

A Clean Air Plan for Bradford

# Proposed Clean Air Zone

Consultation Report – Businesses without a Fleet

May 2020



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**BRADFORD**



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SYSTRA Consultants have prepared this report on behalf of Bradford Council. This activity is supporting the Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy as it develops a Clean Air Plan for the District. Thank you to everyone who participated in the consultation exercise.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of Survey

The government has set out its vision for air quality in its guidance for Clean Air Zone planning: “Clean Air Zones improve the urban environment to support public health and the local economy, making cities more attractive places to live, work, do business and spend leisure time. They support cities to grow and transition to a low emission economy thus ensuring these benefits are sustainable for the long term”.<sup>1</sup>

Bradford Council has been challenged by Government to present proposals which reduce levels of Nitrogen Dioxide at locations where limits are currently exceeded within the shortest possible time. SYSTRA was appointed by Bradford Council in May 2019 to provide support with communications and stakeholder engagement for the emerging Air Quality Plan, including consideration of introducing a Clean Air Zone (CAZ).

This report summarises the results of surveys undertaken as part of a second phase of the public consultation, to help inform the Full Business Case by gauging levels of need and the suitability of the proposed support packages, and to gather views of those most likely to be affected.

## 1.2 Methodology

A self-completion on-line survey was chosen in order to tailor often complex information to specific groups, maximise communication channels, reduce delivery and printing costs and to simplify analysis. The survey design drew upon earlier surveys from the first phase of the consultation, as well as previous surveys prepared in Leeds and Sheffield & Rotherham and the Government’s Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) guidance. Those with reading or language difficulties were invited to contact the Council with a request for braille or paper versions, which we understand was requested on a handful of occasions.

Government guidance for planning and implementing Clean Air Zones states that drivers of taxis, LGVs and HGVs and local businesses are critical stakeholders as they are most likely to be affected by proposals<sup>2</sup>. The survey and supporting information were structured to address the following groups:

- General public

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<sup>1</sup> Clean Air Zone Framework - Principles for setting up Clean Air Zones in England, DfT/DEFRA, May 2017

<sup>2</sup> Ditto

- Taxi drivers
- Businesses located in Bradford with a fleet
- Businesses located in Bradford without a fleet
- Coaches

The survey was published on the Council's website for a period of six weeks between Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February and Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March and was subsequently extended by two weeks until Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April. The Covid-19 outbreak and stay at home order announced on 23<sup>rd</sup> March and cancellation of local elections gave a larger window to complete the consultation.

- Email invitations sent to subscribers for Bradford Council Newsletters;
- Bradford Council website;
- Bradford Council social media channels;
- Press release to Telegraph and Argus and other local news outlets;
- Variable Message signs (VMS) on principal routes in Bradford;
- Public consultation events; and
- Leaflets sent to all Bradford based businesses with business rate letters.

Efforts were subsequently made to boost responses from businesses, both those with and without a fleet, including:

- Telephone calls;
- Meeting with Confederation of Passenger Transport local members;
- Targeted VMS messages to van drivers;
- Emails to Invest in Bradford, and other Ilkley, Airedale and Bradford business networks;
- Emails via the Federation of Small Business, Road Haulage Association and Freight Transport Association; and
- Postcard drops at around 20 local building, plumbing and electrical merchants.

## 1.3 Response Rates and Distribution

A total of 1,637 responses were received, this included 805 members of general public, 744 taxi drivers or owners, 48 businesses with fleet, 33 businesses without fleet, plus a small number of coach operators (7). Eight letters were submitted from local business, taxi and other interest groups in addition to the numbers included in the table below.

### 1.1 Responses per Group

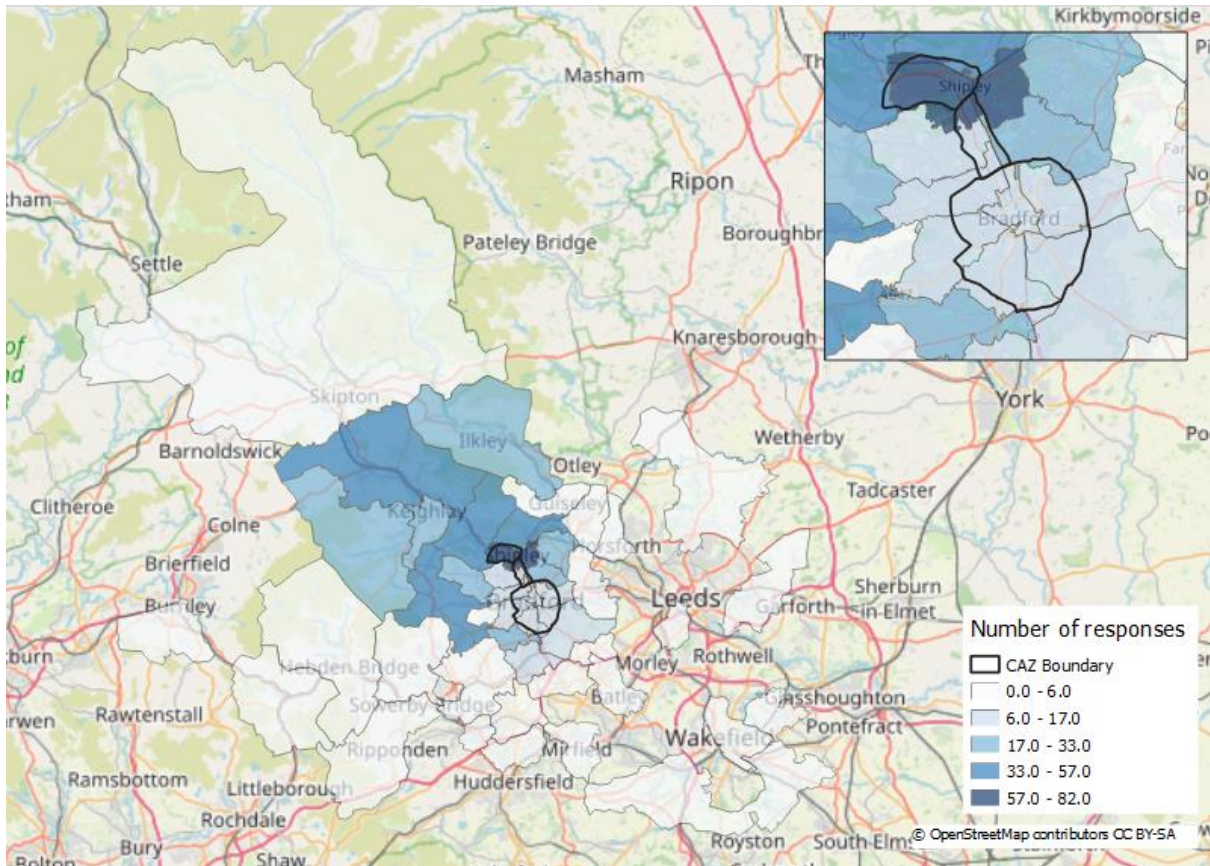
Group	Number of Responses
General public	805
Taxi drivers / owners	744
Businesses with fleet	48
Businesses without fleet	33
Coaches	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,637</b>

The response rate is encouraging from the general public and from taxi drivers / owners, representing approximately 25% of the trade. Response rates from the general public were much lower than those received in the first phase of the consultation, but this was perhaps to be expected since the proposals do not include private cars in the charging scheme. Some coach owners may have responded as part of the general public survey, but the response rate was too low to draw any robust conclusions from this group.

The wards with the highest number of responses from the general public were Shipley and wards along the Airedale corridor towards Keighley.

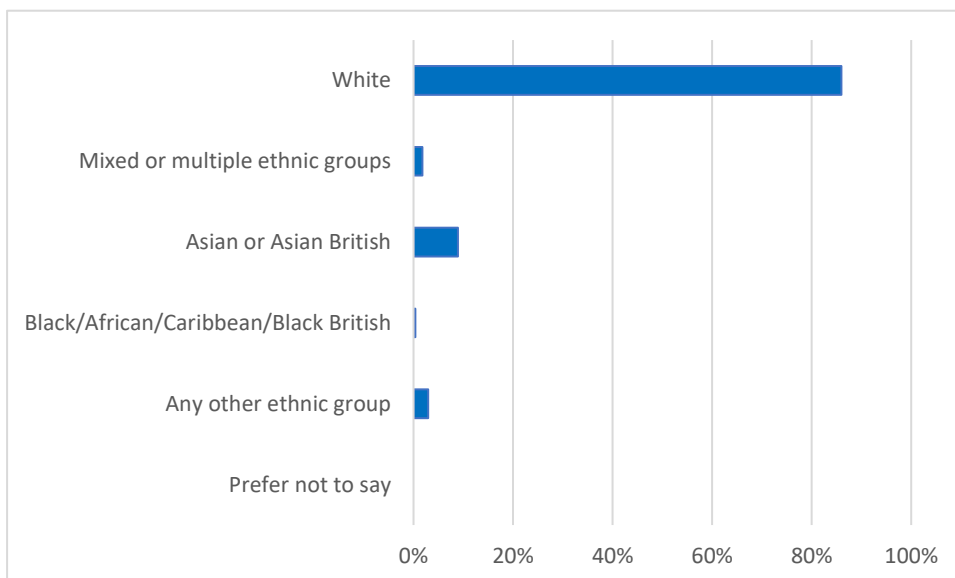


### 1.2 Number of General Public Responses per Postcode



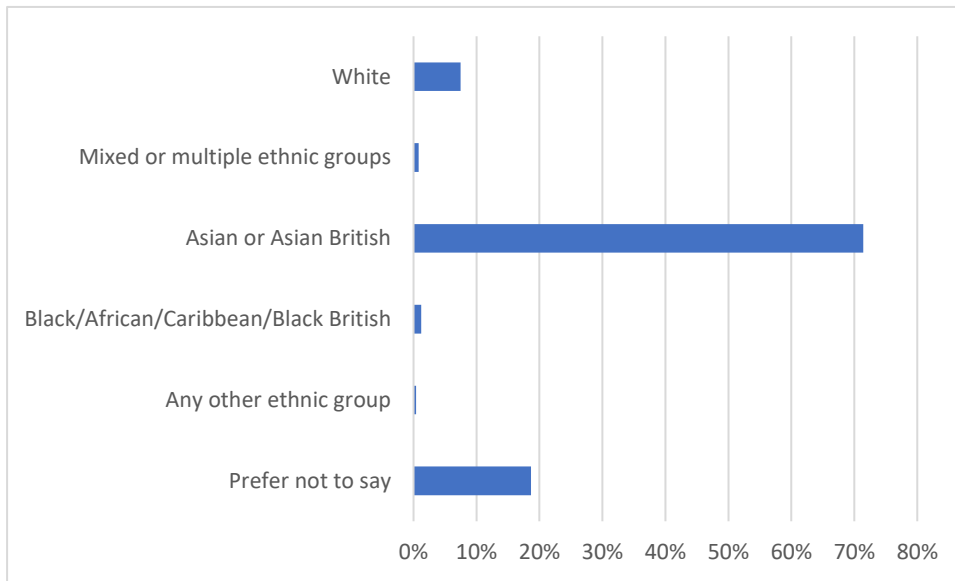
The views of different ethnic groups are reasonably well represented across the total survey numbers although they are skewed within the general public survey. In the general public survey, white respondents accounted for 86% of responses, meaning they were over-represented when compared with 64% represented in the total Bradford population. Amongst taxi drivers who responded, most responses were from non-white drivers or owners (74%) or one third of the overall survey responses.

### 1.3 Ethnicity of General Public responses (n=784)





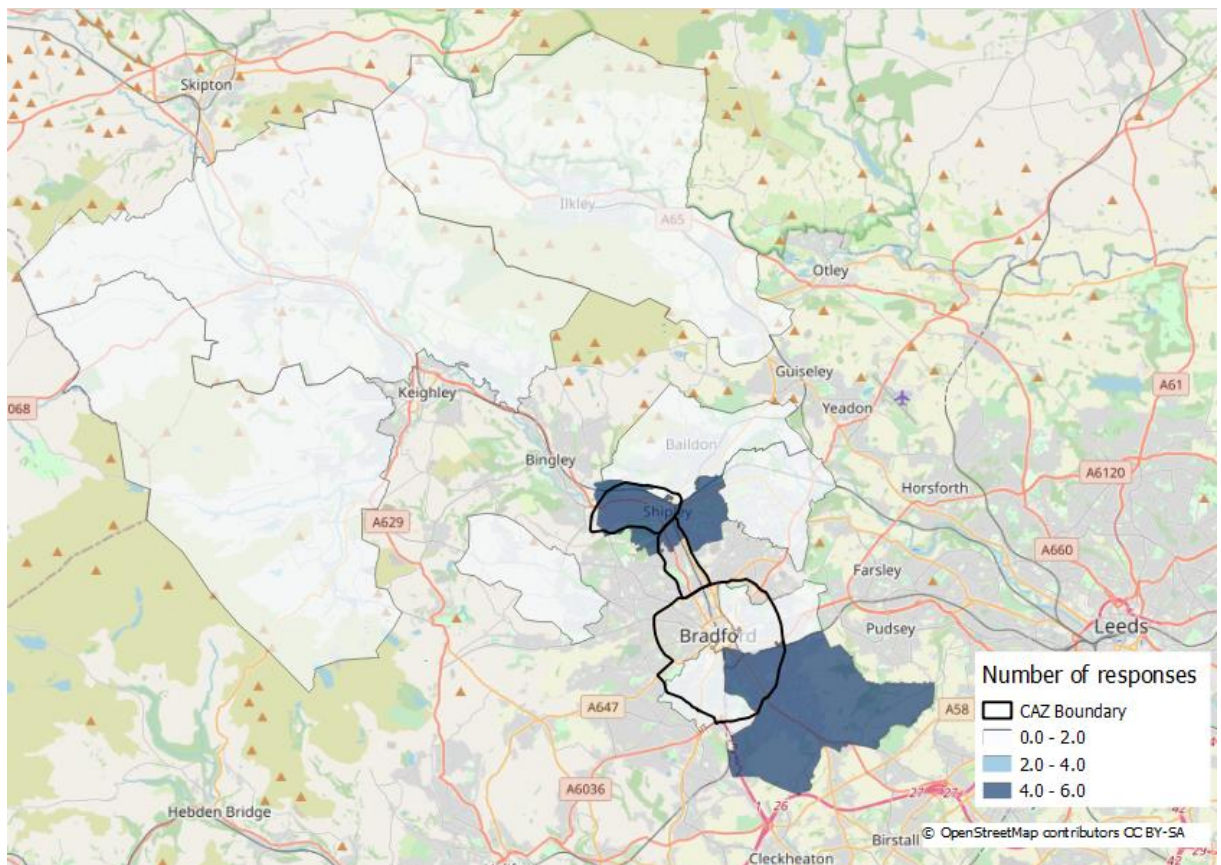
#### 1.4 Ethnicity of Taxi Driver responses (n=725)



## 2 Businesses without a Fleet Responses

This section discusses the responses from businesses without a fleet to all survey questions. The sample size for this group is 33. The locations of these businesses are mapped in **Figure 2.1**. Given the small sample size, caution should be exercised if extrapolating the results.

### 2.1 Number of Responses per Postcode District – Businesses Without a Fleet (n=21)



When asked how they heard about the consultation, 29% stated through variable message signs on road, followed by 15% each for email, Facebook and local media.

## 2.2 Business Information

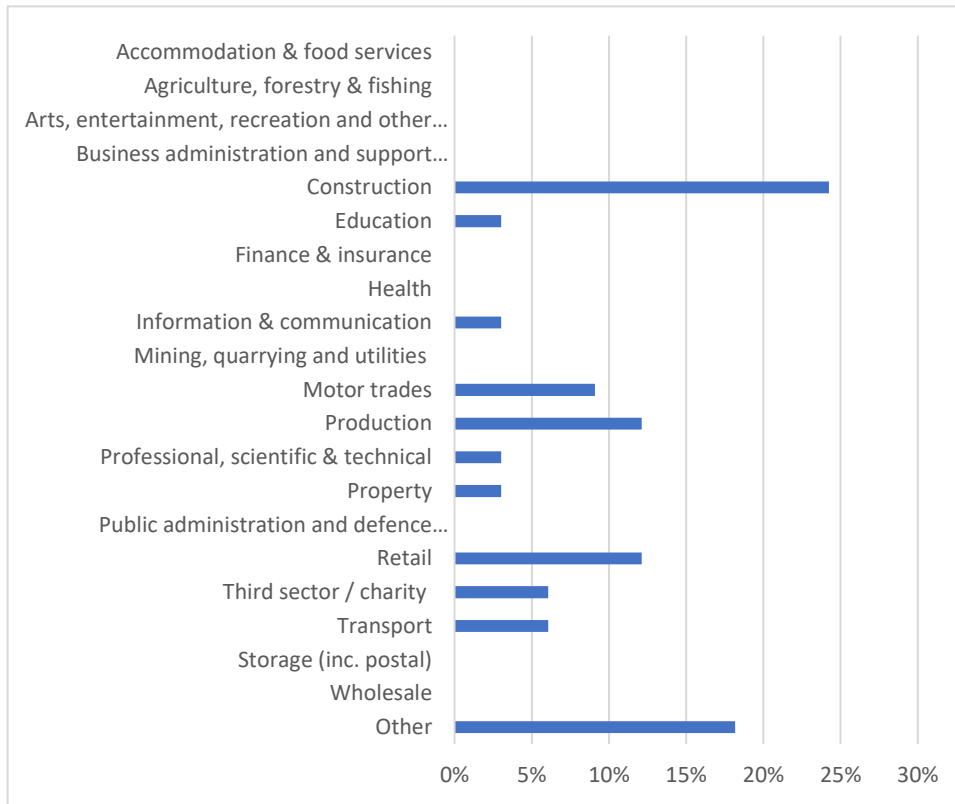
Respondents were asked a series of questions about the business they were completing the survey on behalf of. **Figure 2.2** shows the sectors within which the respondent businesses operate. Just under a quarter (24%) stated that their organisation operates in the construction industry, making it the largest represented sector in the data. Of those who stated 'Other', responses included gardener, waste disposal and service engineer of domestic appliances.

Of the responding businesses without a fleet, most are relatively small in terms of staff workforce. Half (50%) of respondents said they were sole traders, with their organisations



having only one employee. Just over a third (34%) said they have between two and nine employees and a further 13% have between ten and forty-nine employees.

## 2.2 Sector of Organisation – Businesses Without a Fleet (n=33)



## 2.3 Air Quality Perceptions

This section summarises how businesses without a fleet perceive air quality.

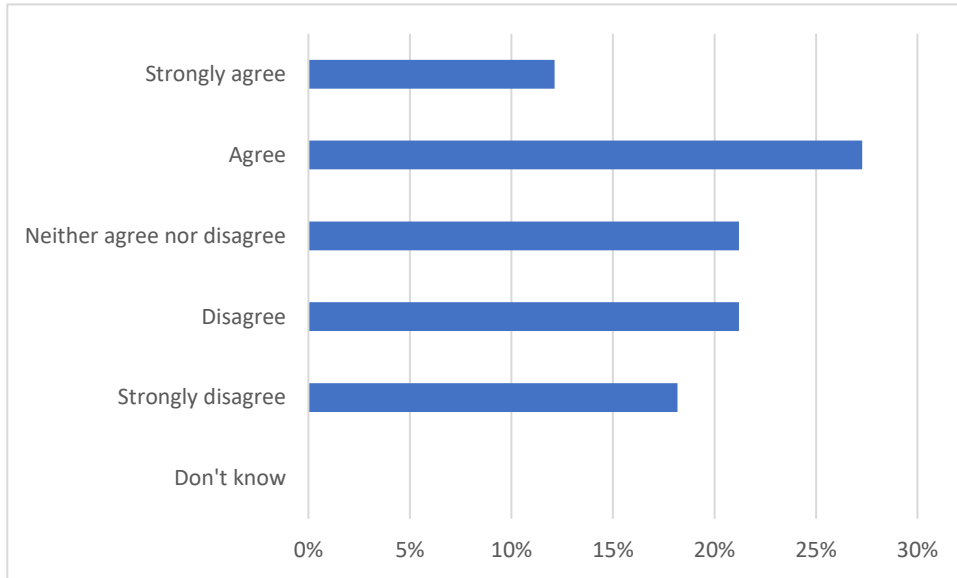
### Support for a Clean Air Zone

The figure below displays to what extent respondents agree or disagree with the following statement:

*'Tackling air pollution within the shortest possible timescale should be a priority for the Council.'*



2.3 Improving Air Quality – Businesses Without a Fleet (n=33)



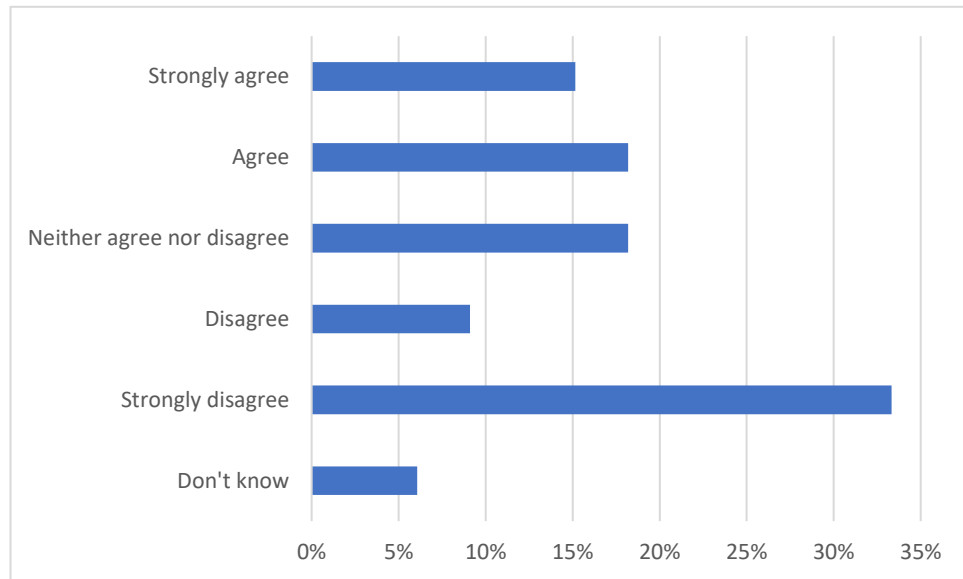
Only 39% of respondents think that improving air quality should be a priority for Bradford Council, while 39% disagree. Support amongst businesses without a fleet for the implementation of a Clean Air Zone in Bradford is low, with only 30% responding in favour, compared to 45% who do not support the idea.

### Impact on Air Quality

When asked whether they thought the Clean Air Zone will have a positive impact on Bradford's air quality, only 33% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed. A larger proportion, 42%, disagreed with the statement.



## 2.4 Extent of Agreement That a CAZ Would Have a Positive Impact on Bradford's Air Quality – Businesses Without a Fleet (n=33)



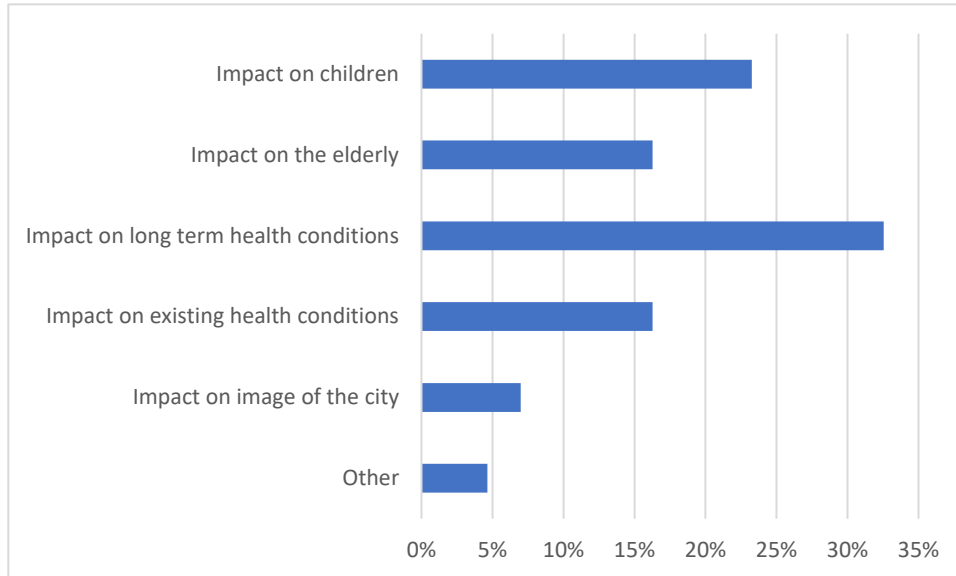
### Level of Concern About Air Quality

Businesses were asked to what extent they are concerned about the levels of air pollution in the Bradford district. Just under half (48%) were fairly or very concerned, compared to 39% who said they were unconcerned.

Businesses were asked about the nature of their air quality concerns. **Figure 2.5** shows that for those who are concerned about air quality, the impact on long term health conditions was selected by the largest proportion of respondents, equalling a third of responses. There was an option to select 'other'. Those that did, mentioned the impact of poor air quality on the environment and its contribution to global warming.



## 2.5 Concerns about Air Quality Levels – Businesses Without a Fleet (n=33)



## 2.4 Clean Air Zone Proposals

This section details views of businesses without a fleet regarding Bradford’s Clean Air Zone proposals.

### Geographical Area of the Proposed CAZ

Businesses were shown a diagram of the proposed charging area, including all the locations which currently exceed the legal limits. Views were sought on the extent to which they agree that the proposed Clean Air Zone covers the right area.

## 2.6 Views on the Geographical Area of the Proposed CAZ – Businesses Without a Fleet (n=33)

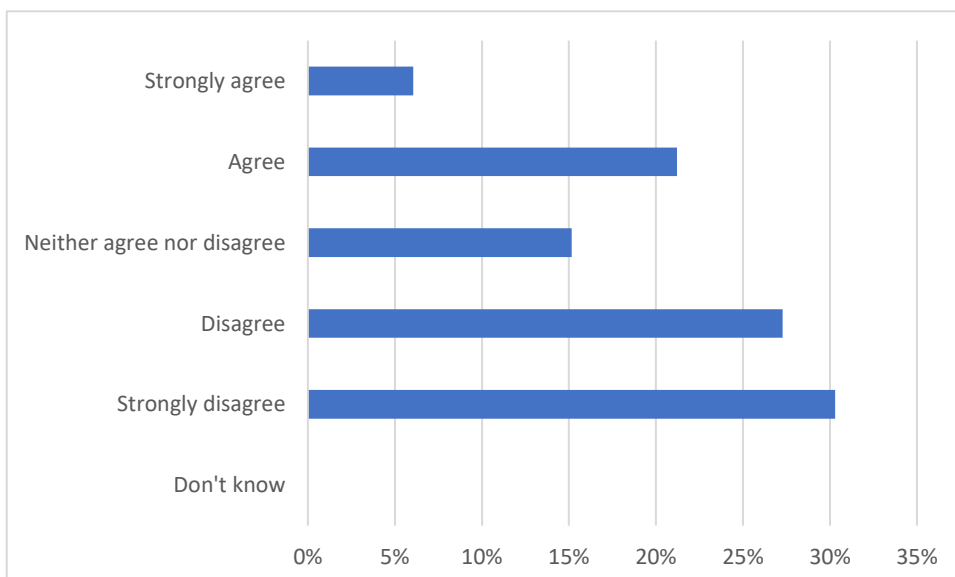
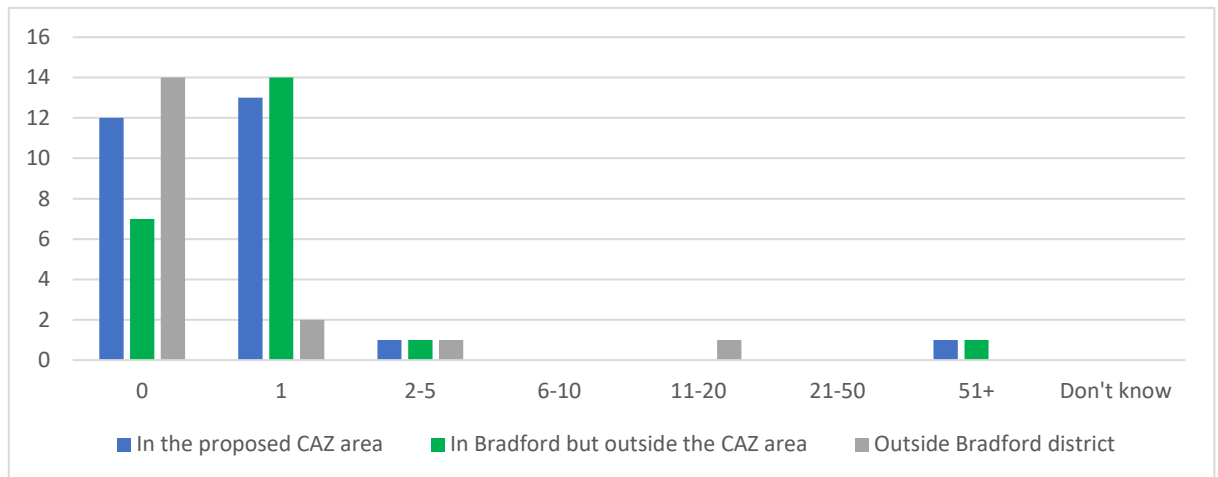


Figure 2.6 shows that nearly two-thirds (58%) of respondents disagree with the proposed CAZ boundary, while just over a quarter (27%) agree.

Businesses were asked how many sites their organisation has and where they are located. Figure 2.7 shows that most have a small number of sites affected by the CAZ (1-5), but a couple said they have over 50.

### 2.7 Location and Number of Business Premises – Business Without a Fleet (n=27)



### Frequency of Journeys within the Proposed CAZ

Businesses were asked roughly how many vehicle trips per week are made in the proposed CAZ as part of their organisation's operation.

### 2.8 Frequency of Trips in the Proposed CAZ – Businesses Without a Fleet (n=28)

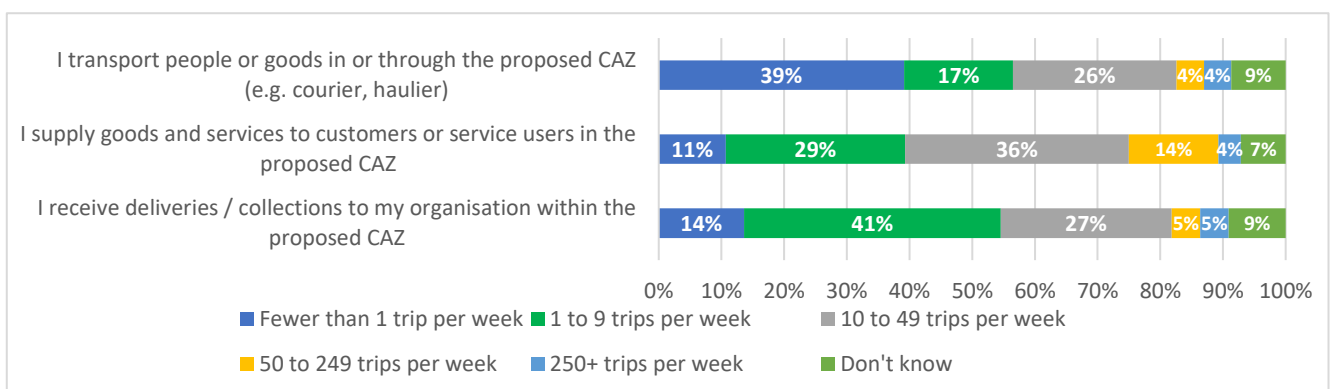
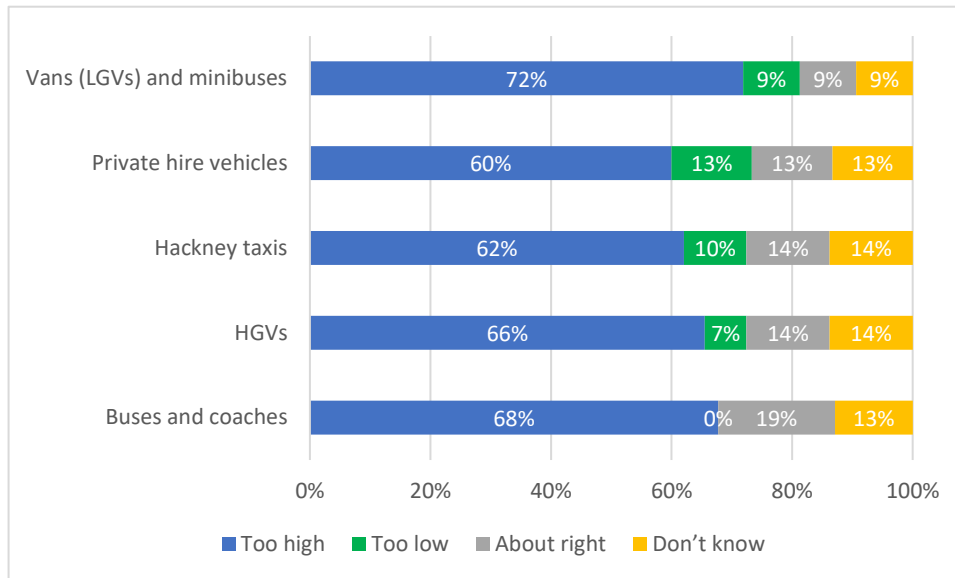


Figure 2.8 shows that of the businesses that completed this question, between 30% and 50% said their business generates between 10 and 249 trips a week for all three journey purposes suggested.

### Proposed Level of Daily Charge

Respondents were asked what they think about the proposed level of charge for different non-compliant vehicles. Between 60% and 72% considered the charge to be too high for all categories of vehicle. Most concern was expressed for van and minibuses drivers.

#### 2.9 Views on the Proposed Daily Charge by Vehicle Type– Businesses Without a Fleet (n=32)

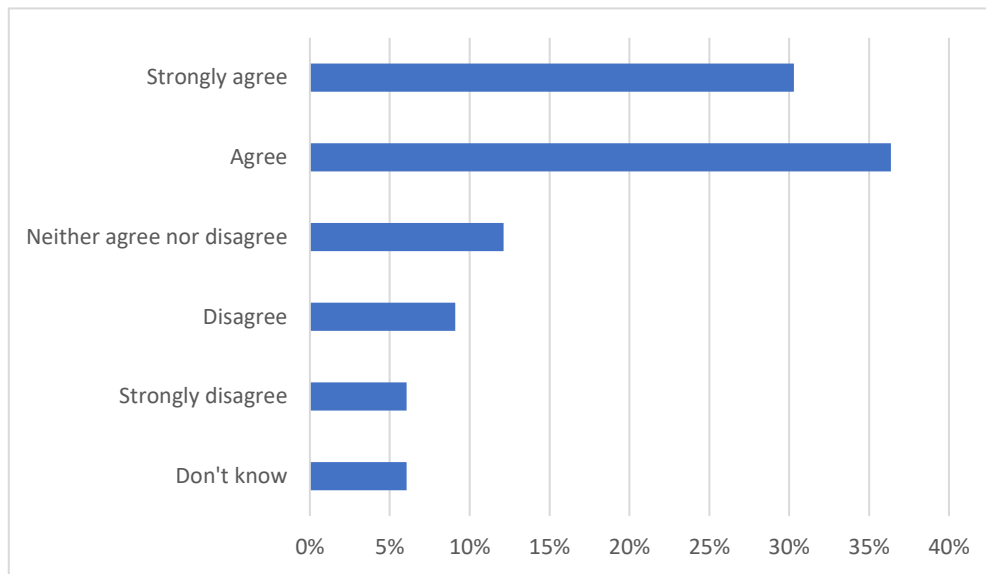


### Electric Bus Routes

Nearly three quarters of businesses without fleet (73%) of said that they would support the introduction of full electric bus routes at some locations in the Bradford district to improve air quality. Only 6% do not support this initiative.

Over two thirds (67%), then either agreed or strongly agreed that the introduction of electric bus routes would have a positive impact on Bradford's air quality.

## 2.10 Views on the Impact of Electric Bus Routes on Bradford’s Air Quality – Businesses Without a Fleet (n=33)



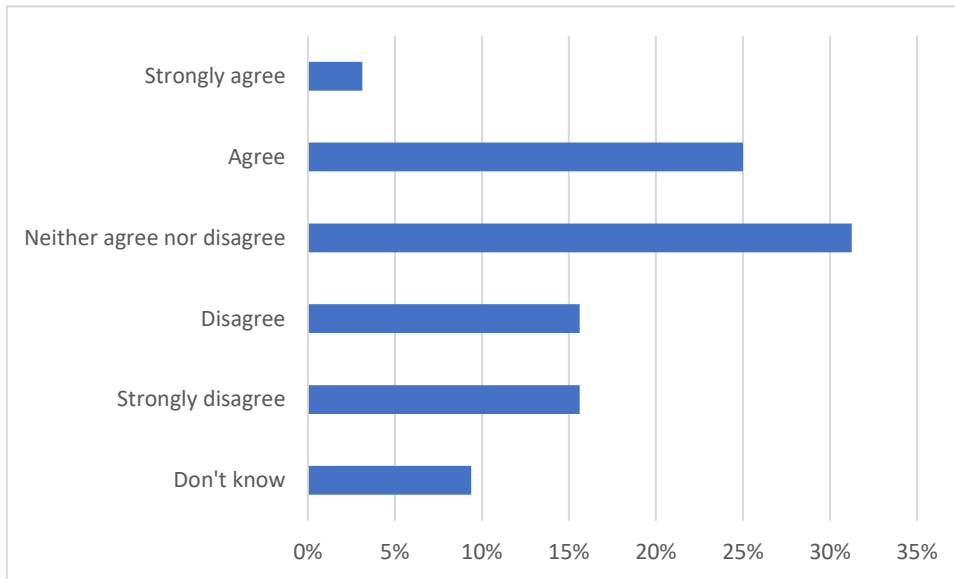
### Park and Ride Facility

Businesses without a fleet were presented with the details of the proposal to support a 1,000 space Park and Ride facility off the M606 at Euroway / Staithegate Lane / Odsall, intended to reduce traffic on some roads with the highest concentration of air pollution.

Just under half (47%) of respondents stated they would support the implementation of this new site, with 25% saying they would not support it and 28% unsure.

When asked to what extent they felt the proposed Park and Ride site would have a positive impact on Bradford’s Air Quality, opinion was relatively evenly divided. A proportion of 28% agreed, while 31% had no opinion either way and 32% disagreed.

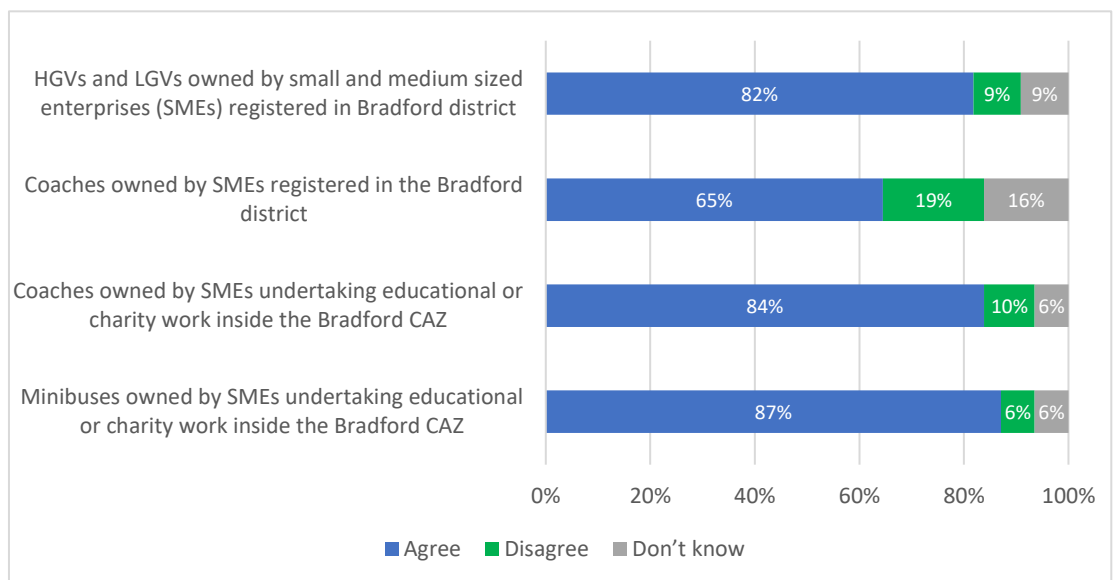
### 2.11 Views on the Impact of a Park and Ride Facility on Bradford’s Air Quality – Businesses Without a Fleet (n=32)



### Exemptions

As part of the CAZ proposals, certain vehicles will be exempt from paying the charges because of national Government guidance. Businesses without a fleet were asked whether they agree or disagree with Bradford Council’s proposals to exempt a selection of other vehicles.

### 2.12 Agreement with Additional Exemptions – Businesses Without a Fleet (n=33)



Of the businesses that responded, between 65% and 87% believed that each category of vehicle should exempt from paying the daily CAZ charges.



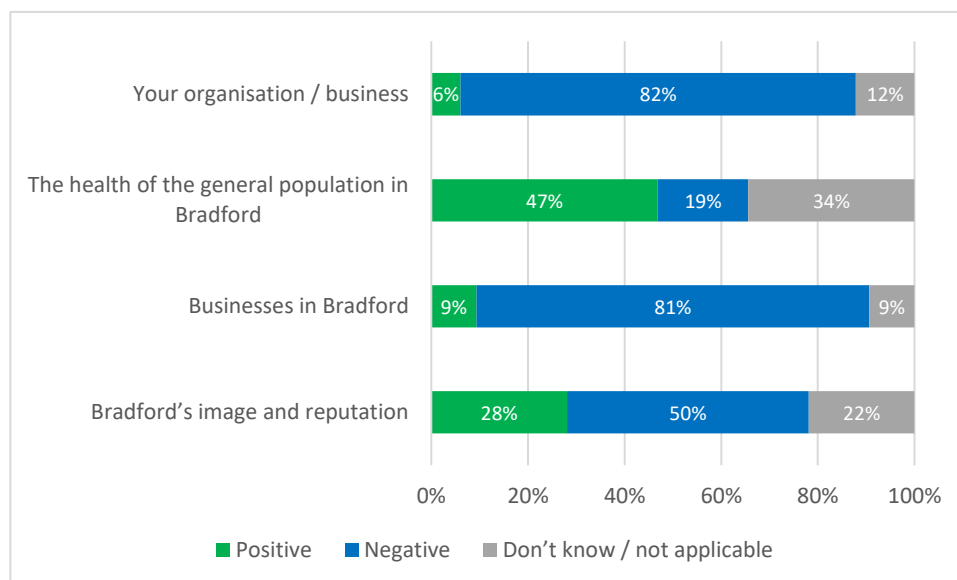
## 2.5 Impacts of the Clean Air Zone

This section summarises the results of how businesses without a fleet feel the introduction of a Clean Air Zone in Bradford will affect them.

### Overall Impact of the Clean Air Zone

Businesses were presented with a series of considerations and asked what they think the overall impact on those would be if a Clean Air Zone was introduced.

#### 2.13 Overall Impact of Clean Air Zone – Businesses Without a Fleet (n=33)

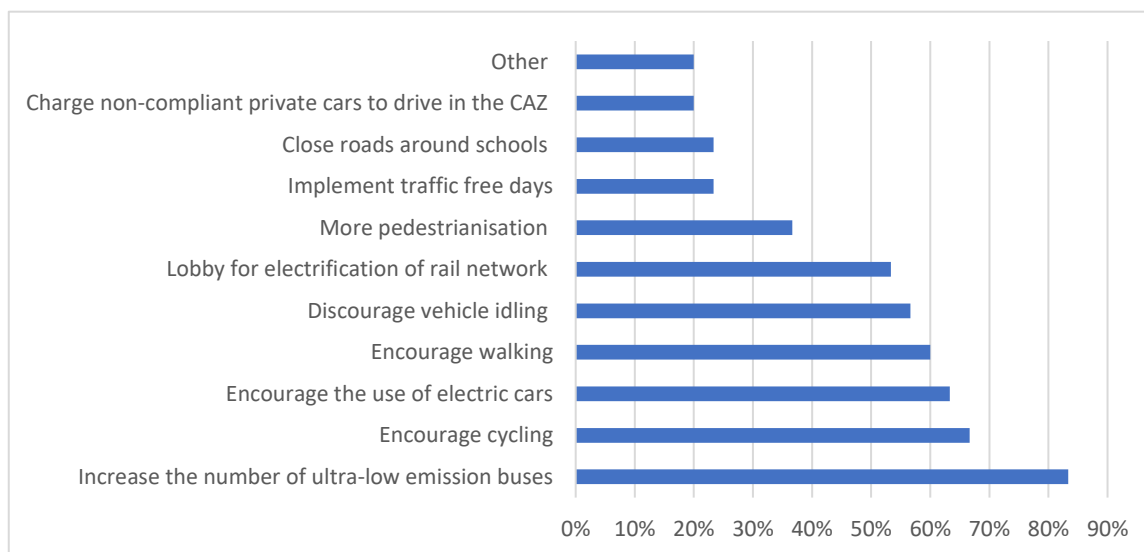


Over 80% of respondents believe the Clean Air Zone will have a negative impact on their organisation / business and businesses in Bradford as a whole, with 50% believing it will also have a negative impact on Bradford's image and reputation. Just less than half do believe the CAZ will have a positive impact upon the health of the general population in Bradford.

### Actions to Improve Air Quality

Businesses were presented with a series of actions which could improve air quality in the Bradford district and asked to select all which they think should be taken. Of the 30 businesses who responded to this question, the majority (83%) selected increase the number of ultra-low-emission buses, followed by over two thirds (67%) selected encourage cycling, 63% thought the use of electric cars should be encouraged and 60% want walking to be encouraged.

## 2.14 Other Actions That Should be Taken to Improve Air Quality – Businesses Without a Fleet (n=30)



For those that responded ‘Other’ and specified an action, themes within these answers included:

- Greater traffic management to reduce levels of idling.
- Placing a ban on parking around schools.
- Increasing car parking fees in the city.

## 2.6 Views on What Additional Information Would Be Helpful

Just over half of respondents (52%) were happy that answering this survey has given them the opportunity to make informed comments about the proposals. Of the remaining respondents, 33% stated the survey had not enabled them to make informed comments and the rest (15%) were unsure.

Some of the main points raised in these comments in relation to additional information that may have helped were:

- A system that allows people to check if their vehicle is compliant or not and therefore whether it would be subject to the charge.
- More information about how certain types of businesses may be affected (e.g. driving schools)

Respondents also used this question as an opportunity to provide more free-text comments about the proposals generally, as well as answering the question posed. Some of the prominent concerns and suggestions evident within the comments were:

- Safeguards need to be put in place to prevent many SME's going out of business, which they fear will be the case if the CAZ is implemented, if they cannot afford to upgrade their vehicles to compliant standards (Mentioned in 50% of comments);
- There should be a greater time period in which people have to upgrade their vehicles as it is a large financial burden;
- A suggestion that private vehicles be included in the CAZ charging scheme and all non-compliant vehicles be charged a lower rate rather than only charging businesses and taxis; and
- Many small businesses / sole traders are currently suffering financially due to the impact of the coronavirus outbreak, struggling to pay essential bills let alone attempting to save any money to upgrade their vehicle (Mentioned in 50% of comments).



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