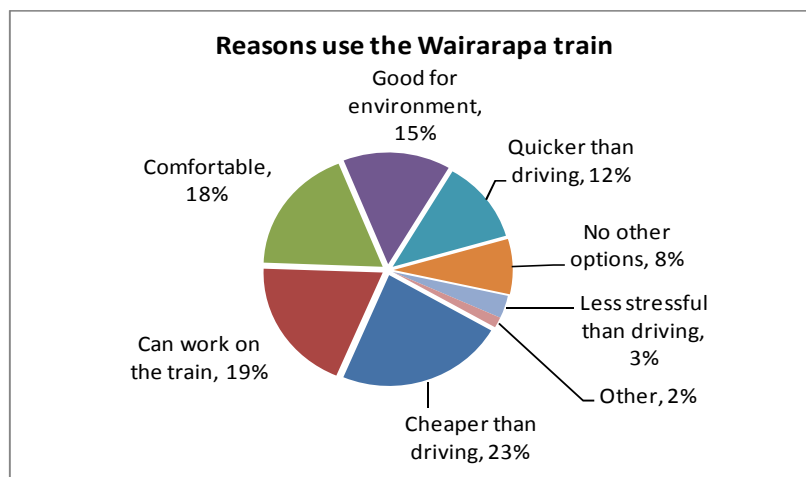
The main reason people use the train is for travel to work (90%).

Most passengers (81%) use the train four or more days per week.

Reasons Use Train (respondents could choose more than one option)	Num. of responses	Percentage of the 725 respondents with this response
It's cheaper than taking the car	408	56%
I can work on the train	341	47%
I like the comfort	326	45%
Its environmentally responsible	258	36%
Its quicker than driving	213	29%
I have no other transport option available	142	20%
Its less stressful than driving	59	8%
No parking issues	11	2%
Good train community/company	9	1%
Its safer than driving	3	0%
Other	4	1%

Primary purpose of trip	Num. of responses	Percentage
Work	656	90%
Education	25	3%
Social	15	2%
Shopping	6	1%
Medical	4	1%
Other	3	0%
(blank)	16	2%
Grand Total	725	100%

Frequency of travel	Num. of responses	Percentage
4 plus days a week	588	81%
2-3 days a week	64	9%
1 day a week	26	4%
Occasionally	31	4%
(blank)	16	2%
Grand Total	725	100%



Trains used and preferred train times (Q7, Q8, Q9, Q10, Q11)

The most popular current train departure times from Masterton are 5:45am (35% of passengers), 6:21am (39%) and 6:48am (20%).

The most popular train departure times from Wellington are 4:25pm (50% of passengers) and 5:30pm (38%). The 6:22pm has 7% of passengers.

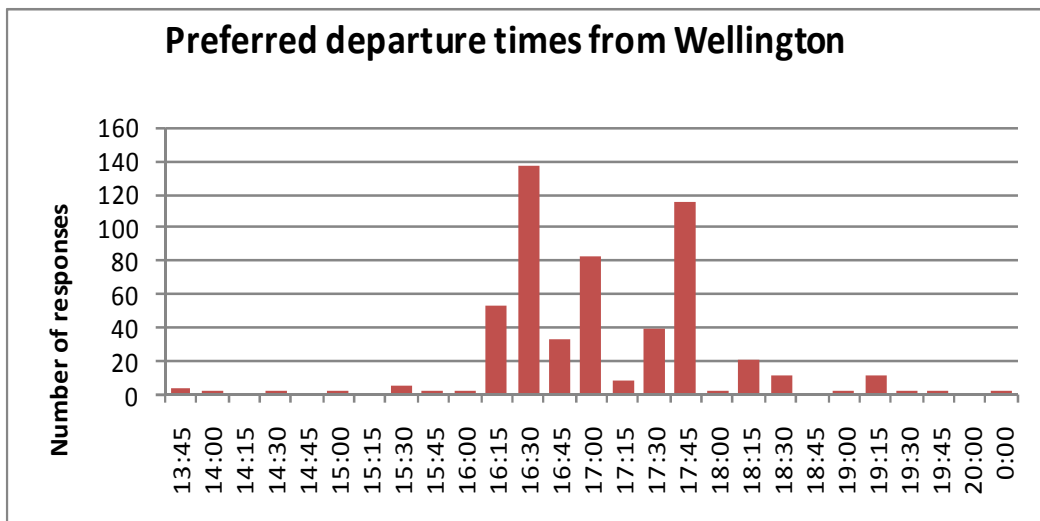
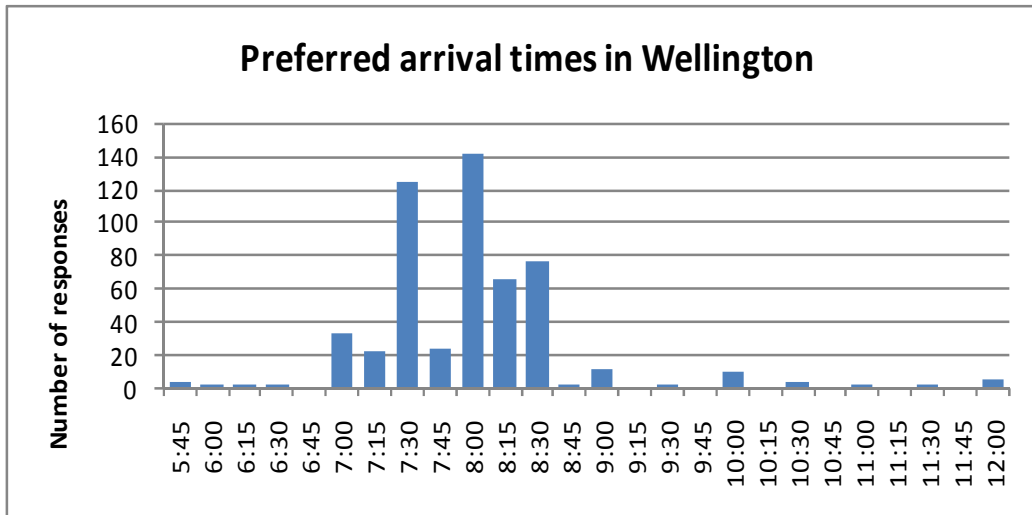
Virtually all trips are return trips (97%).

The preferred arrival times in Wellington appear to align well with the current train arrival times with most people wanting a train to arrive in Wellington around 7:30am and between 8:00am and 8:30am. Current train arrival times are 7:28am, 8:08am and 8:29am.

The preferred departure times from Wellington do not appear to align so well with current train departure times with most people wanting to depart Wellington at 4:30pm, 5:00pm and 5:45pm. Current train departure times are 4:25pm, 5:30pm and 6:22pm.

The Friday night train has been used by 35% of the respondents. 23% of respondents have used the morning weekend trains and 21% have used the afternoon weekend trains.

Times of trains used	Time	Num. of responses	Percentage of the 725 respondents
From			
Masterton	5:45	265	35%
Masterton	6:21	291	39%
Masterton	6:48	151	20%
Masterton	10:25	35	5%
Masterton	15:40	9	1%
Wellington	8:25	11	2%
Wellington	12:55	18	3%
Wellington	16:25	364	50%
Wellington	17:30	273	38%
Wellington	18:22	48	7%



Return trip? (Q7)	Num. of responses	Percentage
Yes	701	97%
No	24	3%
Grand Total	725	100%

Used Friday night and weekend trains? (Q9)	Num. of responses	Percentage of the 725 respondents
Train Period		
Late night Friday train	257	35%
Morning weekend trains	167	23%
Afternoon weekend trains	153	21%

Fares and ticketing (Q12, Q14)

Most passengers use adult monthly (54%) or 10-trip (33%) tickets.

A third (32%) of passengers said they would be prepared to pay higher fares for service improvements. 10% of passengers would pay up to \$1 more per trip and 17% up to \$2 more per trip. Some passengers indicated higher amounts but many appear to have entered a dollar amount per month (e.g. 10 passengers said they would pay \$20 more per month) making further analysis difficult.

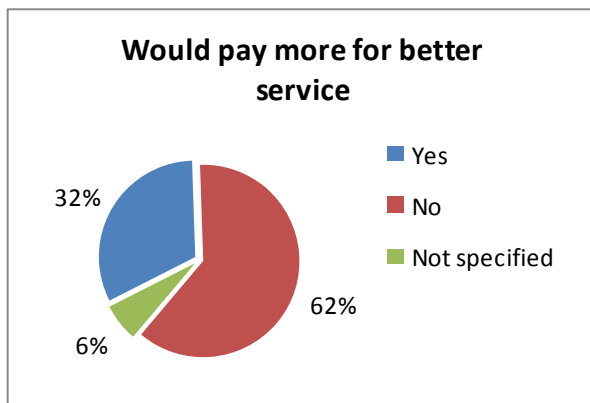
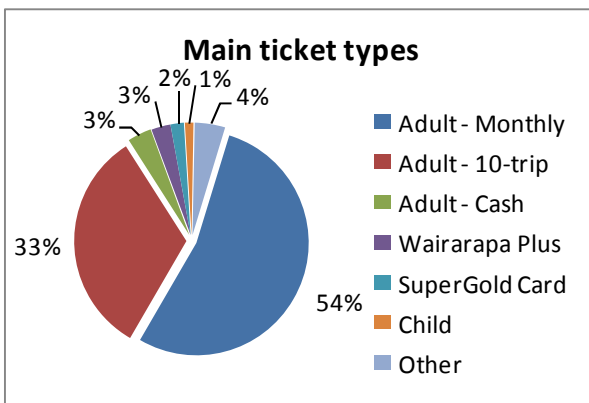
Main ticket type	Num. of responses	Percentage
Adult – Monthly	389	54%
Adult - 10-trip	236	33%
Adult – Cash	25	3%
Wairarapa Plus	20	3%
SuperGold Card	14	2%
Child	8	1%
Other/Unknown	33	5%
Grand Total	725	100%

Wairarapa Plus is made up of Greytown (11), Martinborough (9)

Child is made up of 10-trip (6), Monthly (1), Term Pass (1), Cash (1)

Other/Unknown is made up of Day trip (3). Private Card (3), Blind pass (1), Blank (25)

Would you pay more for better service?	Num. of responses	Percentage
Yes	232	32%
No	447	62%
Not specified	46	6%
Grand Total	725	100%



Passenger views on possible changes and suggestions (Q15, 16)

This section sets out passenger views on possible changes and suggestions as put forward in questions 15 and 16 of the survey form. The following table provides an indication of level of support for each of the suggestions.

Suggestion	Support suggestion?		
	Yes	No	Maybe
More peak services/extra capacity	86%	13%	0%
Make one train express	73%	26%	1%
More off peak services	72%	27%	1%
More weekend services	66%	33%	0%
Remove Friday night service	42%	56%	1%
More refreshments	38%	62%	0%
Major event services	78%	20%	1%
More space for cycles	35%	64%	1%

All comments on each of these suggestions have been summarised and grouped to enable analysis.

More peak services and/or capacity

Suggestion

More peak-time trains services and/or more capacity (the six car SE carriages currently operating on the Upper Hutt line may shortly be available for use on the Wairarapa line. But they will need to have toilets installed and need some other modifications. Funding for these modifications is not currently available).

Feedback

About 85% of comments supported more peak services with a mix of support for more capacity and more services. The main reasons given for this was that many people have to stand (or sit on the floor) on the services, particularly those boarding northbound services at Waterloo and Upper Hutt. Most people wanted more capacity and identified particular problems with the 5:45am service from Masterton, and the 4.25pm and 5.30pm service from Wellington. It was noted that the 6.22pm service from Wellington has plenty of spare capacity (in fact two carriages on this train are usually un-opened).

Make one train an express train

Suggestion

Make one of the trains an “express” train, stopping at fewer stops (perhaps stopping only at Masterton, Carterton, Featherston, Upper Hutt and Wellington).

Feedback

73% of respondents supported this, but this support was conditional on which train would be express, and which stations it would stop at. There was a variety of views as to which train should be express, and which stations should be included as part of an express service. Many doubted the value of such a service given that there are only three trains and the disruption it would cause to many travellers.

More off-peak services and/or shuttle service

Suggestion

More off-peak trains, perhaps shuttling between Masterton and Upper Hutt and linking with the electric units at Upper Hutt.

Feedback

73% of people supported this. Many people commented about the inconvenience caused by the current long gaps between off-peak services, particularly at the weekend. The idea of a transfer at Upper Hutt seemed to be acceptable provided there was no fare penalty involved, and little delay caused by changing trains.

Opposition to the proposal was because of not wanting to change trains, potential delays caused by the change in trains, and the longer journey time from the Upper Hutt-Wellington train having to stop at all station.

More weekend train services

Suggestion

More weekend train services.

Feedback

66% supported this, commenting that the only current option for Wairarapa people has them leaving Masterton at 7.50am and getting home at 8.30pm (compared to a more friendly timetable for those starting their trip in Wellington. A mid-day service was a popular suggestion.

A number of submitters suggested that the shuttle idea to Upper Hutt would work well for weekend services.

Many of those opposing the suggestion said priority should be given to improving the week-day services.

Removal or replacement of Friday night service

Suggestion

Either removing the Friday night service (which has few passengers), or replacing it with buses. The savings could be diverted to extra weekend services.

Feedback

Around 40% of comments supported changes to the Friday night service. Of those that supported changes, a very small number said the Friday night service should be removed altogether and about 30% stated that buses would be fine.

Around 55% of comments did not support changes to Friday night services. Of those that did not support changes about 20% stated that buses should not be used and a further 20% suggested changes to departure times. The main concern with buses was the Rimutaka Hill Road and drunk people with comments such as “Vomit comet” and “Buckets n Board” and the need for a toilet. As for the departure time most people wanted an earlier departure time as waiting till 10:25pm was too late for many with suggestions ranging from 7:30pm to 9:30pm.

It is clear that the Friday night service is important for many people to allow them to socialise in Wellington, but the service is too late for many and too early for others. There is a clear call for a service around 8-9pm either instead or in addition to a later service. Buses may be acceptable.

More refreshments

Suggestion

More refreshments available on the trains.

Feedback

38% of people supported this. Many commented that a servery area already exists in each train. Several people said the current vending machines often don't work. Basic requirements such as water and coffee seemed most popular.

Others considered more refreshments to be a low priority, and suggested the servery area be converted to seating to assist with the capacity issues.

Train services for special events

Suggestion

Train services to major events in Wellington/Wairarapa.

Feedback

78% supported this.

Many however considered it to be a low priority, and doubted the popularity of such a train given the population of the area. Many said that the focus of the rail service should be to cater for trips to work.

More capacity for cycles

Suggestion

More capacity to take cycles on the trains.

Feedback

35% supported this.

Most support was for more capacity on weekend services. Many comments said more cycle capacity should not be at the expense of seating on peak services.

Other suggestions/comments (Q16)

Other suggestions/comments were made with number of comments by theme listed below.

Theme	Comments	Theme	Comments
Capacity	87	Infrastructure	10
Catering	9	Lack of action	8
Comfort	16	Luggage	3
Communication	29	Maintenance	18
Communications	4	Parking	2
Connections	4	Real Time Info	10
Customer service	36	Reliability	178
Fares	41	Reliability - Units hold up	35
Fares – Ticketing	12	Shelter	2
Focus on basics	26	Stations	11
Frequency	4	Survey	15
Funding levels	7	Train Times	43
General	47	Travel time	17
Hutt people	26	Wifi	23
		Grand Total of Comments	723

Reliability was by far the major issue raised, accounting for 25% of all comments. Not keeping to the timetable was the main concern. Delays caused by units, especially at Upper Hutt station, also received many comments.

The next major issue was capacity, and in particular there not being enough seats for all passengers. Many respondents said they have had the experience of standing for the whole trip. Most problems seemed to be with trips from Wellington, with many mentions of Upper Hutt people taking seats that should be available for Wairarapa people. Several suggested that the distribution of carriages should be altered, with more carriages on the busy trains and less on the less busy services.

Many comments were received on fares. Many said the service is expensive, and commented that fares should not be increased until the reliability and capacity issues were resolved.

There were many positive comments. There were several comments that if the reliability and capacity issues could be solved, the service would be excellent. The comfort of the carriages, and the train-staff all received many compliments.

Appendix A: Survey Form

Survey of Wairarapa train services

Greater Wellington Regional Council is currently reviewing public transport services in Wairarapa. To help us provide train services that meet your needs, please take a few minutes to complete this survey form. Then either hand it back to the survey assistant or drop it in the box by the door as you get off the train.

Please remember that funding is limited, and the extra cost of funding any extra services will need to be off-set by reductions somewhere else (unless users are prepared to pay more for services).

If you are *not* a Wairarapa resident please *do not* complete this survey.

If you would like more information, you can visit www.gw.govt.nz/wairarapareview. Or you can email ptreview@gw.govt.nz. Thank you for your help.

Some background information

Greater Wellington Regional Council contracts Tranz Metro to provide the following train services between Masterton and Wellington:

- ❖ Three peak-time services in each direction each week-day.
- ❖ Two off-peak services in each direction on weekdays and at weekends.
- ❖ A late night Friday service in each direction.

Current patronage levels and costs

- ❖ The trains carry about 690,000 passengers a year.
- ❖ Greater Wellington spends about \$25m a year to subsidise train services in the Wellington region. Ratepayers contribute 40% of this and the New Zealand Transport Agency contributes the balance.
- ❖ Wairarapa ratepayers contribute about \$345,000 a year to subsidise the Wairarapa trains.

Please tick one box which best corresponds to your answer, unless specified otherwise.

1. Which area (approximately) do you live in?

- Masterton.
- Carterton.
- Greytown.
- Featherston.
- Martinborough.
- Other _____

2. How do you usually travel to the train station in Wairarapa?

- Car and park at the station.
- Car and be dropped off at the station.
- Bus.
- Walk.
- Cycle.
- Other _____

3. Where did you board this train?

- Wellington.
- Petone.
- Waterloo.
- Upper Hutt.
- Other _____

4. Where will you get off this train?

- Masterton.
- Renall Street.
- Solway.
- Carterton.

- Matarawa.
- Woodside.
- Featherston.

5. How many days a week do you usually travel on the Wairarapa train?

- About 4-5 days a week.
- About 2-3 days a week.
- About one day a week.
- other (please state) _____

6. What was the primary purpose of your journey today?

- Work.
- Education.
- Shopping.
- Social.
- Medical.
- Other _____

7. Do you usually make the return journey when you travel in on the Wairarapa train?

- Yes.
- No.

8. Which Wairarapa trains do you usually use? Tick one for each direction of travel

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5.45am from Masterton. | <input type="checkbox"/> 8.25am from Wellington. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6.21am from Masterton. | <input type="checkbox"/> 12.55pm from Wellington. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6.48am from Masterton. | <input type="checkbox"/> 4.25pm from Wellington. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10.25am from Masterton. | <input type="checkbox"/> 5.30pm from Wellington. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3.40pm from Masterton. | <input type="checkbox"/> 6.22pm from Wellington. |

9. Do you use the following trains?

- Late night Friday train.
- Morning weekend trains.

- Afternoon weekend trains.

10. If you travel to Wellington, what would be your preferred arrival time in Wellington?

11. If you travel from Wellington, what would be your preferred departure time from Wellington?

12. What ticket type do you usually use?

- Adult Monthly Adult 10-trip Adult cash
- Child Monthly Child 10-trip Child cash
- Child Term Pass SuperGold
- Wairarapa Plus (Greytown) Wairarapa Plus (Martinborough)
- Other: _____

13. Why do you use the Wairarapa train? (you may tick more than one answer)

- I like the comfort.
- I can work on the train.
- It's environmentally responsible to use the train.
- I have no other transport option available.
- It's cheaper than taking the car.
- It's quicker than driving.
- Other: _____

14. Would you be prepared to pay higher fares in order to see an improved service?

- Yes, but no more than \$____ per trip.
- No.

15. We are interested in hearing your views about several suggestions for possible changes to the Wairarapa train service. These include:

More peak-time train services and/or more capacity (the six SE carriages currently operating on the Upper Hutt line may shortly be available for use on the Wairarapa line. But they will need to have toilets installed and need some other modifications. Funding for these	
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modifications is not currently available).	
More off-peak trains, perhaps shuttling between Masterton and Upper Hutt and linking with the electric units at Upper Hutt.	
Make one of the trains an “express” train, stopping at fewer stops (perhaps stopping only at Masterton, Carterton, Featherston, Upper Hutt and Wellington)?	
More weekend train services.	
More refreshments available on the trains.	
Either removing the Friday night service (which has few passengers), or replacing it with buses. The savings could be diverted to extra weekend services.	
Train services to major events in Wellington/Wairarapa.	
More capacity to take bikes on the trains.	

16. Do you have any other comments, or suggestions for improvements?

Thank-you for taking the time to give us your feedback. Please hand the survey form back to the survey assistant or drop it in the box by the door as you get off the train.

If you would be prepared to participate in a focus group to discuss these issues further, please provide your name and contact details (preferably an email address) below. The meetings will likely be held at night in Wairarapa.

Name: _____

Contact details: _____