Let’s Carpool - Biennial Survey 2014

A report on the progress of Let’s Carpool, done through a survey of the national database. The survey was designed by Auckland Transport and Greater Wellington Regional Council. The Analysis has been done by Jill Corrin (GWRC) and the Report prepared by Christian Williams (GWRC), with feedback from regional Let’s Carpool partners.
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Background
The Let’s Carpool website was formed in 2009 by Greater Wellington Regional Council. The website became national in 2012, and now includes eight of the larger regions from around the country. The number of people registered on the site has grown steadily and has now passed 10,000 people.

Monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the website on people’s commuting habits is an important part of the project. Two main purposes are served by evaluation – allowing feedback from customers about what works well and what could be done better and secondly to assess the value of the service in terms of its benefits and costs. When Let’s Carpool was established as a national website, it was decided by Auckland Transport (AT) and Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) to undertake biennial evaluations. Previous evaluations were done in 2010 and 2012 but covered only the Wellington region, as the 2012 survey was done just prior to the national expansion. This survey will therefore provide valuable insight into the progress of Let’s Carpool and views on carpooling in general since the service went national.

Methodology
Information for this evaluation was accessed from two sources. The first is the actual commuter database, which contains information on each registration, along with additional information for many people on how they travelled at sign-up, their region, gender, match-success, current status and contact information. This was downloaded in spreadsheet form (as at 7th October 2014), thus providing a record of all registrants on that date. The second source is a comprehensive survey designed to answer key questions about how useful the website has been in helping people find carpooling matches, and to garner other views and feedback on future developments in the carpooling area.

The survey was developed by Auckland Transport (AT) and Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), with other regions given opportunity for input. GWRC facilitated the survey using its Checkbox survey software. The survey was sent out to all registrants on 14th October, and two reminders were sent over the subsequent 10 days. The survey remained open until 3rd November 2014. Ten $100 Z Energy gift cards were offered as a random prize draw to incentivise a higher response rate. The survey was by invite only, so only people receiving the invite email (i.e. registered users) could complete the survey.

The survey was sent to 8,718 email addresses across the country. A total of 1,462 responses to the survey were received, giving a response rate of 16.8%. While it would have been desirable for this rate to be higher to ensure it is representative of the full database, it is still a high number of individual responses, giving plenty of valuable feedback on Let’s Carpool. The full survey can be viewed in Appendix 2.

The evaluation of the results was primarily done by the data analysis team in GWRC, with opportunity for feedback from other regions.

1 This excluded registrants without functioning email addresses, and those who had previously unsubscribed from correspondence from Let’s Carpool.
Results

Database Registrants and Demographics
As at 7th October 2014, there were 10,603 registrants in the database. Figure 1 shows the growth of registrants, shown on the same date in October for each year prior. There is a noticeable jump in 2012, which may be in part due to the addition of Auckland’s existing carpool database into the Let’s Carpool system.

![Figure 1: Total Registrants on Let’s Carpool as at 7 October of each year.](image)

Of the total registrants, just over half (5,377) are registered in Auckland, around a third (3,129) from Wellington, 1,566 from other regions and 532 not registered in any particular region. Figure 2 shows the registrants for each region, including the breakdown between ‘Active’ and ‘Inactive’ users.

![Figure 2: Regional registrations, also showing the breakdown between Active and Inactive users.](image)

2 If no work address is given, registrants are not assigned to a region. Often this is where they are looking for a one-off long-distance trip as opposed to a regular commute.

3 People can mark themselves Inactive by stating on the site that they are not currently looking for a carpool. It can also be done through a purge process where emails are sent requesting users to update their details. Users who have not logged in for more than a year can then be made Inactive if they fail to log in. This has been done primarily in Auckland and Wellington, to keep the database current.
Gender is also asked during registration (optional). Of those who gave their gender, 58.2% are male and 41.8% are female, perhaps indicating that men are in general slightly more comfortable carpooling with strangers. Anecdotal observations have also shown that women are more likely to use the ‘match with same sex only’ function on the website.

The gender balance is shown in Figure 3 below. It is interesting to note that at the time of the 2010 survey, the majority (54.5%) of the registrants were female. Gender was not given in the 2012 report.

![Figure 3: Gender breakdown from the database.](image)

The age of registrants was asked during the evaluation. The results found an evenly spread distribution of age groups, especially between 25-54 years of age (together consisting of about 75% of the registrants). Few users were younger than 18 (a requirement in the terms and conditions) or older than 65. This can be seen in Figure 4 below.

![Figure 4: Age distribution of Let's Carpool registrants from the survey.](image)
The employment status of the respondents was also gauged. As expected, the vast majority of users are in regular, full-time employment (79%). A further 10% were in part-time or shift work, and 8% were students. This is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Employment status, from survey responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time work</td>
<td>1156</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time work</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shift work</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study full-time</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study part-time</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/No response</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1462</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mode of Travel
One of the key indicators used to assess the success of Let’s Carpool is to look at the main mode of travel. As this is asked on registration to Let’s Carpool, we can compare responses from the survey with the main travel mode at sign-up. Table 2 and Figure 5 show that there has been a clear decrease in the number of commuters who drive alone on their commute. Drive alone trips have reduced by about 7% among registrants, while carpooling has increased its share by 40% (6.2 percentage points). While there were some small decreases in public transport use, there were also increases in active modes and driving with children. The increase in active modes is interesting and difficult to explain, as is the increase in ‘drive with child’.

Table 2: Comparison of main travel mode – registration versus current (survey).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Mode of transport</th>
<th>Original Mode N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Survey mode N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drive Alone</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpool</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive with Child</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1240</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1450</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5: Changes in main travel mode following registration at Let’s Carpool.

The Table 3 below shows the breakdown of mode change by region. This table is more relevant for the larger regions where the response rate is higher. The margin of error for smaller regions makes it hard to draw conclusions from. The table provides a rough indication of how much change in carpooling as the main mode of travel occurs after people have registered to the Let’s Carpool site. Note that the percentage changes are also slightly over-estimated, due to the people who didn’t give their main mode on sign-up not being accounted for.

Table 3: Changes in carpool mode by region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>On Registration</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auckland</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay of Plenty</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christchurch</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellington</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>110%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelson</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palmerston Nth</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taranaki</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waikato</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>117%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses from those who carpool

Of the total respondents, 450 indicated that they sometimes carpool during a typical week, representing 30.8% of the survey respondents. This is higher than the result for the main mode shown above (21.8%), as people are often irregular carpoolers who still have ‘drive alone’ as their most common mode of travel. People who selected carpooling as one of their modes (either as driver or as a passenger) were asked to elaborate on their carpooling habits.
How do people find each other?
People find other carpoolers in a variety of ways and places. The graph below shows the number of responses for each possibility given in the survey. Work colleagues are the most common carpooling arrangement, with Let’s Carpool following closely behind. Note that multiple answers were allowed for, so people may have for example found a workmate to carpool with through the Let’s Carpool website.

![Bar chart showing number of responses for each method of finding carpoolers](chart.png)

**Figure 6: How carpoolers found each other.**

The chart above shows that 141 people of the 450 people who indicated that they sometimes carpoled had found carpoolers through the Let’s Carpool website. This is equal to 31.3% of respondents, which is significantly down on 2012 (75.3%) but closer to the 2010 figure of 40.5%. The exact question for previous years has not been found, making it difficult to confirm if it is a true comparison.

How many days do people usually carpool?
Those who carpool were asked how many days a week they most typically carpool. The pie chart below shows the distribution of responses. The majority carpool either four or five days a week. By multiplying the options (days) by the number of responses, an estimate can be found of the average number of days a week each person carpoles. This was found to be 3.6 days per week on average. In 2012, 43.9% carpoled five or more times per week and 19.4% carpooling four times, which has dropped marginally in 2014.
How many people in the car?
Respondents were also asked to say how many people are most commonly in the car (including themselves). Figure 8 shows that the majority of people usually only carpool with one other person, although more than a quarter of carpools have three people. By multiplying the number of people by the number of responses, we can calculate that an average carpool has about 2.5 people in it.

How long do carpooling arrangements last?
People may have carpooled for many years in many different carpools. This question however, asked about the current carpooling arrangements, and how long they had been in existence. Figure 9 shows that nearly half have been carpooling together for a year or more. Nearly a third of carpooling arrangements are less than six months old.
An interesting comparison can be made here with previous studies which asked this question also. In 2010, 14.1% had been in a carpool together for more than one year. By 2012, this had drastically increased to 38.8% and is now 46.9%. This indicates that longer term carpools are becoming increasingly common. Likewise, for the percentage of less than six months, this has dropped from 65.9% in 2010, to 46.9% in 2012 and now down to 30.8%.

What are the cost sharing arrangements?
People were asked how they share responsibility for driving or cost sharing. The bar chart below shows the responses for each of the options, in order of popularity. Note that multiple selections were permitted.

Figure 9: How long people have been carpooling in their current carpool.

Figure 10: How people share responsibility for carpooling.
What are the reasons that lead people to carpool?

People were asked two questions for this – the first allowed them to select all the reasons that influence their decision (Figure 11). Secondly they were asked to select their main reason (Figure 12). Not surprisingly, money savings are top of the list for both. Many people consider the environmental benefits, but fewer rate this as their primary reason.

![Figure 11: All reasons that lead people to choose to carpool.]

![Figure 12: The main reason for people choosing to carpool.]

Responses from those who don’t carpool

If respondents were not currently carpooling on their commute to work, they were asked a separate set of questions, detailing whether they had carpooled previously, if they might in the future, what may help encourage them to carpool, and their main barriers. 1,012 respondents (69.2%) were directed to this section of the survey.
Have people carpooled in the past, and will they in the future?
Of those who aren’t carpooling, 31% have previously carpooled, while 69% haven’t. Table 4 shows the views of people, split between whether they have carpooled previously.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carpoole before?</th>
<th>Carpool in the future?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maybe/undecided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen above that most people would consider carpooling in the future. People who haven’t carpooled before are more likely to say they are undecided about carpooling in the future, while most people who have carpooled before still hope to carpool again in the future (26 out of 31). Only 5% of respondents seem to have given up on the idea of carpooling.

Why are people not currently carpooling?
It can be seen below that by far the most common response for why people are not currently carpooling is that they have not found a suitable match. There are multiple options for why people may not currently be able to carpool (irregular hours, other preferences, needing the car etc), where people may likely search again in the future if situations change. Very few people consider it unsafe, whereas loss of flexibility is commonly cited.

What would need to change in the future?
Building on Figure 13 above, people were asked what would need to change to lead them to carpool. The following responses were given to this question. Again, the ease of finding a match is by far the most common answer. If the Let’s Carpool database could be more heavily populated, then finding a suitable match would also become easier.
The Let’s Carpool Website – User Experience

This section outlines people’s use of the website and views on its content and design. The questions were asked on an eight point scale from very difficult to very easy. This ensured people must choose to be above or below a neutral midpoint. This section of the survey was completed by all respondents, regardless of whether they were carpooling or not.

Ease of use, design and content of the website
Most people who gave opinions on the website found it easy to use. Three quarters answered above the neutral midpoint. This still leaves 25% of people who are finding it difficult, and may not be carpooling due to difficulties with the website. Ensuring people can get help when requested is important. On top of this, it could be worth reviewing the website and registration process to find out if anything can be made easier or clearer for people, to minimise the risk of lost opportunities.
Relating to this, people were also asked about their views on the website design (poor/nice). About 81% of responses were above neutral, while 19% were below. The most common response was ‘Nice’.

For the content, a very similar pattern was observed, again with 81% of people rating it above average, with the most common response being ‘Useful’. This is seen in Figure 16 below.

![Figure 16: How useful the information content provided on the Let’s Carpool website is.](image)

**Would users recommend the Let’s Carpool website to others?**

This is an important, simple headline indicator that should be compared across time. This is unfortunately not available from the previous evaluation, but can be asked in future surveys.

Just short of two thirds (63%) of users would recommend the Let’s Carpool website to others, while a further 28.4% might. A total of 8.5% people (118 respondents) wouldn’t recommend the service.

![Figure 17: Whether users would recommend the Let’s Carpool website.](image)
A check was made to see whether this was significantly different for those looking for one-off journeys or regular commutes (or both). As seen in the table below, no major difference is seen between the intended use.

| Table 5: Likelihood to recommend Let’s Carpool and intention on sign-up. |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| both | one-off | other | regular | (blank) | Total |
| Maybe | 35% | 26% | 38% | 26% | 17% | 27% |
| No | 7% | 11% | 15% | 8% | 0% | 8% |
| Yes | 57% | 61% | 38% | 62% | 24% | 60% |
| (blank) | 2% | 3% | 8% | 4% | 60% | 5% |

Is Let’s Carpool promoted in the workplace or place of study?
Respondents were asked if they were aware of their workplace or tertiary institution promoting Let’s Carpool. Nearly half of respondents (49.7%) didn’t think it was, while more than a third (37.4%) said it was. The remaining 12.9% were unsure.

How people heard about Let’s Carpool (from database records)
We can look at the full database to see how those who answered the question found Let’s Carpool. The web is the most common way people found the site (although lower in Auckland than most other regions). Employers are the second highest source, and aside from ‘other’, friends are the third main source.

| Table 6: Source of information on Let’s Carpool, analysed from the full database results. |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| Row Labels | BANNER | Employer | Facebook | Friend | NL | Other | Paper | Radio | TER | TV | WEB | Total |
| Auckland | 1% | 24% | 3% | 11% | 1% | 23% | 2% | 5% | 10% | 1% | 18% | 100% |
| Bay of Plenty | 1% | 9% | 6% | 9% | 6% | 27% | 1% | 5% | 3% | 2% | 31% | 100% |
| Christchurch | 1% | 29% | 4% | 8% | 2% | 11% | 15% | 1% | 4% | 2% | 23% | 100% |
| Wellington | 1% | 15% | 3% | 20% | 1% | 15% | 10% | 6% | 1% | 3% | 25% | 100% |
| Nelson | 0% | 4% | 7% | 11% | 0% | 22% | 15% | 4% | 0% | 0% | 37% | 100% |
| Palmerston Nth | 0% | 13% | 5% | 17% | 1% | 11% | 8% | 5% | 1% | 1% | 37% | 100% |
| Taranaki | 1% | 18% | 11% | 16% | 4% | 12% | 7% | 6% | 15% | 1% | 11% | 100% |
| Waikato | 2% | 29% | 7% | 15% | 2% | 13% | 7% | 2% | 2% | 1% | 20% | 100% |
| no region | 1% | 4% | 6% | 16% | 1% | 19% | 2% | 1% | 3% | 2% | 47% | 100% |
| Total | 1% | 20% | 3% | 14% | 1% | 19% | 5% | 5% | 6% | 2% | 22% | 100% |

Recommendations to improve the Let’s Carpool website
This section was concluded with an open-ended question about what could be done to improve the website. Not surprisingly, there were many written comments relating to this, making it difficult to summarise. A total of 381 comments were received. Below are bulleted points of the main categories of suggestion, listed roughly in order of their prevalence (from high to low)

- **Promote the website more** – many people said the main problem was simply that they couldn’t find a match near them, and that it needed ‘critical mass’. There were many ideas about more promotions through media, organisations, workplaces etc. “It’s a great concept but it needs far more promotion.”
- **Records are out of date** – people said that people often had not updated their details, and after emailing many people, they would find the listings were outdated. In short, they recommended the purge function that exists, to keep records updated. “People don’t update
their info and that makes it hard to find out who is looking for a pool. Some people have been sitting there for years”

- **People are not responding** – related to the above much frustration was caused by not getting any response to emails sent. Suggestions were to do more to encourage that etiquette. “Encourage those emailed to reply, even if it’s a ‘no thanks and don’t ask me again’ response. Perhaps you can automate the response too”

- **The website is old/outdated** – quite a few people felt that it was a clunky system that was not user friendly, and could do with an overhaul or refresh. “The general interface is highly unintuitive for users, it feels really dated in its general look and feel.”

- **Need an app** – People suggested mobile services, or more responsive systems that were not only relating to a regular commute. “Carpooling should really be going in the direction of things like Carma, where you can have an app on your phone that allows you to build/join pools of people to share with”

- **Poor communication or correspondence** – people often wanted more communication, either a welcome email, a regular update to remind them of the service. “Once I joined nothing happened not even follow up from the lets carpool group”

- **Notifications of new matches** – related to the above, people wanted email/text notification of new matches (nb: the email function should already exist, although can be turned off). “Should auto send email if new entry added to your database which match individual car pool preferences.”

- **Suggestions for improving the map** – people wanted a better map, to zoom in closer or have more changes. “Need to be able to zoom right in on map.”

- **Technical issues/bugs** – some people listed bugs, such as always needing to log-in when switching between pages, not being able to log-in, match not working. “Kind of annoying "login" in each time you move between the main page and the search pages”

- **No confirmation of emails sent** – people sent emails through the site, but were not sure if it ever got delivered, and never received answers. “I contacted the people in my area and did not receive any acknowledgement from Lets Carpool or any replies from the people. Does the site work?”

- **Ability to rate/feedback other users** – as with Trade Me, people wanted to be able to say if someone was not responding, or had been difficult. “It would be great to put people’s names on this site who have completely let you down so others are made aware of them.”

- **Other technical issues** – smaller things, including the lack of address finder on the home page, difficulties updating/deleting account, trouble getting support, confusion with link to Facebook, poor route matching. “I have tried to suspend my ad and can’t find where to do that, or even delete it.”

There were of course many positive and appreciative comments listed as well. “I like this website and its service. I have been carpooling more than a year through this website. Keep up the good work!” “You are doing a great job. The website is really useful.”

**General Attitudes towards Carpooling**

Eight statement were given in relation to carpooling and respondents were instructed to rate their level of agreement with each statement on a scale of one to ten, where one equals strongly disagree and ten equals strongly agree.
For each statement listed below, the mean (average), median (middle, 50\textsuperscript{th} percentile) and mode (most common) are given.

1. **Carpooling reduces congestion.** Mean = 8.6, Median = 9, Mode = 10
2. **Carpooling is good for the environment.** Mean = 8.7, Median = 9, Mode = 10
3. **Carpooling is easy.** Mean = 5.5, Median = 5, Mode = 5
4. **Carpooling is safe.** Mean = 6.6, Median = 7, Mode = 5
5. **Carpooling is social.** Mean = 7.6, Median = 8, Mode = 8
6. **Carpooling saves money.** Mean = 8.4, Median = 9, Mode = 10
7. **Carpooling saves time.** Mean = 5.6, Median = 5, Mode = 5
8. **Carpooling is cool.** Mean = 6.6, Median = 6, Mode = 5

People are in agreement that carpooling is good for the environment, reduces congestion and saves money, all with a median of 9 and a mode of 10. Social scored fairly high while the answers for carpooling being safe, easy, saving time and being cool were all lower. The question about safety still had a median of 7, showing that most people considered it high on the safety scale. It is unfortunate that it is seen by many as relatively time consuming and relatively difficult.

**Interest in a Carpooling App**

All respondents were first asked if they would be likely to use a smartphone app for carpooling if one were developed for New Zealand. People were given the opportunity to comment on their answer. Respondents who thought they would or were undecided were asked follow-up questions about how they would use it, and what attributes would be most important.

![Figure 18: Whether respondents thought they'd be likely to use an app if developed.](image)

337 people gave comments on why or why they wouldn’t use a smartphone. Common responses under the yes, maybe or no headings are given below.

**Comments for people who answered ‘yes’ for a smartphone app**

People provided comments to back up whatever their opinions on smartphone apps.
For people who said yes (i.e. most people), they often thought that it would be made more convenient through smartphones, and allow additional flexibility with options. “Having an app will make it much easier and increase your clientele numbers”, and “Good idea for spontaneous carpooling”. It also has the possibility to reach a younger audience who aren’t highly represented on Let’s Carpool. “I think a smartphone app would make car-pooling more accessible, and perhaps "cooler".” There are other technological advantages and tips given by some. “Will allow more frequent use of the service, and automatic location detection would make it easier to see who lives close and who works close.” Overall, there were 185 comments where people had indicated they would be likely to use it.

For the 19% who were undecided, hesitation was often about how the app would be designed and ease of use. “Depending how easy it would be to use. And how flexible you could be with your trips”. Security concerns were another often raised issue, and whether or not it would be possible to meet people in advance. “Would want to know who I was car pooling with - would have concerns over personal safety”. Others simply didn’t see much advantage of an app over the current website, especially if it was for a regular carpool.

The people who wouldn’t use the app had similar concerns as those above, often relating to security. On top of them were the people who don’t have smartphones, don’t use apps, or generally didn’t think they would be able to make it work. “Once again, being older I am not very savvy with the latest phones.”

**How would people likely use an app**

Those who would or might use an app were asked further questions on intended use. As can be seen in Figure 19 below, most people said they’d be interested to use it as both a driver and a passenger, while roughly one in five would be just a driver or just a passenger.

**Figure 19: Smartphone app use - driver, passenger or both?**

The ‘Regular Commute’ was still the most common intended use, with less people inclined to use it for spontaneous or one-off trips. Single recreational events (such as festivals, sports events) were next most likely. This can be seen in Table 7 below.
Table 7: How likely users are to use app for various purposes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very likely</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Very unlikely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular Commute</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long distance Trip</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Event</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spontaneous trip</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, for the importance of various attributes including cost, punctuality, sociability and security, Figure 20: Importance of attributes for a smartphone app. below shows users’ weighting for each. Security is rated as being very important, as is convenience. The sociability of the driver is less important. However, in general, all these attributes were rated as being important to varying degrees.

![Figure 20: Importance of attributes for a smartphone app.](image)

**Final Questions and Comments**

Roughly one third of respondents (429) said they would appreciate being contacted to see whether they can be assisted to find a match. This would be rather time consuming, but would also be a valuable chance to check people’s details are up-to-date, and also to run a new match to see if there are options. Regions have been given a list of those who requested help, and should follow up on this procedure.

More than half (782) said they were fine to be contacted should any follow-up survey be planned where phone conversations may be useful.

The final question of the survey was an open ended box for any final thoughts or comments on carpooling in general. A further 230 comments were given on a range of topics and suggestions. Some of these relate to regional issues, and each region is again encouraged to look at comments
given in their region. For the most part, they re-iterated comments that had been made regularly in previous sections. The main ones are bulleted below.

- Supportive comments about the website and carpooling
- Personal explanations about why the respondent does or doesn’t carpool
- Issues about others who didn’t respond to emails
- Various people mentioned providing carpool parking space in town centres or at large employers, shopping centres and so forth
- Multiple calls for it to be promoted and advertised widely to get more people on the site
- Need to keep the database up-to-date
- Various concerns of safety, such as suggesting a vetting system to give people confidence

There were some other individual and more novel suggestions.

- “When you click on a matching commuter it would be good if a line could appear between their origin and destination as it sometimes difficult to quickly (i.e. within a second or two) establish their destination.”
- “Known, sheltered, safe pick up and drop off points, Carpool Stops, would make a difference, in conjunction with an easy to use free app that has strong security protocols.”
- I wonder if there is a link to the provision of a car share membership scheme for hiring “vehicles to reduce (second) car ownership and utilise vehicles more efficiently”
- “Give carpoolers a parking space in the city. Parking is a pain, while its easy not to carpool. Solve the real pain to incentivise the desired behaviour.”

Overall, there were many messages of support, which seems appropriate to finish on.

- “I checked out your site again and was amazed how much more sophisticated it is now, and you have more people using it... Thank you!”
- “Just thank you ...for many years I have been carpooling as a driver and passenger as well. I have met very interesting people who became friends ...and some met thanks to your website. I will use it again in the future if I need it”

**Conclusion**

Overall the survey shows that Let’s Carpool has been successful in converting drive alone trips to carpool journeys. Carpooling as the main mode of travel for respondents has increased from the time of registration by 40%, increasing from 15.6% to 21.8% mode share. Drive alone has gone down from 54.5% to 47.5%.

The survey hasn’t highlighted any urgent need for an overhaul, however there are many still finding it hard to find a match. Others have highlighted that many records seem to be out of date, highlighting the need to keep the system updated.

This increase of 6.2% carpooling is equivalent to 657 new carpoolers (of the 10,603 registered on the database). They typically carpool 3.6 days a week with 2.5 people in the vehicle. While still small in relation to the huge numbers of single occupancy vehicles on the highways every morning, the benefits accrued by these carpoolers and to the regions where they live are substantial. The Let’s Carpool website continues to offer opportunities to those looking for alternative options.
Appendix 1 – Regional mode shifts (main regions only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode - Auckland</th>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drive alone</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpool</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive with children</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle/motorscooter</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk/run/skate/scoot</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferry</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No regular commute</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response/unknown</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode - Waikato</th>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drive alone</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpool</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive with children</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle/motorscooter</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk/run/skate/scoot</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response/unknown</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode - Christchurch</th>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drive alone</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpool</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive with children</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle/motorscooter</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk/run/skate/scoot</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No regular commute</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response/unknown</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode - Wellington</th>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drive alone</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpool</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive with children</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk/run/skate/scoot</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No regular commute/Other</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle/motorscooter</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response/unknown</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2 – Survey Questions

Let's Carpool

Evaluation of Let's Carpool
Thank you for completing this survey. By doing so, you will be helping us improve our service, the website, and future developments. It will also put you in the draw to win one of ten $100 Z Energy petrol vouchers! Winners of the vouchers will be contacted by 31 October 2014.

The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. You can exit and re-enter the survey at any time. This survey is only being sent to registrants on the Let's Carpool database. Your anonymity will be respected at all times, and any information you provide will be held in confidence and used for this evaluation only.

If you would like more information about the survey, please contact:

Cherie Ann Williams
Greater Wellington Regional Council
cherie.ann.williams@gis.govt.nz
04 632 4533

By clicking the 'Next' button, you are indicating you are willing to participate in the survey.
During a typical week, which modes of travel do you use for your regular commute to/from work or tertiary institution? (Tick all that apply. If you do not have a regular commute, tick No regular commute. Only count modes where the distance is more than 100 metres.)

- Drive alone
- Drive with children
- Carpool - drive with other adults
- Carpool - passenger in a private vehicle
- Bus
- Train
- Ferry
- Walk/run/skate/scoot
- Cycle
- Motorcycle/motorcycle
- No regular commute

Which mode of travel is your main mode for your regular commute?

Your main mode is the one that covers the longest distance.

- Drive alone
- Drive with children
- Carpool - drive with other adults
- Carpool - passenger in a private vehicle
- Bus
- Train
- Ferry
- Walk/run/skate/scoot
- Cycle
- Motorcycle/motorcycle
- No regular commute

Which option below best describes your current occupation?

- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- Study full-time
- Study part-time
- Self-employed (variable)
- Not currently employed
- Other:

Which age group do you belong to?

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75 or over
- Prefer not to answer
When you signed up for Let's Carpool, were you primarily looking to carpool for...
Choose a regular commute even if you were asking for occasional rides on your regular commute.
- A regular commute
- A one-off journey
- Both of the above
- Other:

After registering at Let's Carpool...
Choose the option that suits best.
- I ran a search and there were carpooling options available
- I ran a search and could not find carpooling options
- I am unsure whether there were carpooling options available

How many people have you contacted from the Let's Carpool website?
- 0
- 1-3 people
- 4-6 people
- 7-9 people
- 10 or more people

How many people have contacted you through the Let's Carpool website?
- 0
- 1-3 people
- 4-6 people
- 7-9 people
- 10 or more people
You have indicated earlier that you sometimes commute in a private vehicle with other adults (i.e. carpool). How did you find your carpooler(s)?
Tick all that apply. If you don’t carpool, please return to the second page, and check your responses for your regular commute.

- Let’s Carpool website
- Family member
- Friend(s)
- Work colleague
- Neighbour/holiday
- Other

How many days do you currently carpool?
This can include driving with other adults or as a passenger in a private vehicle (including spouse/partner) but it does not include children.

- Never
- Less than once a week
- About once a week
- About twice a week
- About three times a week
- About four times a week
- Five or more times a week

When carpooling, how many people usually travel in your current carpool (including yourself)?

- 1 person
- 3 people
- 4 people
- 5 or more people

How long have you been in your current carpool arrangement?

- Less than 1 month
- 1-2 months
- 2-4 months
- 6 months to a year
- 1-2 years
- More than 2 years

What arrangement(s) does your carpool use for dividing costs and responsibility?

Tick all that apply.

- We take turns driving our own vehicles
- One person drives, others contribute a fixed fee
- Informal/irregular contributions towards petrol and parking
- Driver offers ride free of charge
- Share the parking costs
- Other

We would like to know more about your reasons for carpooling. What factors influence your decision to carpool?

Tick all that apply.

- It saves money
- There are environmental benefits
- It’s more social
- It’s quicker than other options
- I don’t own a car/can’t drive
- It reduces congestion
- So I can use carpool transit lanes or carparks
- Other

What is the main reason you choose to carpool?

Select the option that suits best.

- It saves money
- There are environmental benefits
- It’s more social
- It’s quicker than other options
- I don’t own a car/can’t drive
- It reduces congestion
- Other
You indicated earlier that you are not currently carpooling (i.e., driving with other adults, or as a passenger in a private vehicle). The following questions relate to why you don’t carpool. If you do in fact carpool on your regular commute, please return to Page 3 to check your answers for modes of travel for your commute.

Have you carpooled regularly in the past?
- Yes
- No

Would you still consider carpooling in the future?
- Yes
- No
- Maybe/undecided

What are the main reason(s) that you do not currently carpool?
Tick all that apply:
- I prefer to commute by walking/cycling
- I prefer to commute by public transport
- My hours are irregular
- My journey route is irregular
- I don’t feel it is safe
- I have not found anyone to carpool with
- I have had bad experiences in the past
- It would increase my journey time
- The lack of flexibility is a problem
- I need my car for work
- I need my car for other errands
- Other:

What would likely need to change to encourage you to carpool in the future?
Tick all that apply:
- Nothing would convince me to carpool
- If it was easier to find a match
- If I found people I could trust
- If petrol or parking costs increase
- If my work circumstances changed
- If my home circumstances changed
- If I was more convinced of the resulting benefits
- If my employer promoted it at our workplace
- If I could no longer commute using my current travel mode
- Other:
The following questions relate to the Let's Carpool website, and your experiences with it. Click on the bars below to indicate your answer:

How would you rate the Let's Carpool website for its ease of use?

- No Opinion
- Very Difficult
- Difficult
- Diff-Neat
- Near-Easy
- Easy
- Easy-V Easy
- Very Easy

How would you rate the look, feel and design of the Let's Carpool website?

- No Opinion
- Very Poor
- VP-P
- Poor
- P-N
- N-N
- Nice
- N-VN
- Very Nice

How would you rate the content and information provided on the website?

- No Opinion
- Very Poor
- VP-P
- Poor
- P-N
- N-U
- Useful
- U-E
- Excellent

Would you recommend Let's Carpool to others?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Do you have any suggestions to improve the Let's Carpool website? Please be as concise and specific as possible.
Does your workplace or tertiary institution promote or encourage carpooling among staff?
- Yes
- No, not that I am aware of
- Maybe (I'm unsure)

Are you aware of the Let's Carpool Facebook page?
Select the option that fits best.
- Yes, I have 'liked' the page
- Yes, but I haven't 'liked' the page
- No - I don't use Facebook
- No - I use Facebook, but haven't heard of the page

We would like to assess people's general attitudes towards carpooling. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements on a scale of 1-10, where 1 equals 'strongly disagree' and 10 equals 'strongly agree'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carpooling reduces congestion.</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carpooling is good for the environment.</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carpooling is easy.</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carpooling is safe.</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carpooling is social.</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carpooling saves money.</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carpooling saves time.</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carpooling is cool.</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following question relates to carpooling apps for smartphones. Many such apps exist around the world, and we want to know whether it would be useful here in New Zealand.

If a smartphone app was developed, which could allow you to quickly and easily find carpoolers making similar trips, would you be likely to use such an app? Choose the answer that fits best.

☐ Yes
☐ Yes - I don’t have a smartphone now but if I do in future I would use it
☐ No - I don’t have a smartphone
☐ No - I wouldn’t trust it
☐ No - I don’t think it would be useful
☐ I’m undecided - it would depend on the details

Would you like to give more reasoning or details to your answer above?

You indicated that you would or might use a smartphone app. Would you be most likely to use it as:

☐ A driver
☐ A passenger
☐ Both

How likely would you be to use an app for the following uses?

Click on a button for each line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likelyhood of use</th>
<th>Regular commute</th>
<th>Long-distance trips</th>
<th>Spontaneous short-distance trips</th>
<th>Recreational events (holidays, music, sports etc)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very unlikely</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maybe</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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How important would each of the following aspects be for an app if you were to use it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
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<th>Very important</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety/security</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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Thank you for taking the survey. We have received your response, and you are in the draw for the Z Energy gift vouchers. We will contact you if you win. Happy carpooling!