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Perceptions of the Trunk Road Network in Scotland

An Ipsos Scotland report for Transport Scotland

Contents

1 Introduction

This report presents the results of the 2024 Trunk Road Users Survey, conducted by Ipsos Scotland on behalf of Transport Scotland. The survey had been carried out annually from 2009 to 2019, with interviews conducted face-to-face in respondents' homes using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). However, the survey was suspended in 2020 following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2023, the survey resumed on an annual basis, using an online survey methodology. This change in methodology reflects developments in the field since the 2019 survey was undertaken, with high quality online options now being available.

While data from previous years has been included in the report to provide context, it is important to note that it is not possible to make direct comparisons between data from before 2023 and data from 2023 onwards, due to the change in survey methodology.

The survey questionnaire

The questionnaire covered the same topics as the 2023 survey, with minor changes to the wording of some questions. The topics were:

- Road condition and defects
- Roadworks and maintenance
- Road lighting, marking and signage
- Cycle lanes and footways
- Disruption due to severe weather
- Perceptions of Traffic Scotland information
- Transport-related challenges faced in local areas.

A copy of the questionnaire is available on request from info@transport.gov.scot.

Methodology

The survey was administered through the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, an online survey panel recruited via a random probability, unclustered address-based sampling method. (Previous waves of the survey were conducted face-to-face in respondents' homes using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) using a representative quota sampling approach.) This means that every household in Scotland has a known chance of being selected to join the panel. Letters are sent to selected addresses in Scotland (using the Postcode Address File) inviting them to become members of the panel. Invited members can sign up to the panel by completing a short online questionnaire or by returning a paper form. Members of the

public who are digitally excluded are able to register to the Knowledge Panel either by post or by telephone, and are given a tablet, an email address, and basic internet access which allows them to complete surveys online.

Fieldwork took place between 24 and 30 October 2024. A total of 1,128 panellists in Scotland (aged 18+) completed the survey. Respondents who had not driven or travelled as a passenger on Scottish trunk roads in the previous twelve months were excluded from participation. To establish eligibility, respondents were shown a map of trunk roads in Scotland (see Appendix A) and asked how often they had travelled on the network in the past twelve months. Those who answered “never” were screened out of further participation. Note that passengers on public transport were eligible to take part.

This work was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the international quality standard for Market Research, ISO 20252.

Survey data

Data were weighted to ensure the results were as representative of the Scottish population as possible. As up to two members per household are allowed to register on the KnowledgePanel, a design weight was employed to correct for unequal probabilities of selection of household members. Calibration weights have also been applied using the latest population statistics relevant to the surveyed population to correct for imbalances in the achieved sample

The calibration weights were applied in two stages:

- The first set of variables were (using ONS 2019 mid-year population estimates as the weighting targets): An interlocked variable of Gender by Age, and region.
- The second set were (using ONS 2019 mid-year population estimates, the ONS Annual Population Survey and 2011 UK census as the weighting targets): Education, Ethnicity, Index of Multiple Deprivation (quintiles), and number of adults in the household.

The weighted profile of the 2024 sample is shown below.

Table 1.1: Weighted sample profile by gender

Gender	2024
Male	48%
Female	51%

Table 1.2: Weighted sample profile by age

Age	2024
18-24	9%
25-34	17%
35-54	32%
55-64	17%
65+	24%

Table 1.3: Weighted sample profile by region

Region	2024
North West	11%
North East	26%
South West	33%
South East	28%

Presentation and interpretation of the findings

The survey findings represent the views of a sample of Scottish adults, and not the entire population of Scottish trunk road users. As such, they are subject to sampling tolerances, meaning that differences between sub-groups may not always be statistically significant.

Throughout the report, we have commented only upon differences which are statistically significant at the 5% level – i.e. where we can be reasonably certain that they are unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Throughout the report, statistically significant differences are noted only when they exceed the cutoff of the 95% confidence level – i.e., where we can be reasonably certain that they are unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Where percentages do not sum to 100%, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of 'don't know' categories or multiple answers. Aggregate percentages (e.g., 'very satisfied/fairly satisfied') are calculated from the absolute values. Therefore, aggregate percentages may differ from the sum of the individual scores due to rounding of percentage totals.

For questions where the number of respondents is fewer than 30, the number of times a response has been selected (n) rather than the percentage is given.

2 Perceptions of trunk roads

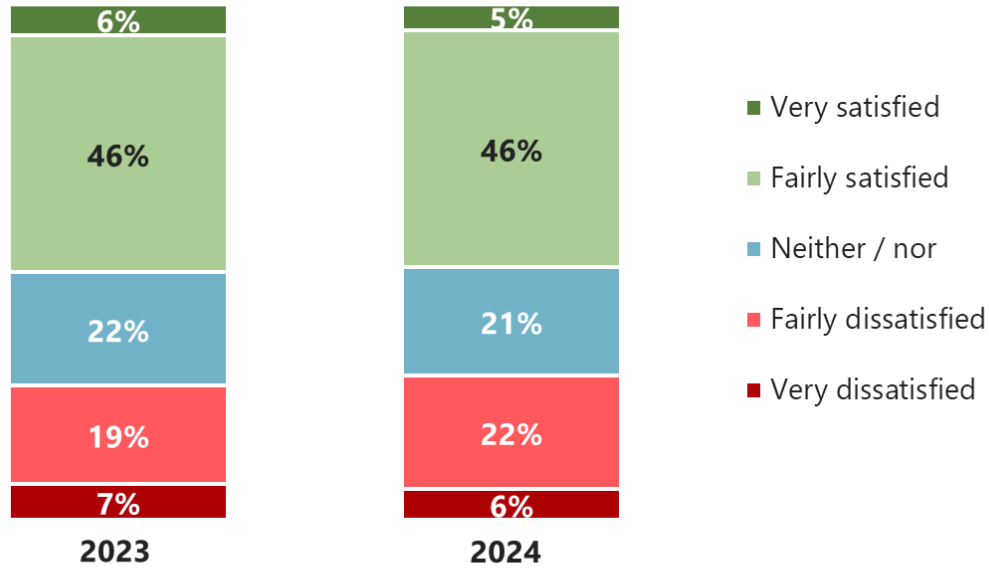
Frequency of use and satisfaction

Participants were asked to select the trunk roads which they travelled on most frequently. The road most used was the M8 (36%), followed by the A90 (18%), M74 (17%), A9 (14%) and M80 (13%).

Half of respondents (51%) were satisfied with the trunk roads they used most often, while a just over a quarter (28%) were dissatisfied. This was in line with findings from 2023 (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Overall satisfaction with trunk roads (2023 and 2024)

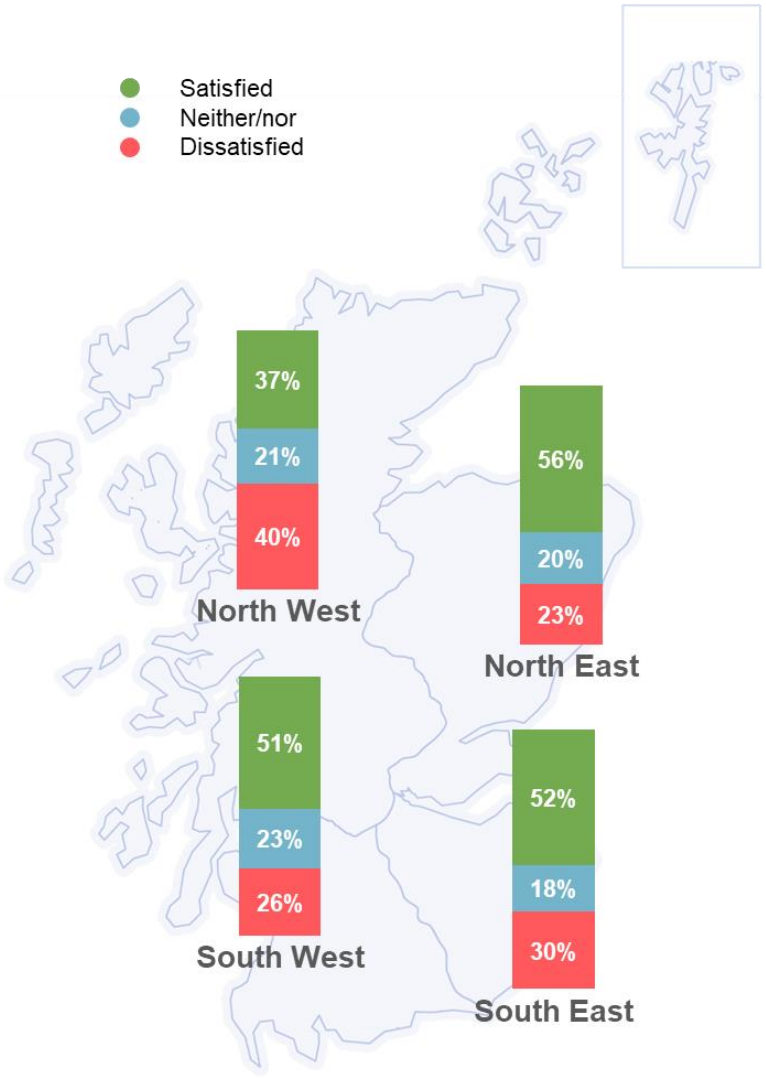
Q. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the trunk roads that you use most often?



Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Overall satisfaction was lower than average among respondents in the North West (37%) (Figure 2.2), which mirrored 2023's findings.

Figure 2.2: Overall satisfaction with trunk roads, by region



Dissatisfaction was higher among older respondents, with 33% of those aged 65 and older saying they were dissatisfied with the trunk roads they used most often (compared to 14% of those aged 18-24).

Perceived importance of aspects of trunk road management and maintenance

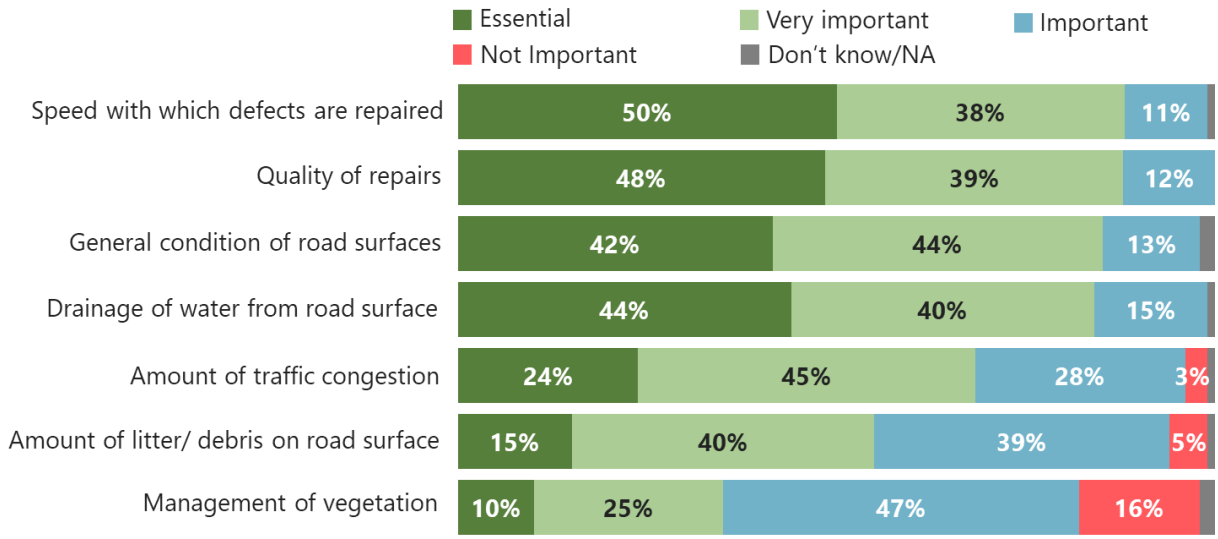
Respondents were shown a list of specific aspects of trunk road management and maintenance. For each aspect, respondents indicated how important they perceived it to be. Consistent with previous years, the aspects which were perceived as most important (rated as either 'essential' or 'very important') were the speed with which

defects are repaired (88%), the quality of repairs (87%), the general condition of road surfaces (86%) and the drainage of water and flooding from road surfaces (83%) (Figure 2.3).

The management of vegetation remained the least important aspect, mentioned by 35% of respondents.

Figure 2.3: Perceived importance of aspects of management and maintenance

Q. How important is the management and maintenance of each aspect to you?



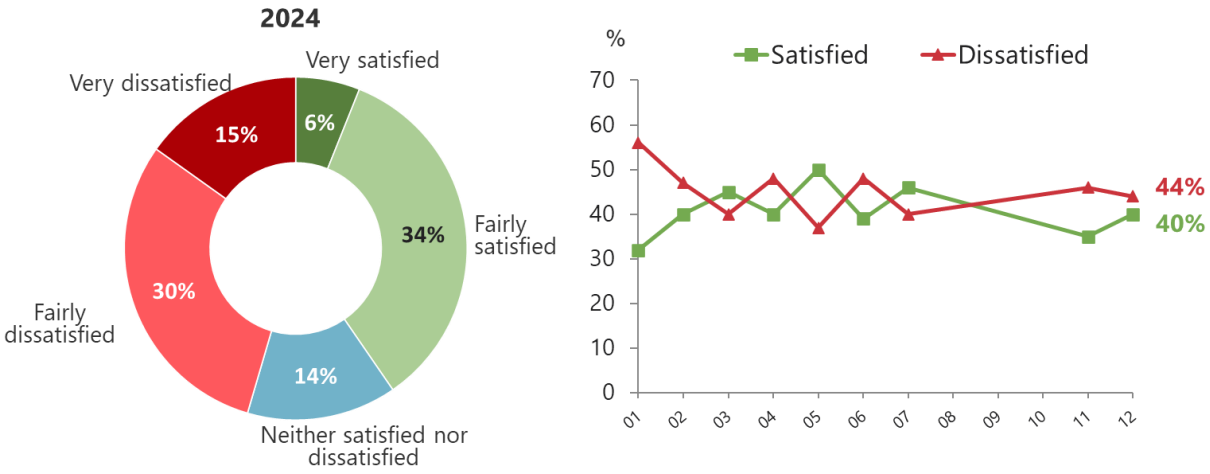
Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Satisfaction with general condition of trunk roads

Attitudes towards the general condition of road surfaces were mixed, with four in ten satisfied (40%) and a similar proportion dissatisfied (44%). In comparison with 2023, there was an increase in those saying they were satisfied with the general condition of trunk roads (40%, compared to 35%).

Figure 2.4: Satisfaction with the condition of trunk road surfaces

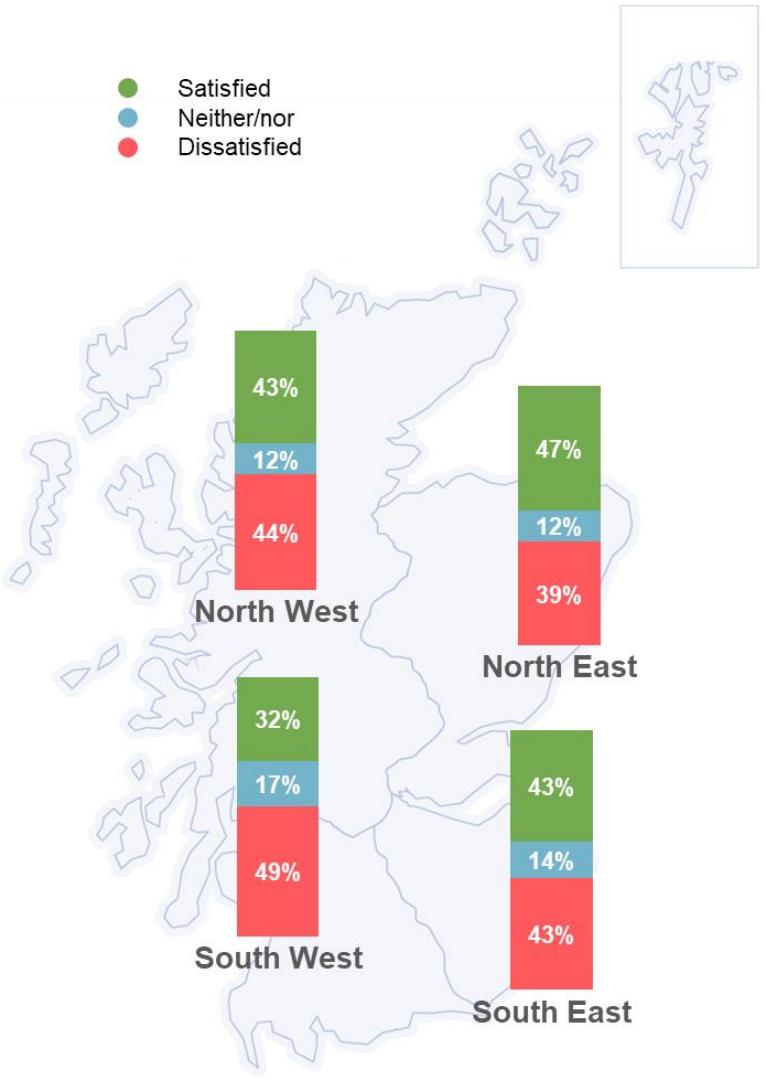
Q. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the general condition of trunk road surfaces?



Base: All who used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Trunk road users in the North East were more likely than average to be satisfied (47%, compared to 40%), while satisfaction was lowest among those in the South West (32%) (Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5: Satisfaction with the condition of trunk road surfaces, by region



Respondents aged 55 and older were more likely than younger respondents to be dissatisfied with the condition of trunk road surfaces (52%, compared to 31% of those aged under 35).

Respondents who were dissatisfied with the general condition of trunk road surfaces were asked to identify the roads they were most dissatisfied with. The most commonly named road was the M8, selected by a quarter (25%) of users (compared to 17% in 2023). This was followed by the A90 (14%), M74 (10%) and A9 (9%).

Among those who were dissatisfied with the general condition of trunk road surfaces, 82% said they 'always', 'usually', or 'sometimes' encountered defects they regarded as unsafe. Potholes remained the most common defect (55%) (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Defects encountered on the trunk road network (% encountered in past year)

Defects	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2023	2024
Potholes	72%	71%	71%	64%	73%	69%	62%	55%
Uneven/bumpy surfaces	9%	9%	10%	12%	10%	12%	14%	12%
Poor repairs	8%	8%	8%	10%	7%	8%	12%	11%
Water on roads	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	7%
Poor road markings	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	5%
Slippery roads caused by ice/snow	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%
Deterioration of road edge	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%
Cracking	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Ironwork in need of repair	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	<0.5%	2%	1%
Poor skid resistance	<0.5%	1%	<0.5%	1%	<0.5%	<0.5%	1%	<0.5%
Base: All who had encountered defects	*885*	*723*	*895*	*643*	*878*	*753*	*605*	*517*

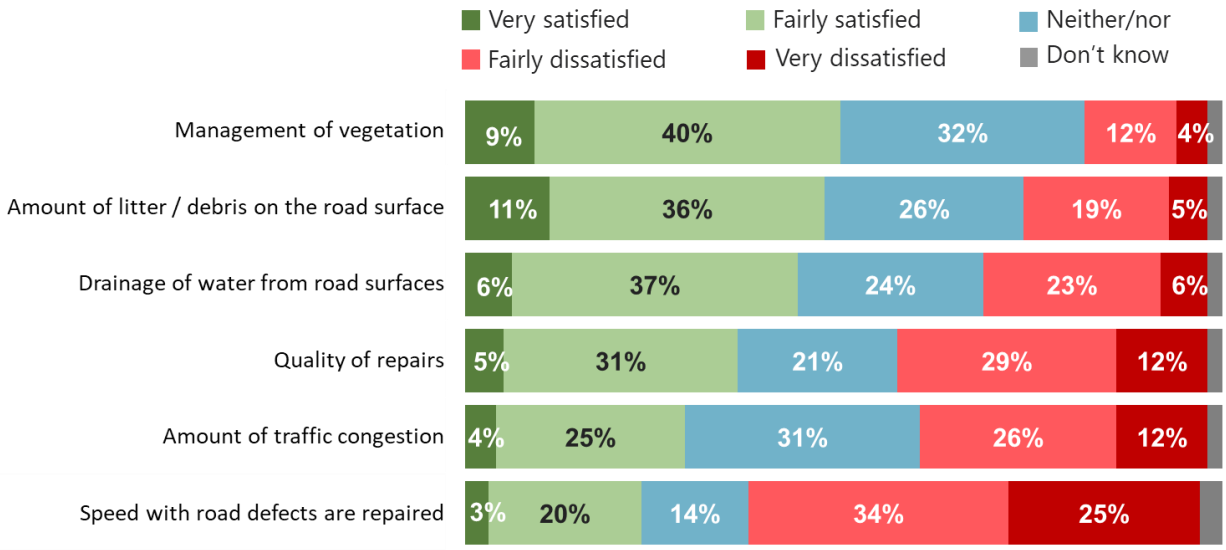
Respondents who had experienced at least one defect were asked about the specific road they encountered these on. The most commonly mentioned roads were the M8 (19%), A90 (16%), A9 (10%) and M74 (10%), the roads travelled on most frequently by trunk roads users.

Satisfaction with other aspects of trunk road management and maintenance

Among the other aspects of trunk road management and maintenance, satisfaction was highest with the management of vegetation on verges and central reserves (48%), and lowest with the speed with which road defects, such as potholes, are repaired (23%) (Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.6: Satisfaction with other aspects of trunk road management and maintenance

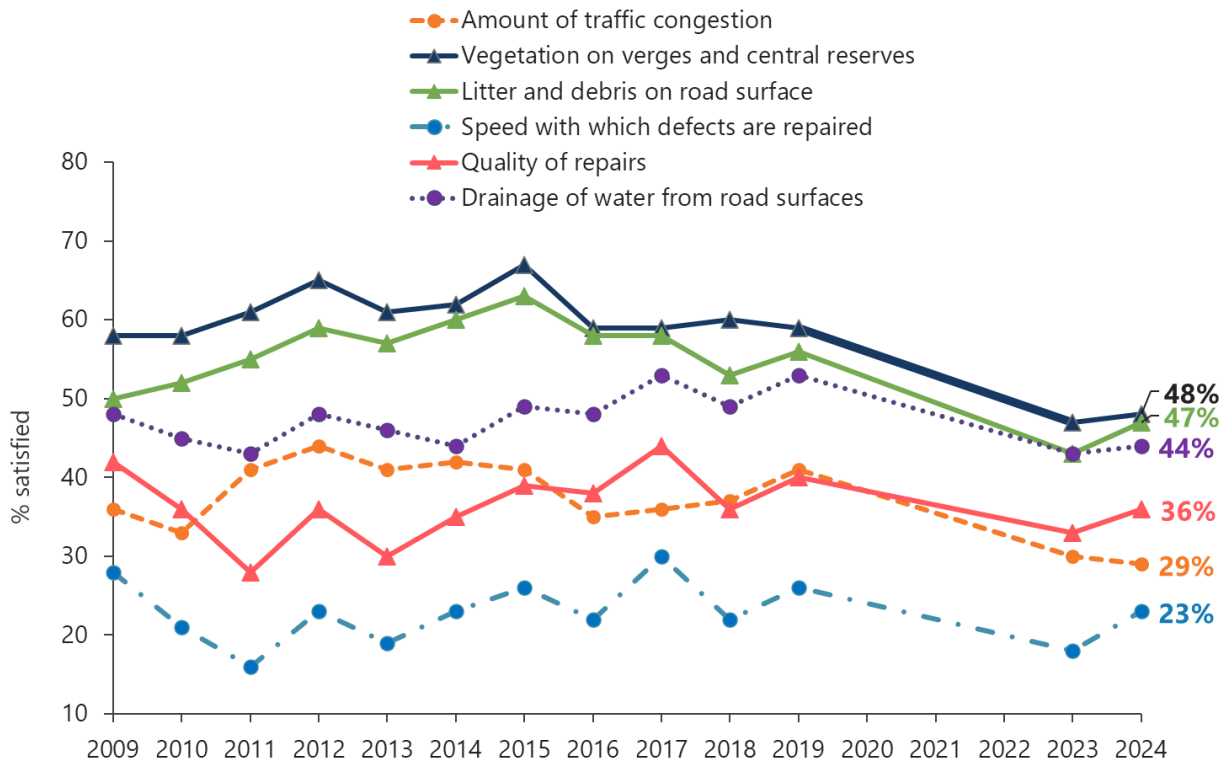
Q. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following aspects of the general state and condition of trunk roads?



Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

These findings were consistent with those from 2023 (Figure 2.7). Although the speed of repairs remained the lowest rated aspect, satisfaction with this increased between 2023 and 2024 (23%, compared to 18%).

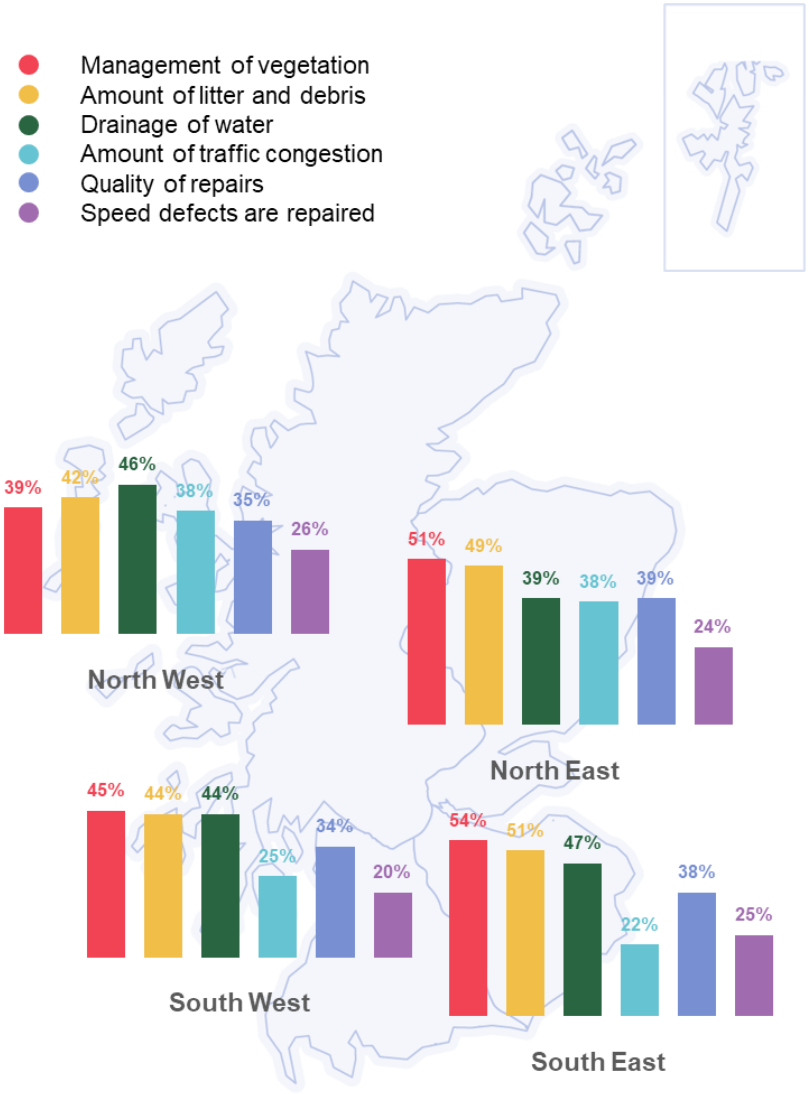
Figure 2.7: Trends in satisfaction with other aspects of trunk road management and maintenance



Base: All who used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Respondents in the North West and North East were more likely than average to be satisfied with the amount of traffic congestion (both 38%, compared to 29%). Road users in the North West were less likely to be satisfied with the management of vegetation (39%, compared to 48%).

Figure 2.8: Satisfaction with other aspects of trunk road management and maintenance, by region



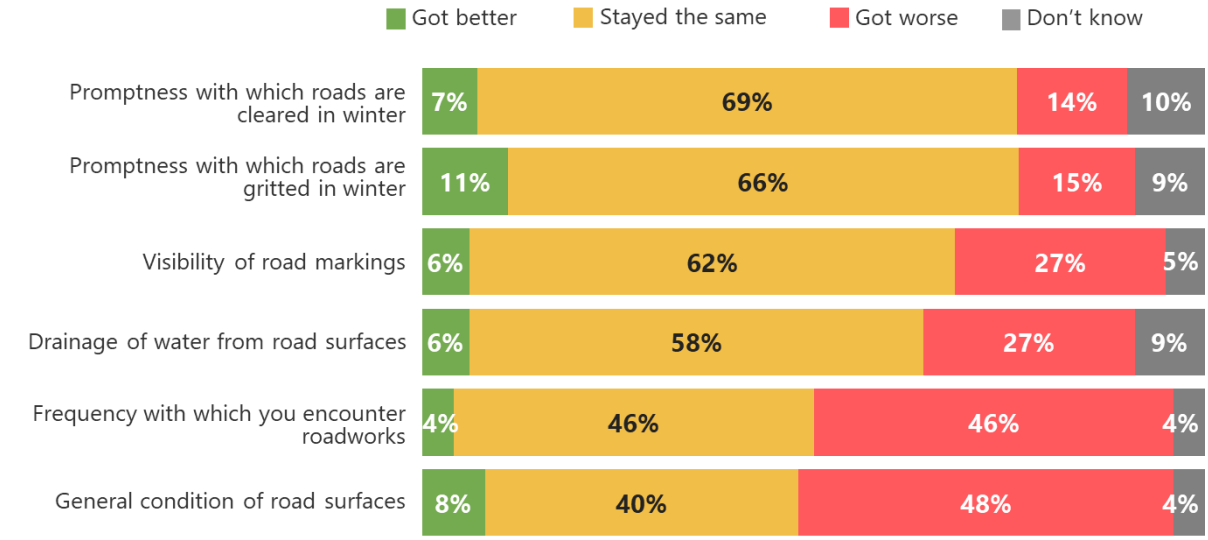
Perceived changes in the trunk road network

Respondents were presented with a list of aspects of service provision on the trunk road network and asked if they thought these had got better, worse or stayed the same over the past two years. Almost half felt there had been a worsening in the general condition of road surfaces (48%) and the frequency of roadworks (46%). For

all other aspects of service provision, a majority (between 58% and 69%) felt that there had been no change.

Figure 2.9: Changes in aspects of the trunk road network over the past two years

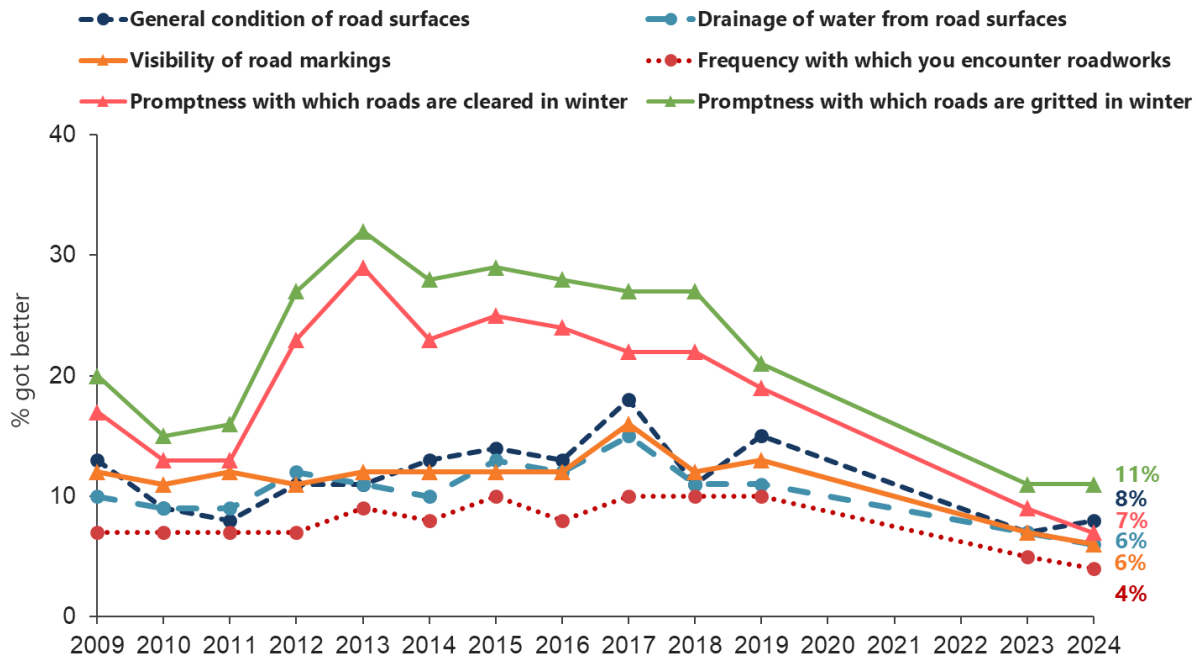
Q. Do you think that each of the following aspects of trunk roads have got better, worse, or stayed the same over the past two years?



Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

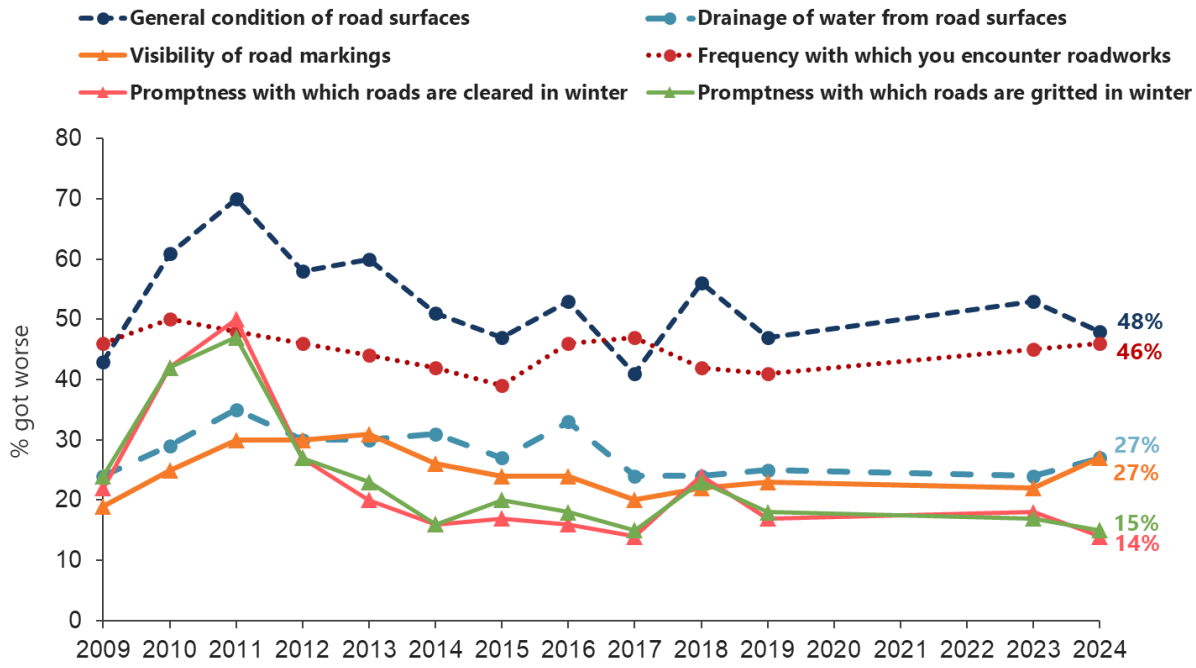
These findings were broadly in line with 2023 (Figures 2.10 and 2.11), although there was a slight increase in those who felt the visibility of road markings had got worse (27%, compared to 22%).

Figure 2.10: Trends in perceptions that aspects of the trunk network have improved



Base: All who used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Figure 2.11: Trends in perceptions that aspects of the trunk network have worsened



Base: All who used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Respondents in the South West were more likely than average to say that the general condition of road surfaces (54%, compared to 48%) and the visibility of road markings (33%, compared to 27%) had got worse. Meanwhile, those in the North West were less likely than average to say that the frequency they encountered road works had got worse (33%, compared to 46%) and more likely to say that it stayed the same (57%, compared to 46%).

Older road users, aged 55 and over, were more likely than those under 55 to have perceived deteriorations across a number of aspects of the trunk road network, including the general condition of road surfaces (59%, compared to 41%), frequency of encountering roadworks (52%, compared to 41%), drainage of water and flooding (31%, compared to 23%),

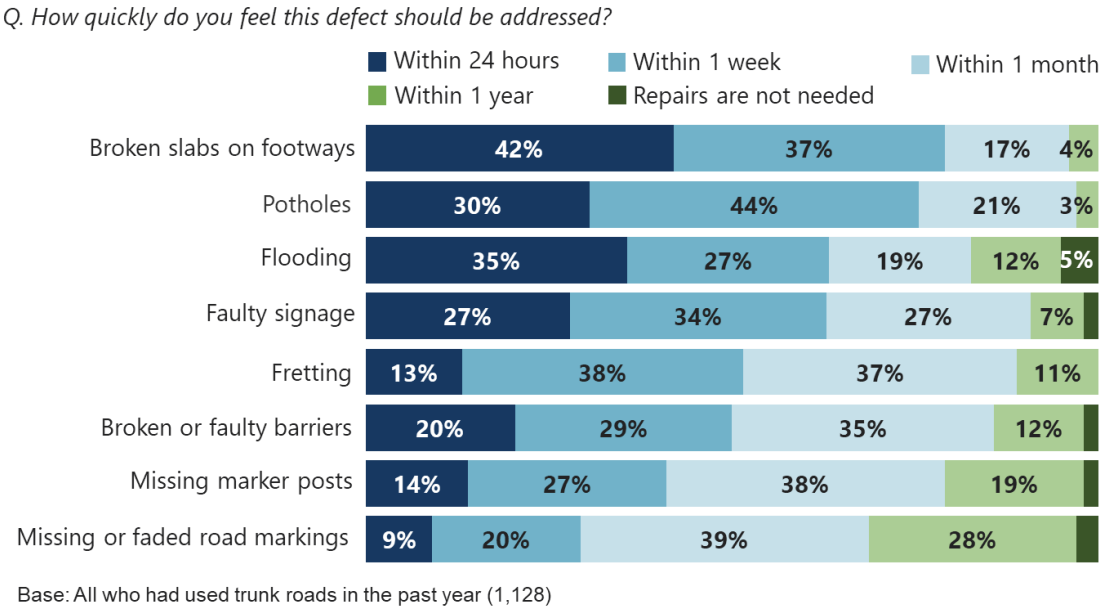
Addressing trunk road defects

Respondents were shown images of eight types of road defect (Figure 2.12, overleaf) and asked how quickly, if at all, they felt each one should be repaired. The images used for potholes, fretting, broken barriers, flooding and missing road markings were updated for the 2024 survey, and as a result, it is not possible to make direct comparisons between the 2023 and 2024 results for these defects.

Figure 2.12: Images of defects shown to respondents

Broken footway slabs were the most immediate priority for repair, with 78% saying this defect should be repaired within a week and 42% saying it should be repaired within 24 hours. A majority of respondents also indicated that potholes (74%), flooding (62%) and faulty signage (61%) should be repaired within a week. For all types of defect, the majority of respondents believed they should be repaired within a month (Figure 2.13).

Figure 2.13: Acceptable timeframes for repairing defects



Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Respondents in the North West were more likely than average to say that repairs to potholes should be made within 24 hours (38%, compared to 30%) and fretting (19%, compared to 13%), while those in the North East were more likely to say that flooding defects should be repaired within 24 hours (44%, compared to 35%) (Table 2.2).

In the case of missing or faded road markings, those in the North were more likely to say these should be repaired within 24 hours (11%, compared to 7% in the South).

Table 2.2: Speed with which defects should be addressed, by region (% saying "within 24 hours")

Defect	All	North West	North East	South West	South East
Broken slabs on footways	42%	47%	40%	45%	37%
Potholes	30%	38%	28%	31%	27%
Flooding	35%	28%	44%	33%	32%
Faulty signage	27%	32%	27%	26%	27%
Fretting	13%	19%	11%	13%	12%
Broken or faulty barriers	20%	18%	16%	21%	25%
Missing marker posts	14%	16%	10%	16%	13%
Missing or faded road markings	9%	12%	10%	9%	5%
Base: All who had used trunk roads at some point in the last year	*1,128*	*141*	*291*	*380*	*311*

3 Roadworks and winter maintenance

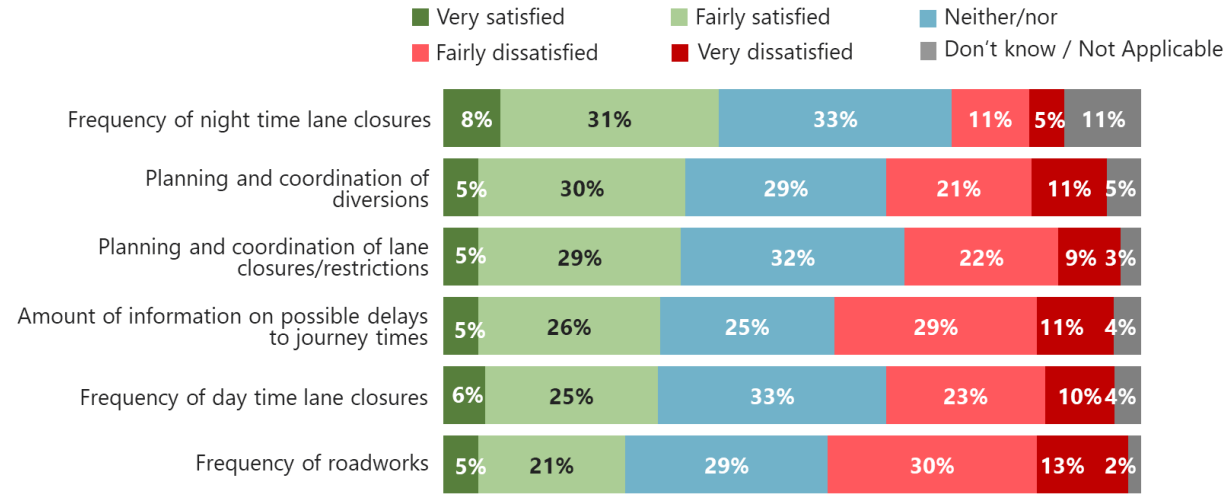
Satisfaction with roadworks

Satisfaction with specific aspects of roadworks was mixed (Figure 3.1). Road users were more positive about the frequency of night time lane closures than other aspects. Thirty nine percent were satisfied with this and 16% were dissatisfied (11% selected “don’t know / not applicable” for this aspect).

Trunk road users were more negative about the frequency of road works – 25% were satisfied and 43% dissatisfied.

Figure 3.1: Satisfaction with aspects of roadworks and trunk road maintenance

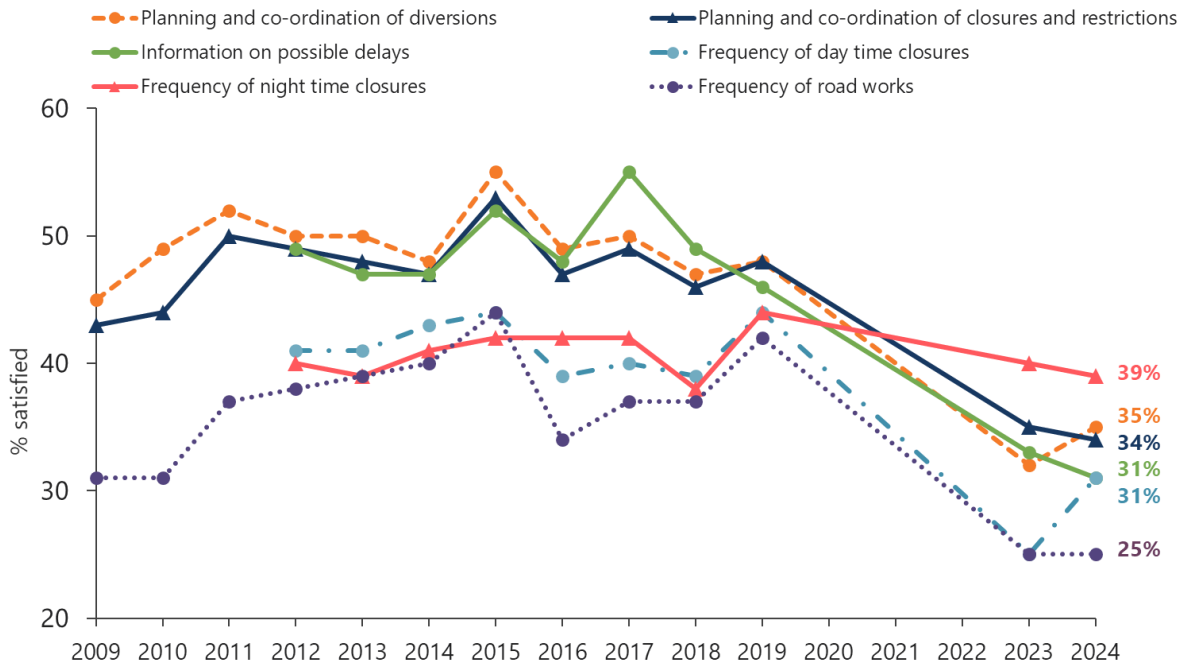
Q. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following aspects of road works and the maintenance of trunk roads?



Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Between 2023 and 2024, there was an increase in satisfaction with the frequency of day time closures (31%, compared to 25% in 2023).

Figure 3.2: Trends in satisfaction with aspects of roadworks and trunk road maintenance

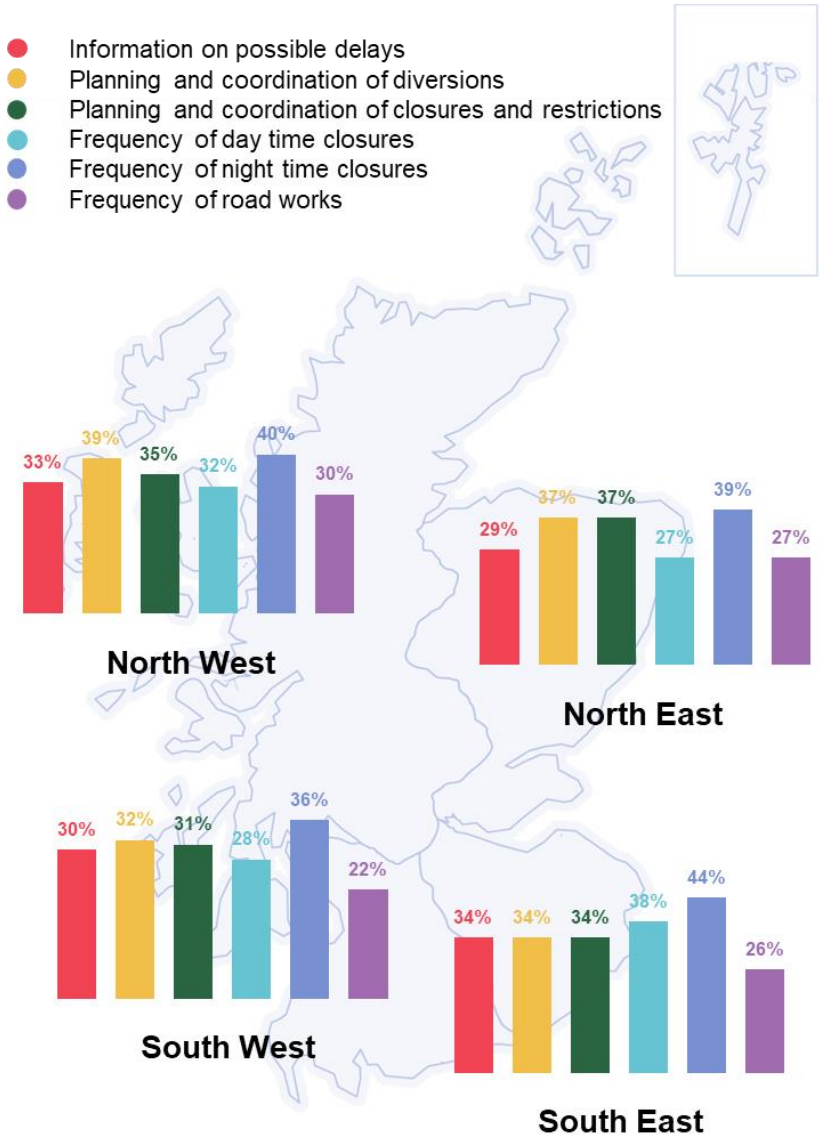


Base: All who used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

There was little regional variation in satisfaction with roadworks, aside from slightly higher satisfaction among those in the South East with day time lane closures - 38%, compared to 31% overall (and 26% in 2023). (Figure 3.3).

Respondents who were dissatisfied with the frequency of roadworks were most dissatisfied with the M8 (19%), A9 (13%) and A90 (12%).

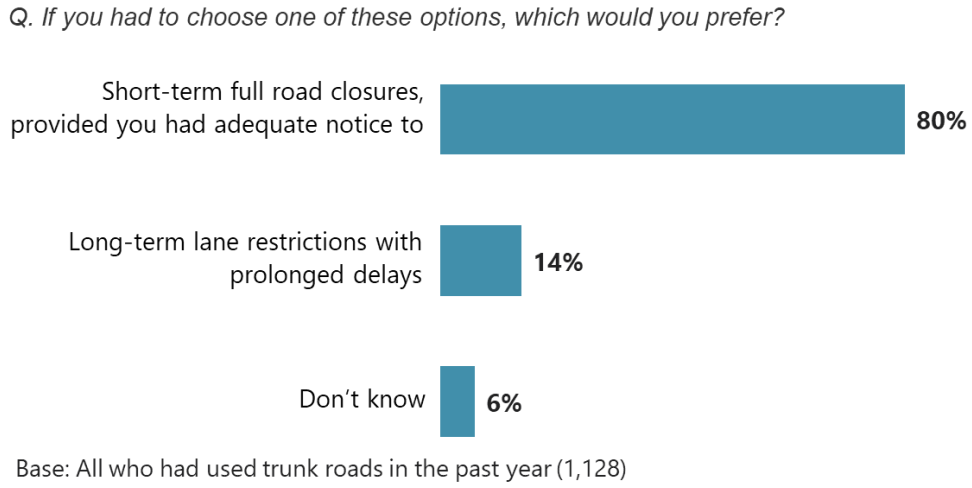
Figure 3.3: Satisfaction with aspects of roadworks and trunk road maintenance, by region



Transport Scotland's approach to roadworks

Respondents were asked to choose between two approaches to road closures: short-term full road closures with adequate notice to adjust travel arrangements and long-term lane closures with delays. In line with previous years, most respondents (80%) said they preferred short-term full road closures (Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4: Preferred approach to roadworks

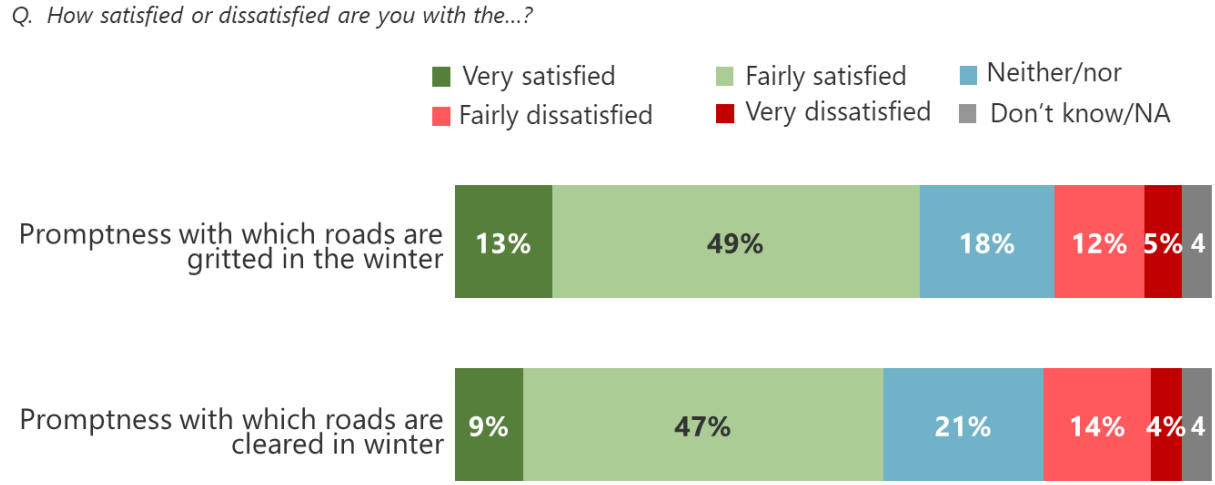


Respondents in the North East were more likely than average to choose long-term lane restrictions (19%, compared to 14% overall).

Winter maintenance

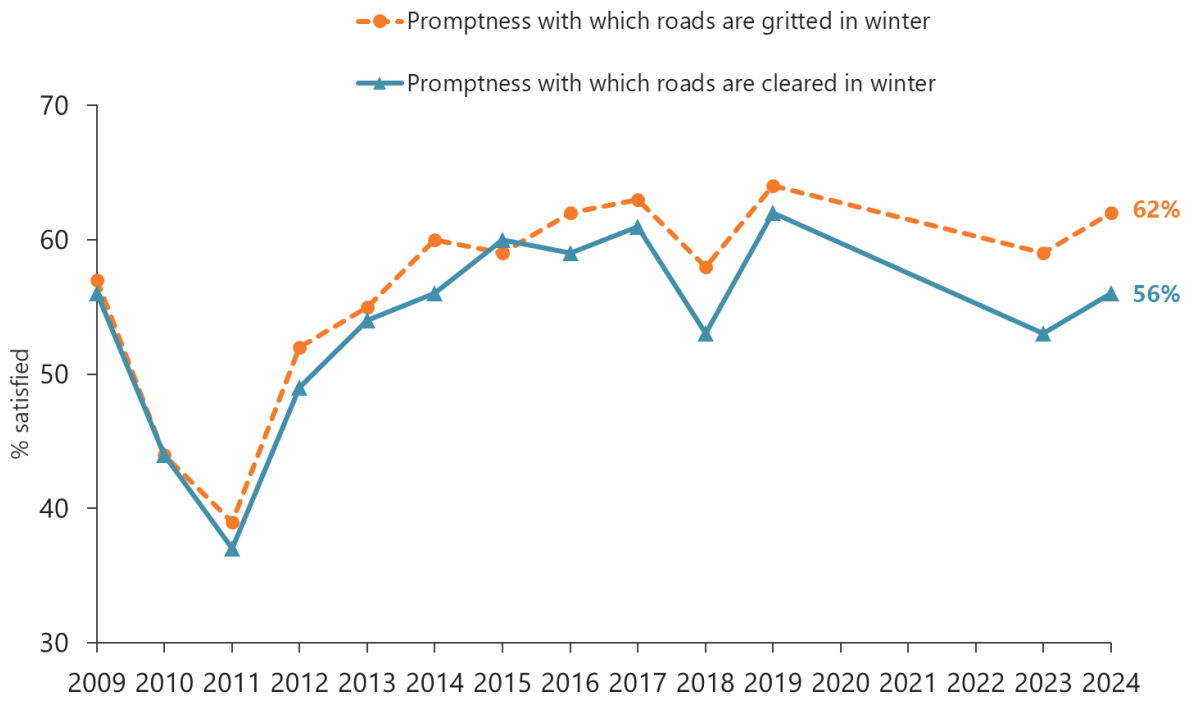
Overall, respondents were positive about efforts to maintain the trunk road network during winter, including the promptness with which roads are gritted (62% were satisfied) and cleared (56%) (Figure 3.5). These findings were broadly in line with those from 2023 (Figure 3.6). Road users in the North West were more likely than average to be dissatisfied with the promptness with which roads are gritted (24%, compared to 17% overall).

Figure 3.5: Satisfaction with winter maintenance



Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Figure 3.6: Trends in satisfaction with winter maintenance



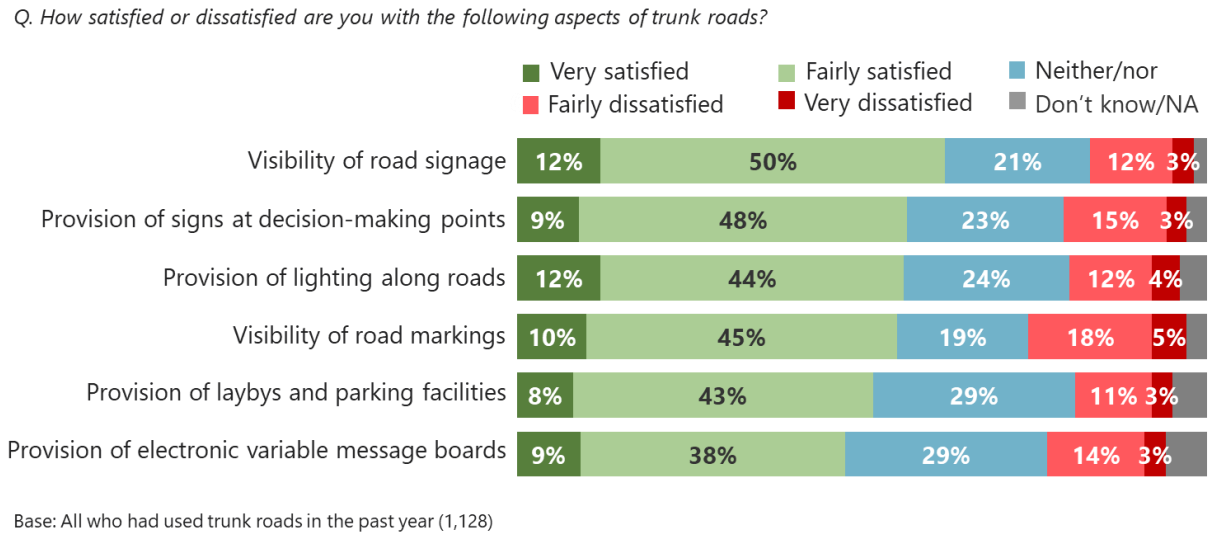
Base: All who used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

4 Lighting, markings, signage, laybys and parking facilities

Satisfaction with lighting, markings, signage, laybys and parking facilities

Overall, respondents were satisfied with lighting, markings, signage, laybys and parking provisions on the trunk road network (Figure 4.1). Satisfaction was highest for the visibility of road signage (62%), the provision of signs at decision-making points (56%) and lighting along roads (56%).

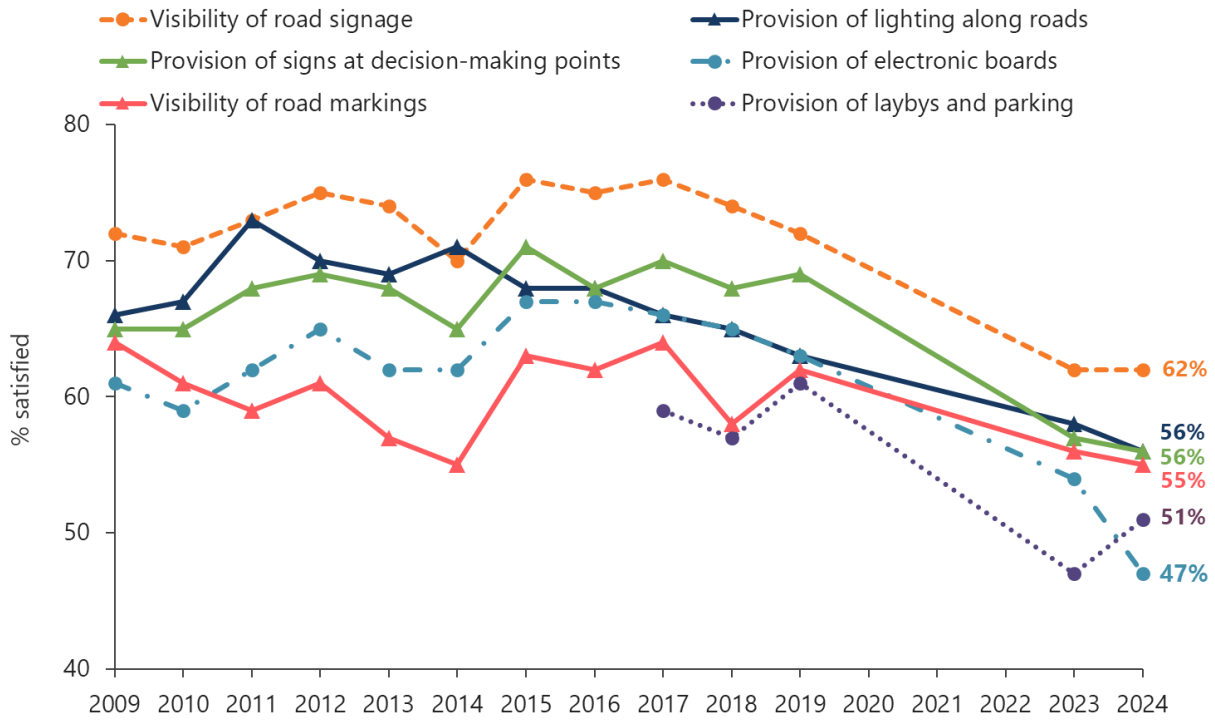
Figure 4.1: Satisfaction with lighting, marking, signage, laybys and parking



Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Satisfaction with the provision of electronic variable message boards continued a downward trend which began in 2016. In the 2024 survey it became the lowest-rated aspect in this group (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2: Trends in satisfaction with lighting, marking, signage, laybys and parking

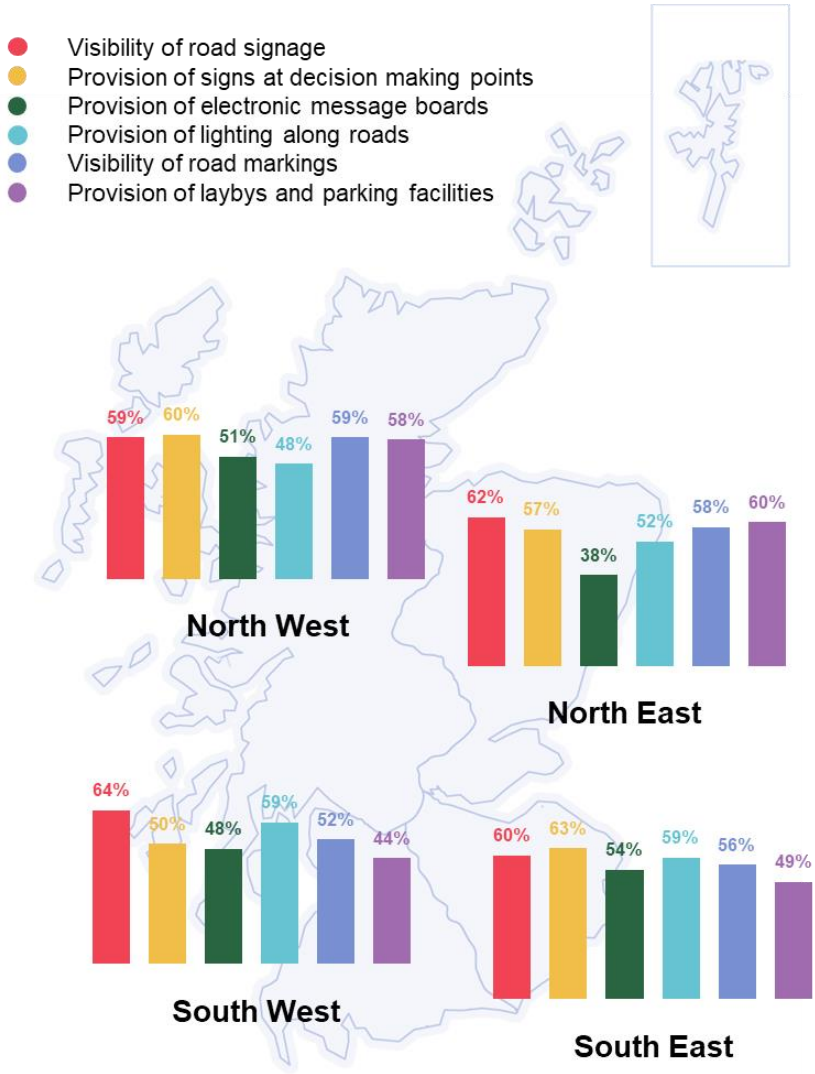


Base: All who used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Trunk road users in the South East were more likely than average to be satisfied with the provision of signs at decision-making points (63%, compared to 56% overall), and the provision of electronic variable message boards (54%, compared to 47%).

Respondents in the North East were more likely to be satisfied with the provision of laybys and parking (60%, compared to 51% overall), but less likely to be satisfied with the provision of electronic variable message boards – 38%, compared to 47% (and 44% in 2023) (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3: Satisfaction with lighting, marking, signage, laybys and parking, by region



Respondents who expressed dissatisfaction with the visibility of road markings were asked with which road they were most dissatisfied. The most commonly selected roads were the M8 (18%) and A90 (16%), which likely reflected the greater frequency of use for these roads.

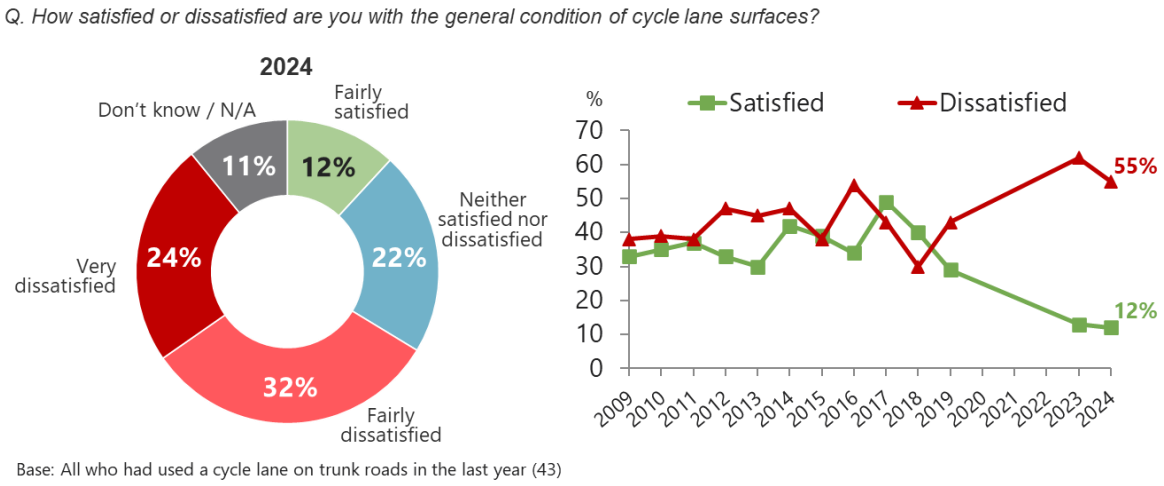
5 Cycle lanes and footways

This section covers the usage of cycle lanes and footways that are alongside trunk roads. Because the base sizes were relatively small, (43 cycle lane users and 91 footway users), the data presented here cannot be said to be representative of the wider population of cycle lane and footway users and should be interpreted with caution.

Satisfaction with cycle lanes

Cyclists were more likely to be dissatisfied than satisfied with the general condition of cycle lane surfaces – 55% were dissatisfied and just 12% satisfied. This was in line with the findings from 2023 (Figure 5.1).

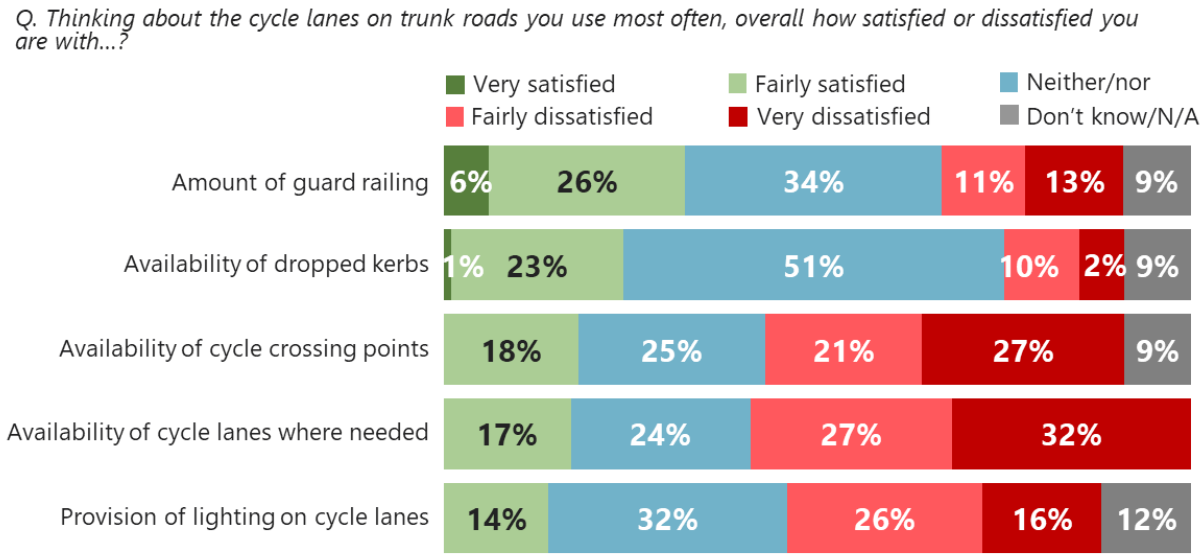
Figure 5.1: Satisfaction with the general condition of cycle lane surfaces



Base: All who had used a cycle lane on trunk roads in the last year (43)

When asked about the specific features of cycle lanes, dissatisfaction was highest for the availability of cycle lanes (59%) and cycle crossing points (48%) (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2: Satisfaction with features of cycle lanes

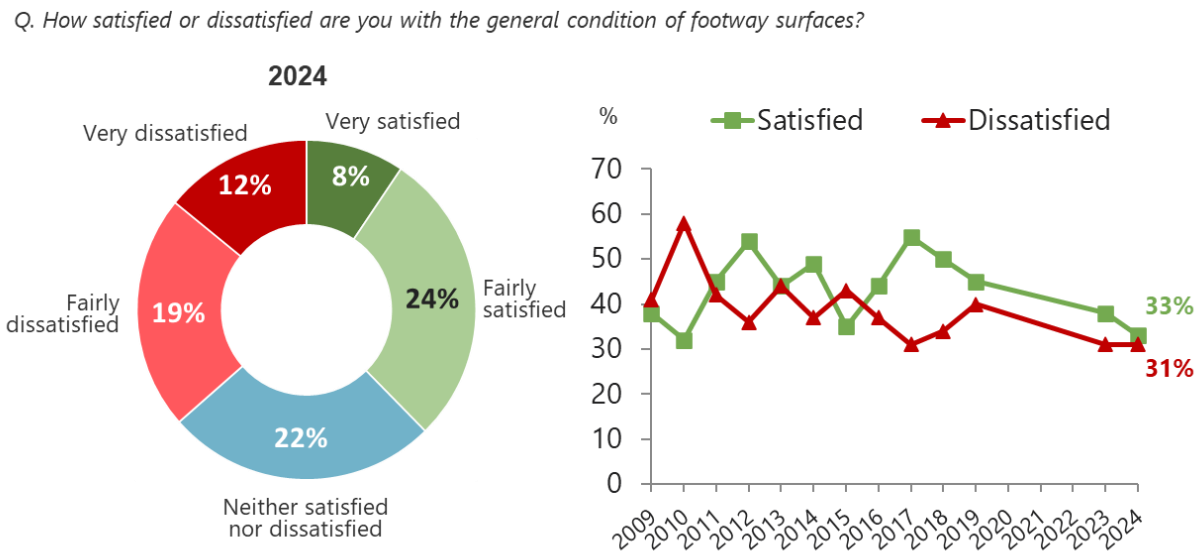


Base: All who had used cycle lanes in the last year (43)

Satisfaction with footways

Among those who had used trunk road footways within the past year, around one in three said they were either satisfied or dissatisfied with their general condition, similar to the findings from 2023 (Figure 5.3).

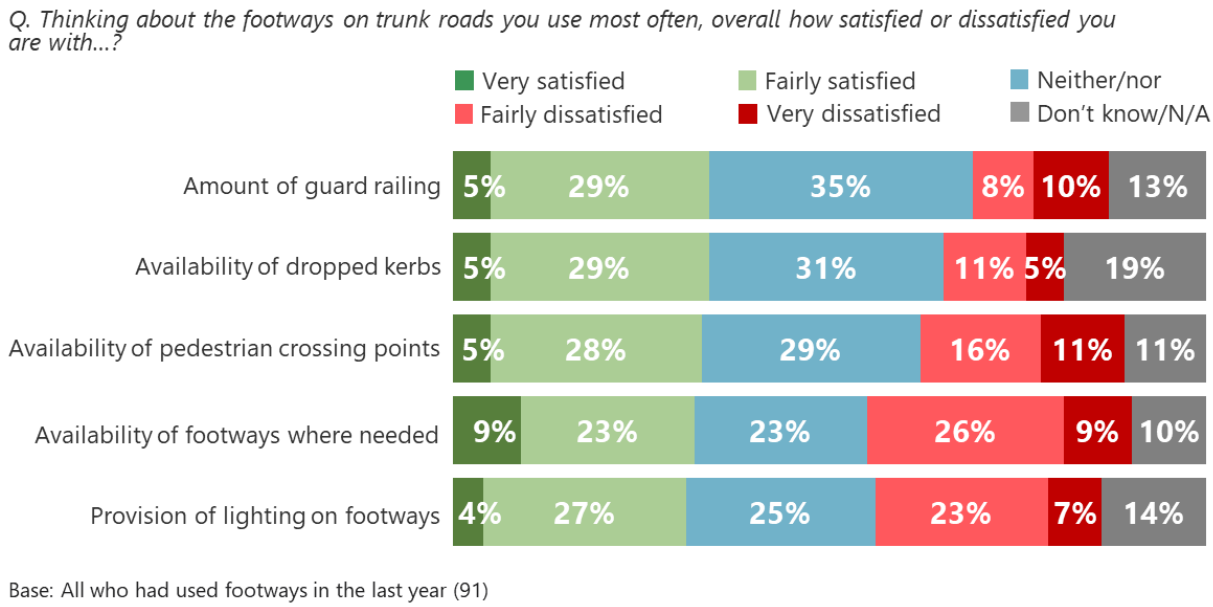
Figure 5.3: Satisfaction with the general condition of footway surfaces



Base: All who had used a footway on trunk roads in the last year (91)

Similar proportions, around one in three, said they were satisfied with the specific aspects of trunk road footways. Dissatisfaction was highest for the availability of footways (35%) and the provision of lighting (30%) (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4: Satisfaction with features of footways



Base: All who had used footways in the last year (91)

6 Improving the trunk road network

Future improvements to the trunk road network

Respondents were asked to select up to three aspects of trunk roads which they would most like to see improved. As shown in Figure 6.1, almost half (48%) selected the speed with which road defects and potholes are repaired, and 39% selected the general condition of road surfaces. One in three selected the quality of repairs (31%) and the amount of congestion (28%).

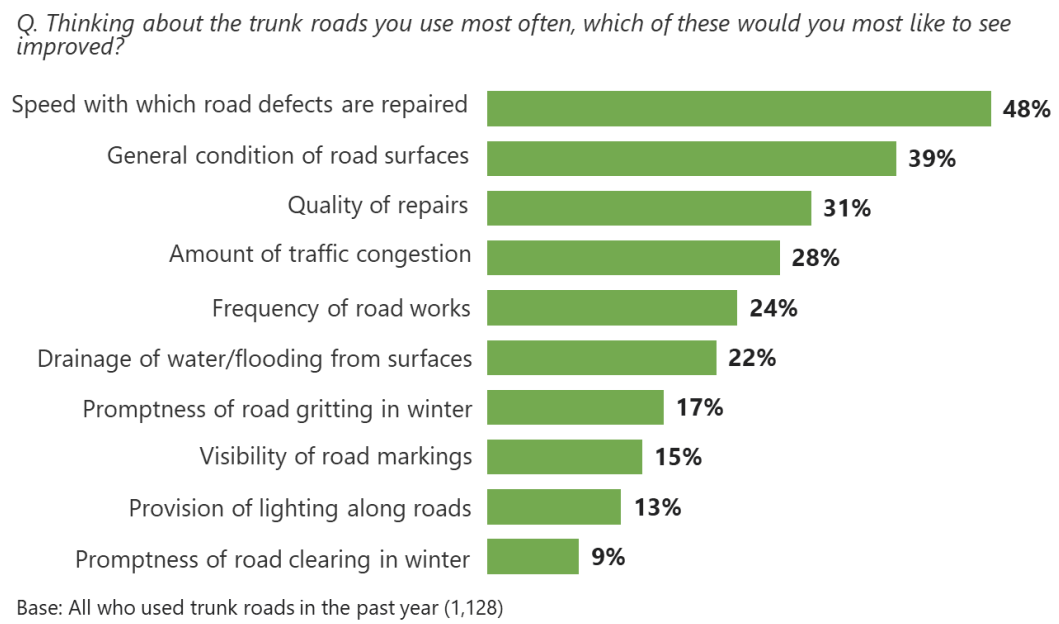
In comparison to 2023, there was an increase in those selecting:

- the frequency of roadworks (24% in 2024, compared to 19% in 2023)
- the drainage of water and flooding (22%, compared to 18%)
- the visibility of road markings (15%, compared to 11%), and
- the provision of lighting along roads (13%, compared to 9%).

While slightly fewer respondents selected:

- the speed with which road defects and potholes are repaired (48%, compared to 53%), and
- the promptness of road clearing in winter (9%, compared to 13%).

Figure 6.1: Priorities for improving the trunk road network



Respondents in the South East were more likely than average to say they would like to see the amount of traffic congestion improved (38%, compared to 28% overall), while those in the South West were more likely to select the frequency of roadworks (29%, compared to 24%). Respondents in the North East were more likely to select the drainage of water or flooding (29%, compared to 22%).

Older respondents (aged 55 and older) were more likely those aged under 55 to prioritise improvements to the speed with which road defects and potholes are repaired (61%, compared to 38%).

Priorities for development

The priorities for improvement outlined above in Figure 6.1 were reinforced by analysis of the relationship between satisfaction with various aspects of trunk road management and maintenance, and the relative perceived importance of each (see Appendix B).

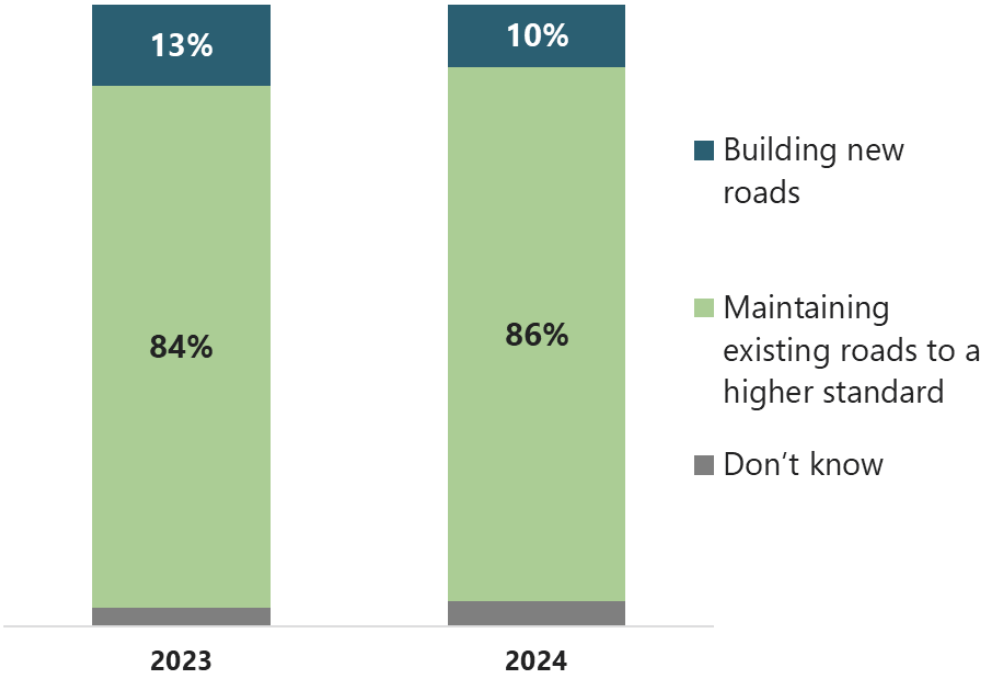
In line with previous years, the key priorities for development were the speed of repairs, quality of repairs, and general condition of surfaces.

Priorities for future investment

Respondents were asked whether Transport Scotland should prioritise (a) investment in the building of new roads, or (b) the maintenance of existing roads to a higher standard. As in previous years, the majority of respondents (86%) were in favour of maintaining existing roads to a higher standard (Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2: Priorities for future investment by Transport Scotland

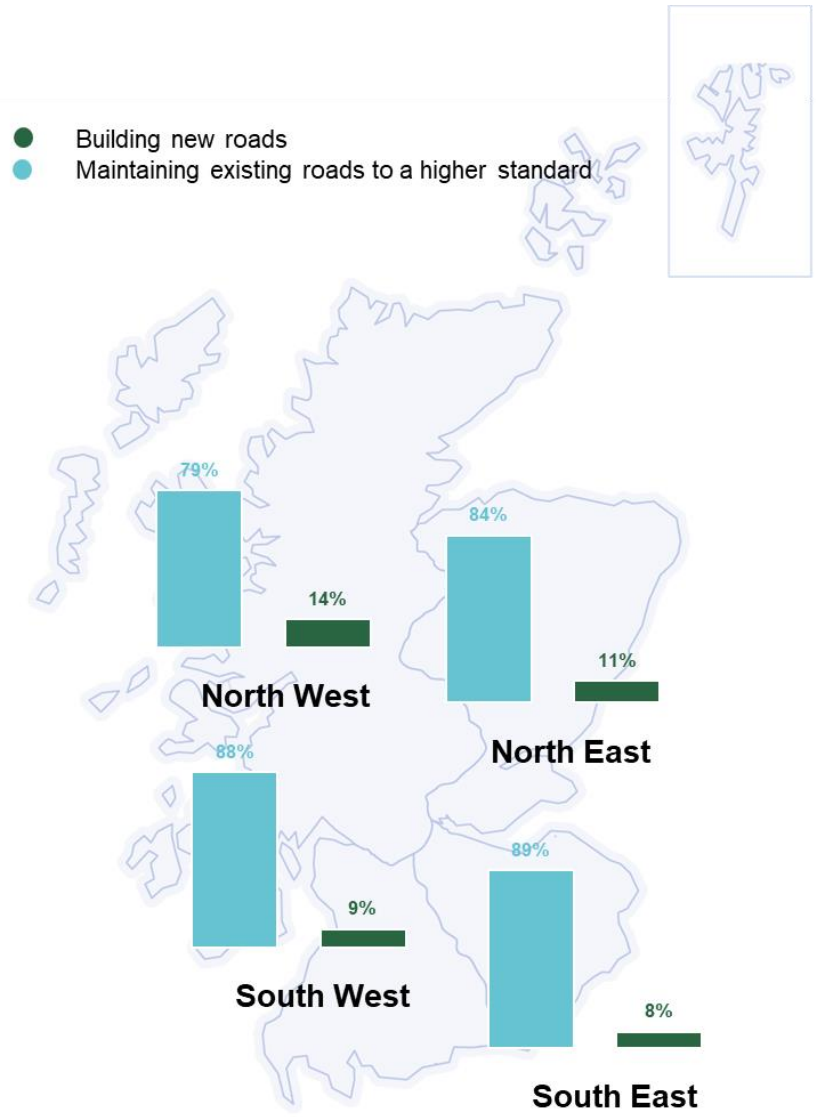
Q. Which of these options do you think Transport Scotland should prioritise?



Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Respondents in the South East and South West were more likely than those in the North West to prioritise the maintenance of existing roads to a higher standard (89% and 88% respectively, compared to 79%) (Figure 6.3).

Figure 6.3: Priorities for future investment by Transport Scotland, by region



7 Disruption due to severe weather

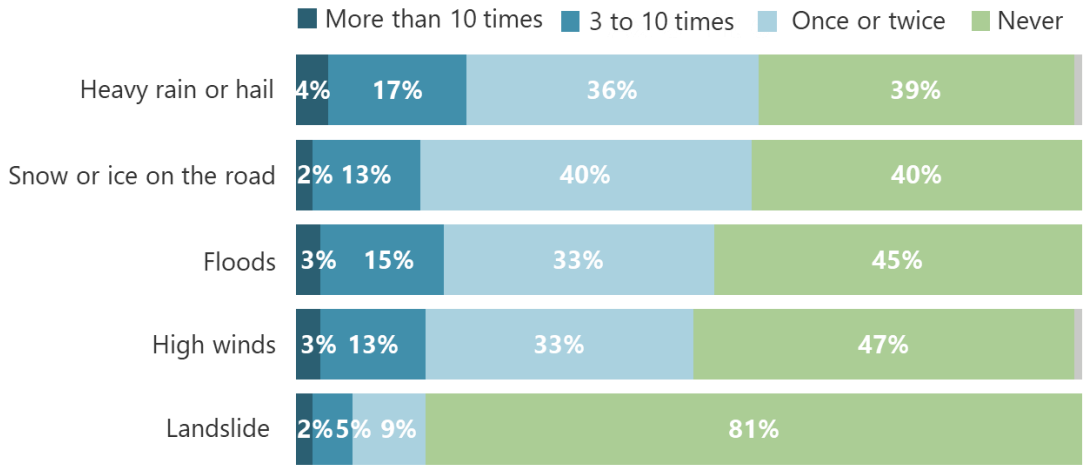
Experience of severe weather disruption

Four in five respondents (79%) said that at least one of their journeys had been disrupted by severe weather in the past 12 months. Heavy rain or hail was the most frequently encountered disruption (57% experienced at least once), with landslides the least (16%) (Figure 7.1).

In comparison with 2023, respondents were less likely to say they had experienced snow or ice (55% in 2024, compared to 66% in 2023) and more likely to say they had experienced high winds (49%, compared to 43%).

Figure 7.1: Experience of severe weather disruption

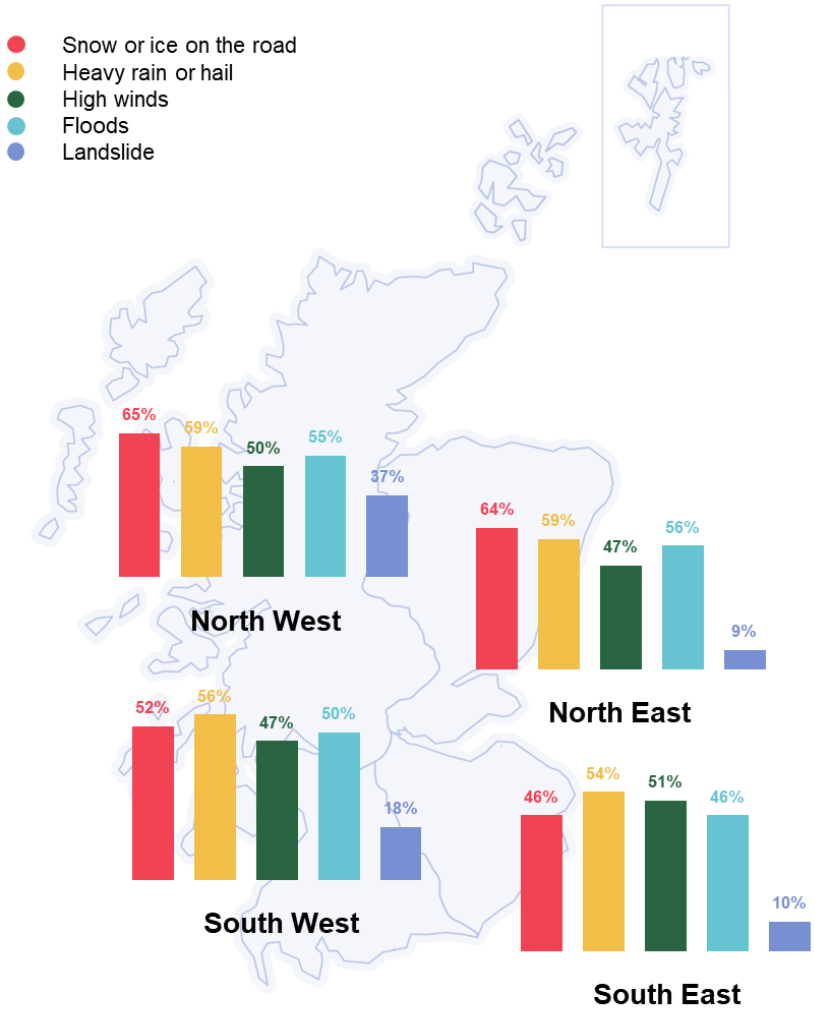
Q: In the last 12 months or so, how often would you say that journeys that you make on trunks roads have been disrupted by the following... ?



Base: All respondents who used trunk roads in the last year (1,128)

Respondents in the North West and North East were more likely than average to have experienced disruption from snow and ice (65% and 64%, compared to 55%), and respondents in the North West were more likely to experience landslides (37%, compared to 16% overall).

Figure 7.2: Experience of severe weather disruption, by region

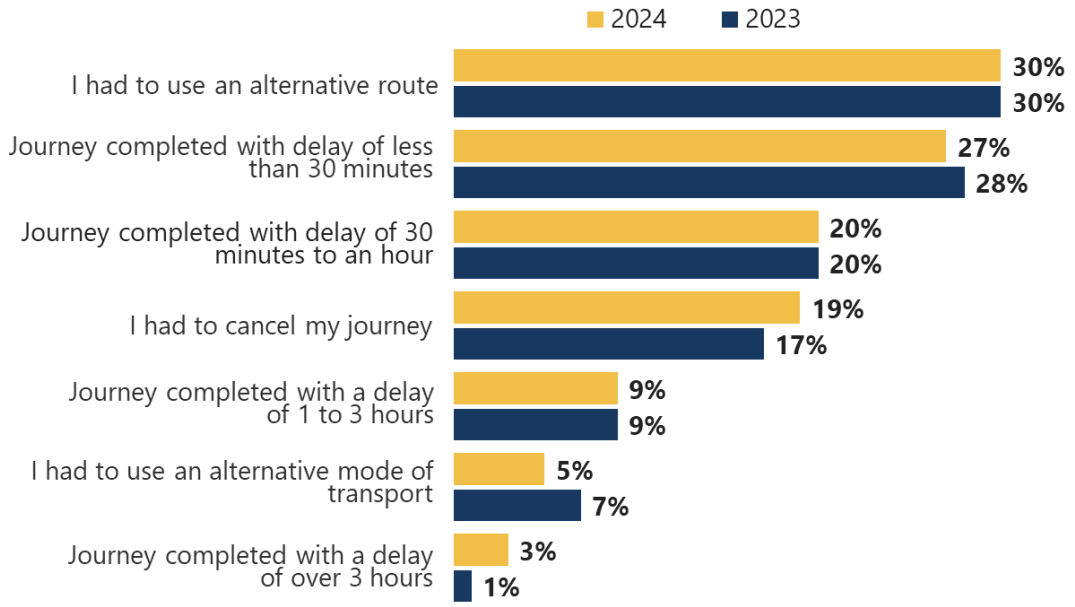


Respondents who had experienced disruption due to floods were asked which specific roads were affected. The A90, M8 and A9 were the most common occurrences (15%, 12% and 11% respectively).

Of those who experienced a disruption due to severe weather, 59% experienced a delay to a journey that they were eventually able to make. Nineteen per cent had to cancel a journey (Figure 7.3).

Figure 7.3: Impact of severe weather disruption on journeys

Q. Thinking back to the last time your journey was disrupted as a result of severe weather conditions, in which of these ways were you affected?



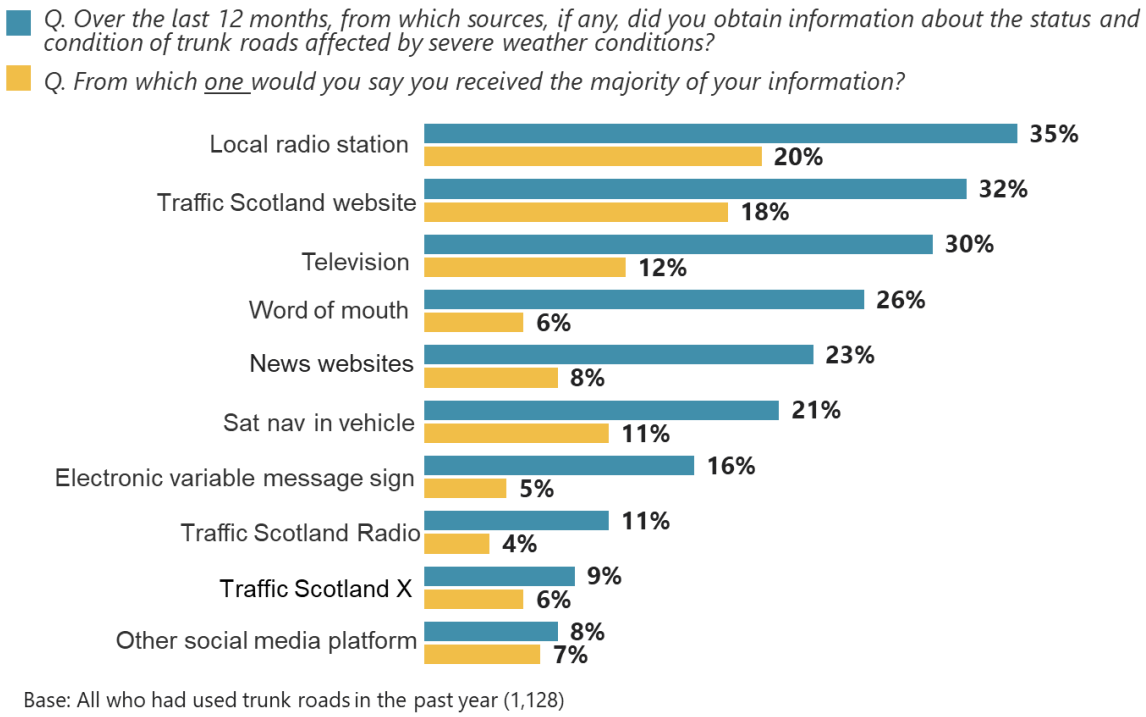
Base: All who had experienced disruption to at least one journey in the past year as a result of severe weather (903)

Sources of information about road conditions before, during and after severe weather

The most common sources of information on the condition of trunk roads affected by severe weather were local radio (35%), the Traffic Scotland website (32%), television (30%) and word of mouth (26%). When asked which one source they used for the majority of information, 20% selected local radio and 18% selected the Traffic Scotland website.

The use of television for information about the condition of trunk roads had increased since 2023 (30% in 2024, compared to 24% in 2023).

Figure 7.4: Sources of information on the status and condition of trunk roads during severe weather



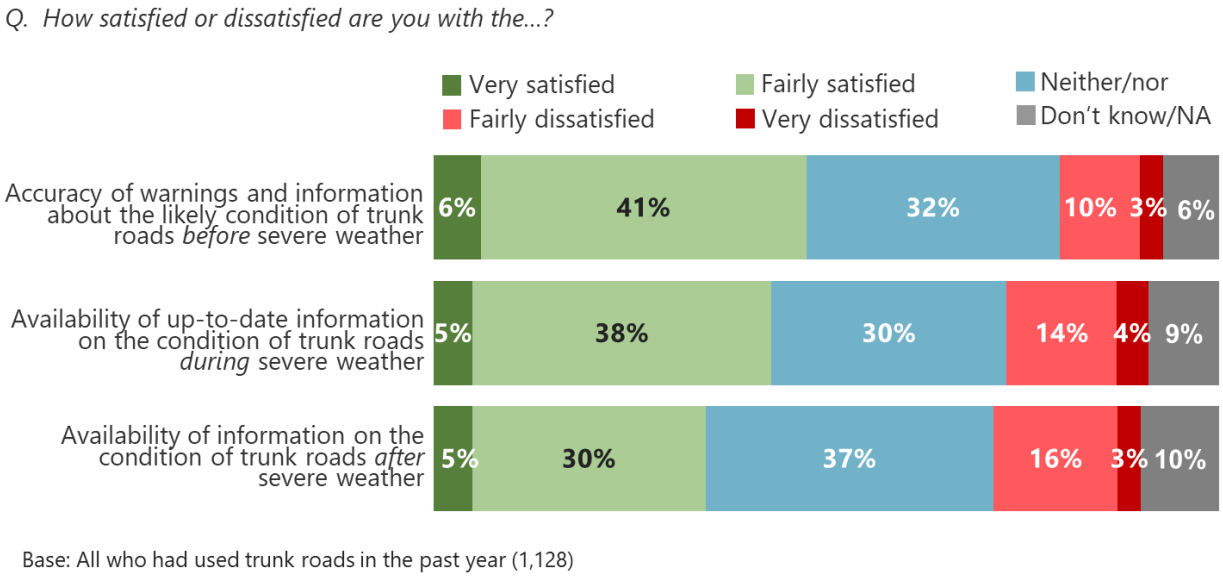
Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Respondents aged 35 and older were more likely than those aged 18-34 to use the Traffic Scotland website (37%, compared to 19%) and the radio (39%, compared to 23%) as a source of information about severe weather.

Satisfaction with information about road conditions before, during and after severe weather

Respondents were more likely to be satisfied than dissatisfied with the quality of information about severe weather affecting trunk roads (Figure 7.5).

Figure 7.5: Satisfaction with information before, during and after severe weather

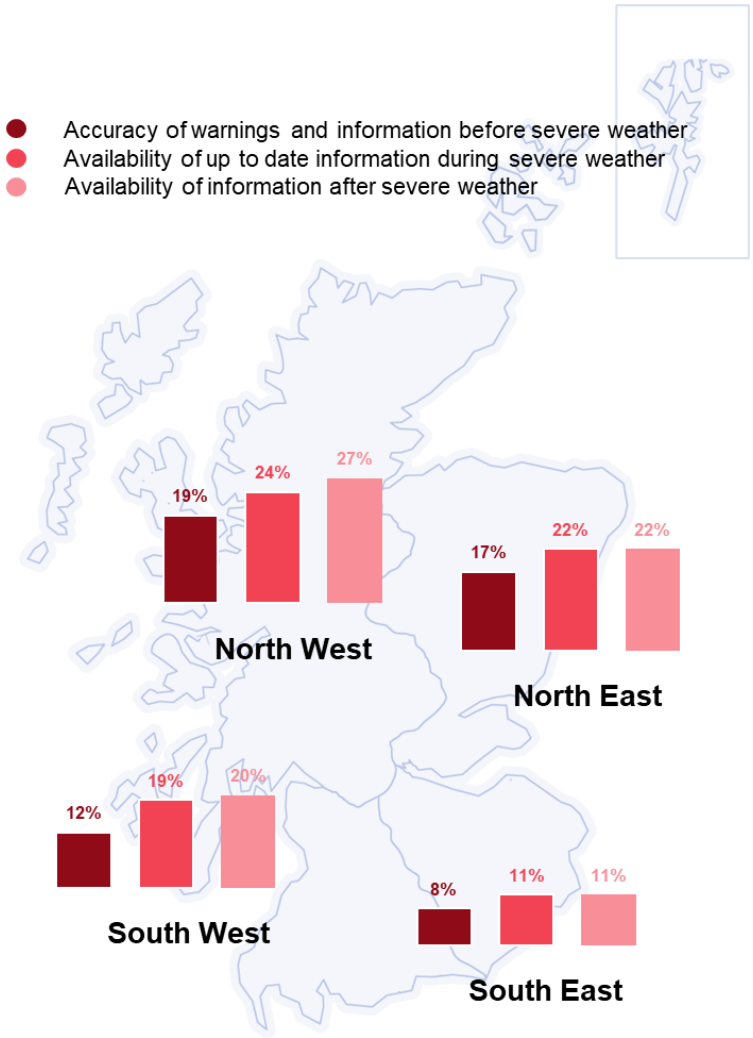


Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Respondents in the North were more likely than those in the South to be dissatisfied with the accuracy of information on the condition of trunk roads before severe weather (17%, compared to 10%) (Figure 7.6).

Dissatisfaction with the availability of information was lower than average among those in the South East, both during severe weather (11%, compared to 18% overall) and after severe weather (11%, compared to 19%).

Figure 7.6: Dissatisfaction with information before, during and after severe weather, by region

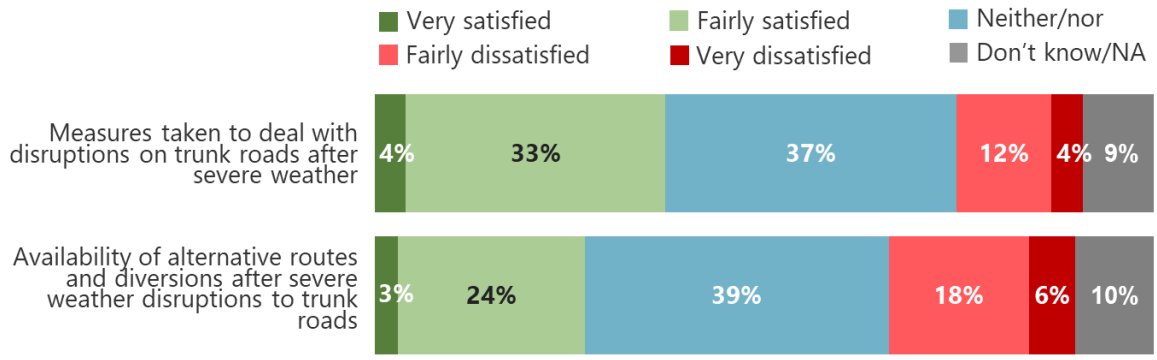


Satisfaction with measures to deal with severe weather disruption

Around a third of respondents (37%) were satisfied with the measures taken to deal with disruptions after severe weather, while 16% were dissatisfied. Satisfaction with the availability of alternative routes and diversions was more varied, with 27% saying they were satisfied with this measure and 25% saying they were dissatisfied (Figure 7.7). Satisfaction with the measures to deal with disruptions had increased since 2023 (37%, compared to 32%).

Figure 7.7: Satisfaction with measures to deal with severe weather disruption

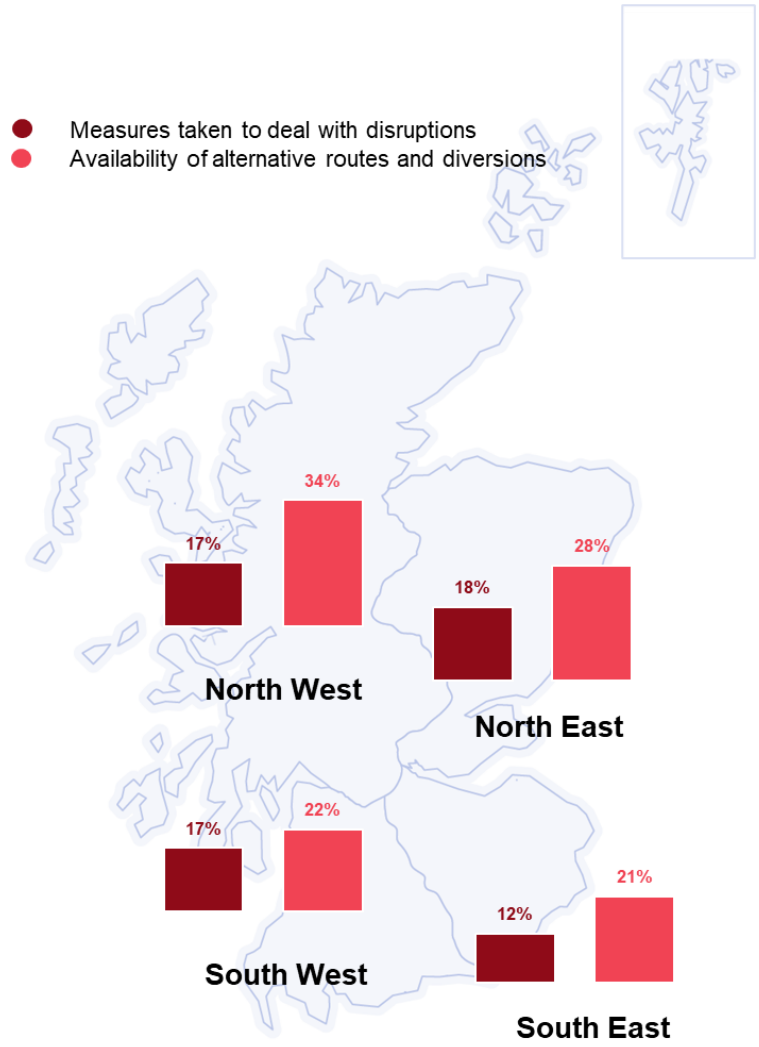
Q. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the...?



Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Those in the North West were more likely than average to be dissatisfied with the availability of alternative routes and diversions (34%, compared to 25% overall) (Figure 7.8).

Figure 7.8: Satisfaction with measures to deal with severe weather disruption, by region

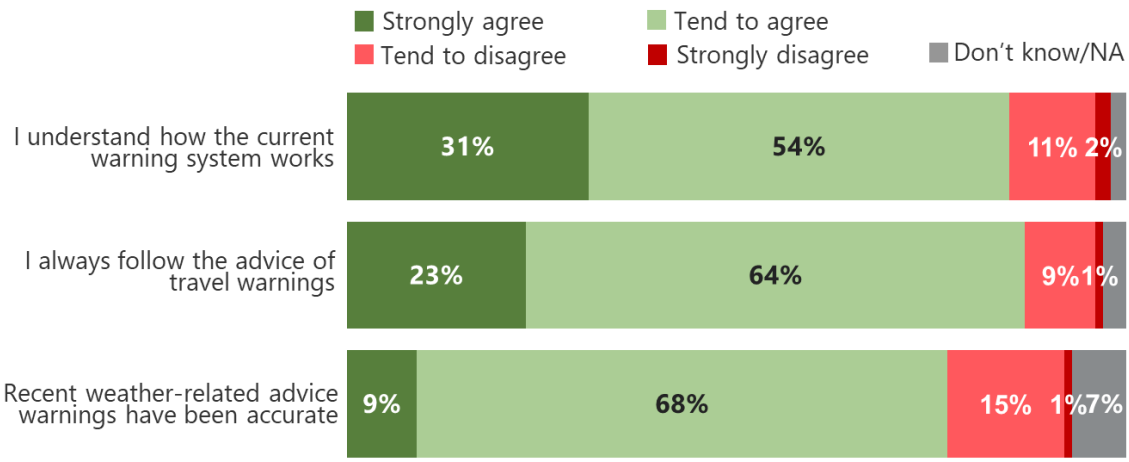


Weather-related travel advice warnings

The majority of respondents (85%) said that they understood how the current warning system works, with a similar proportion (87%) saying they always follow the advice of the travel warnings (Figure 7.9). Three-quarters (77%) agreed that recent weather warnings had been accurate. These findings were broadly in line with the 2023 data, although there was a slight increase in those who said they follow the advice of travel warnings (87%, compared to 83% in 2023).

Figure 7.9: Views on weather-related travel advice warnings

Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following...?



Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Women were more likely than men to say that they always follow the advice of travel warnings (91%, compared to 84%), and those aged 65 and older were more likely than average to say this (93%, compared to 87% overall).

8 Information about Transport Scotland

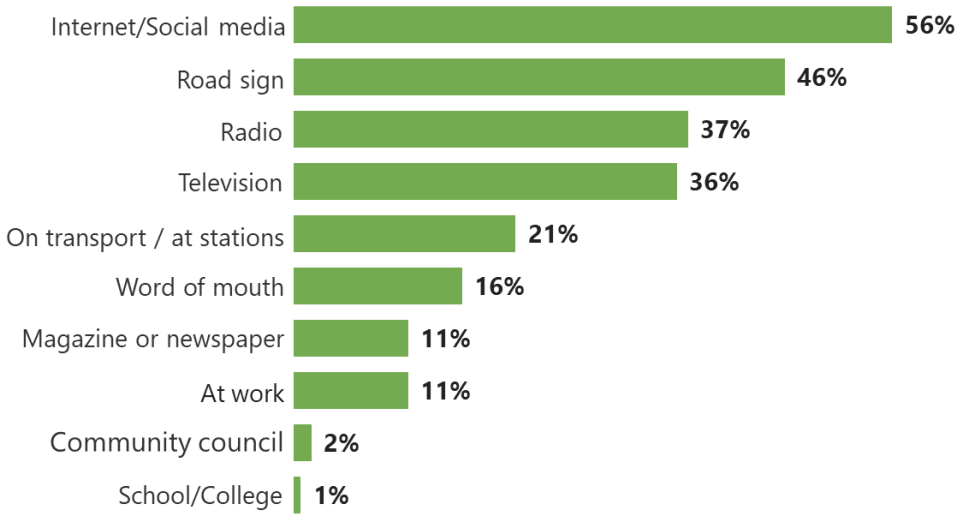
Sources of information about Transport Scotland

Almost nine in ten respondents (87%) had heard of Transport Scotland before completing the survey, the same proportion as in 2023. Respondents aged 55 and older were more likely to have heard of Transport Scotland than those aged under 55 (92%, compared to 84%).

The most common sources of information about Transport Scotland were online (on the internet or social media) (56%), on road signs (46%), the radio (37%) or television (36%) (Figure 8.1). These findings were in line with those from 2023.

Figure 8.1: Sources of information on Transport Scotland

Q. Where have you seen or heard anything about Transport Scotland?



Base: All who had heard of Transport Scotland (1,001)

Older respondents, aged 65 and older, were more likely than average to mention television as a source of information about Transport Scotland (49%, compared to 36% overall).

Use of trunk roads online information sources

Just over half of respondents (55%), the same proportion as in 2023, had used an online information source about trunk roads, with the Traffic Scotland website being the most commonly mentioned (Table 8.1).

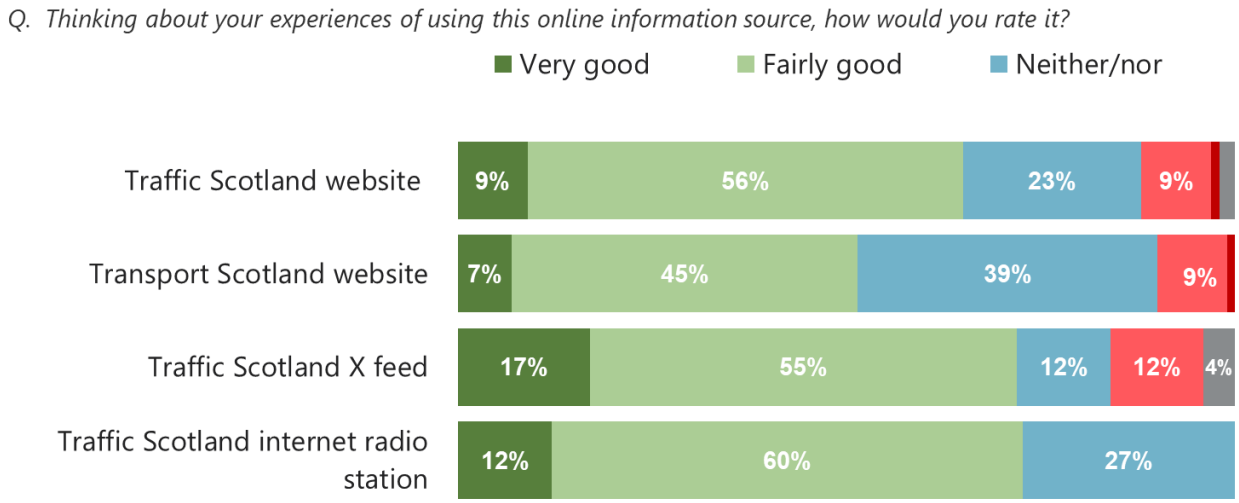
Table 8.1: Use of trunk roads online information sources

Information source	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2023	2024
Traffic Scotland website	34%	38%	43%	45%	45%	40%	41%	37%
Transport Scotland website	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	17%
Traffic Scotland X (formerly Twitter)	2%	5%	6%	8%	10%	9%	15%	12%
Internet radio	25%	3%	5%	5%	5%	7%	7%	6%
Base (all who had access to the internet)	*1,735*	*1,797*	*1,812*	*1,830*	*1,841*	*2,008*	*1,259*	*1,128*

Respondents aged 35 to 64 were more likely than average to have used the Traffic Scotland website (44%, compared to 37% overall), while respondents aged 65 and older were more likely to say that they had not used any of the online sources of information (49%, compared to 42% overall).

Views of the Traffic Scotland online information sources were largely positive with at least two-thirds of respondents rating each as being 'fairly' or 'very' good (Figure 8.2). Views on the Transport Scotland website were slightly less positive with half of respondents (51%) rating this as 'fairly' or 'very' good.

Figure 8.2 - Ratings of the online information sources



Base: Traffic Scotland website (363); Transport Scotland website (124); Traffic Scotland X feed (78); Traffic Scotland internet radio station (60)

Note: When rating online information sources, if a respondent had used more than one source of online information, they were asked to give their views on just one of these sources (randomly selected by the online script).

9 Local transport challenges

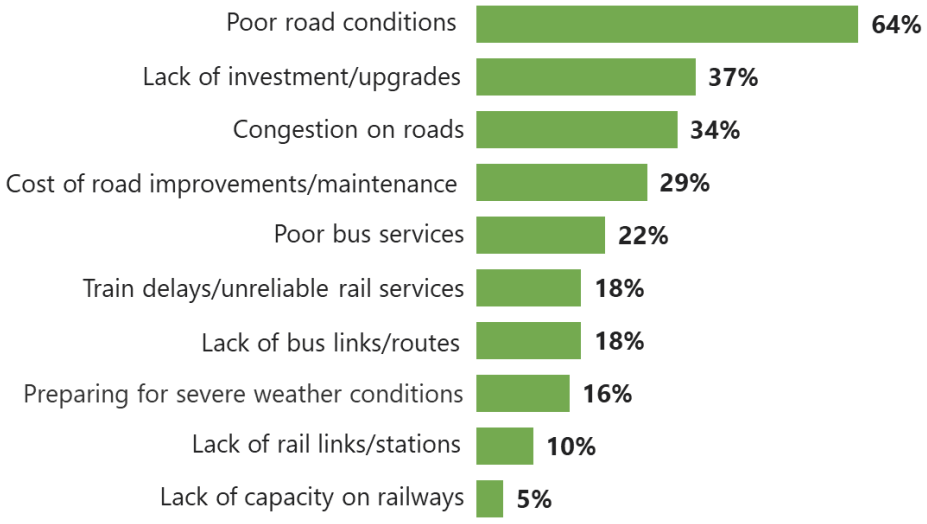
Respondents were asked to identify the main transport-related challenges facing their local area (it was not specified whether this was a trunk road or non-trunk road area).

The most commonly reported challenge was poor road conditions, mentioned by almost two-thirds of respondents (64%). The next most common challenges, mentioned by just over a third of respondents, were a lack of investment or upgrades (37%) and congestion on roads (34%) (Figure 9.1).

In comparison to 2023, respondents were more likely to mention congestion on roads (34% in 2024, compared to 28% in 2023) but less likely to mention poor bus services (22%, compared to 26%).

Figure 9.1: Perceived transport-related challenges facing respondents' local areas (top ten responses)

Q. What do you think are the main transport-related challenges facing your local area?

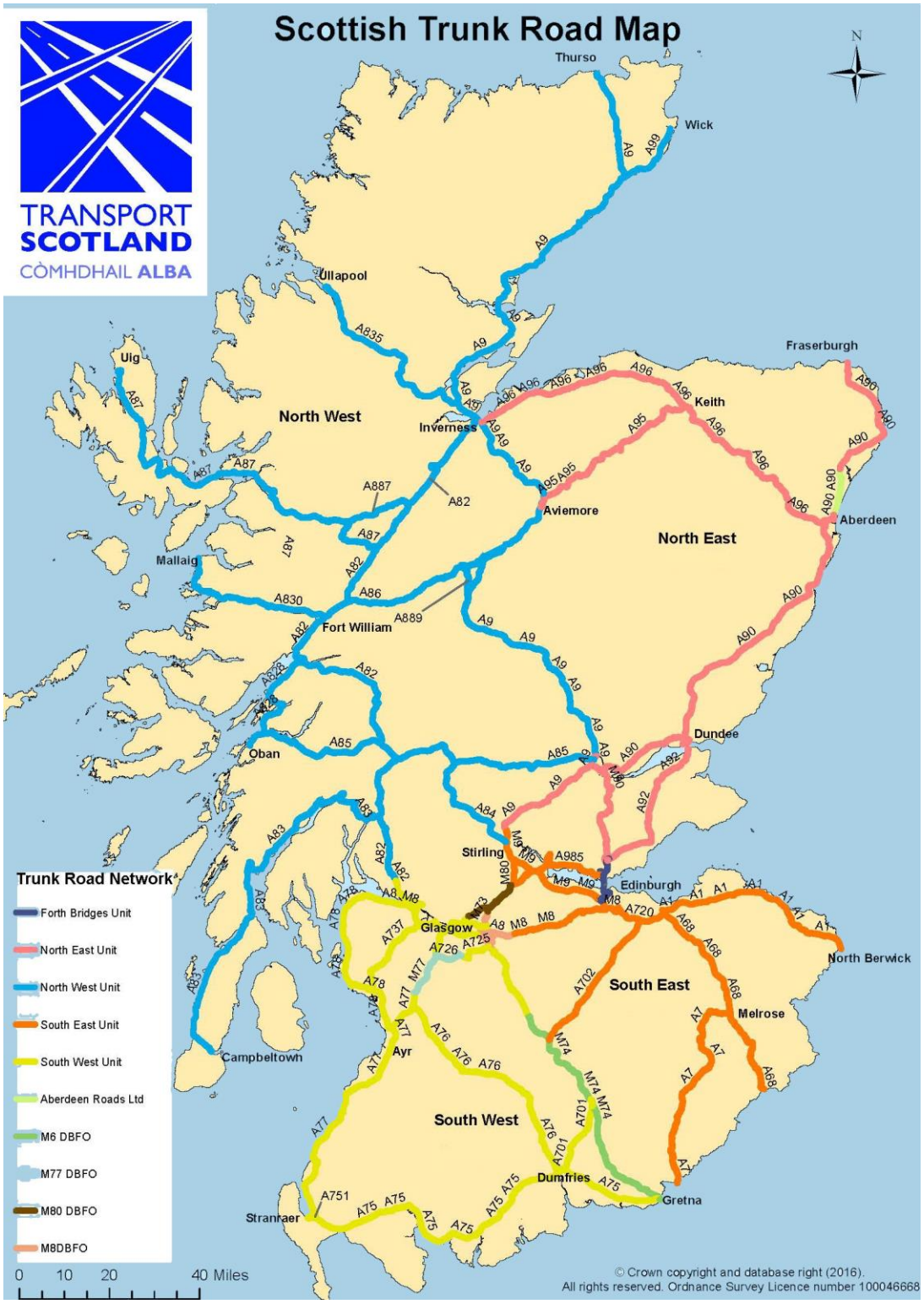


Base: All who had used trunk roads in the past year (1,128)

Respondents in the North East were more likely than average to report on poor bus services being a challenge (28%, compared to 22% overall) and a lack of bus links in rural areas (24%, compared to 18%).

Meanwhile, those in the South East were more likely to say that congestion on roads was a challenge (43%, compared to 34% overall), and those in the North West were more likely to mention a lack of road links or routes (11%, compared to 5%).

Appendix A: Map of trunk road network in Scotland



Appendix B: Trunk road management and maintenance – importance versus satisfaction

In the survey, importance and satisfaction were recorded on a four- and five-point scale, respectively. In order to 'plot' the two measures on equivalent scales and show the relationship between them, the scores for each were standardised using z-scores. A z-score expresses each item in a numerical series in terms of the series mean and standard deviation to tell us which have scored higher or lower than average. The z score for any item was calculated as the value minus the mean of the series, divided by the standard deviation of the series.

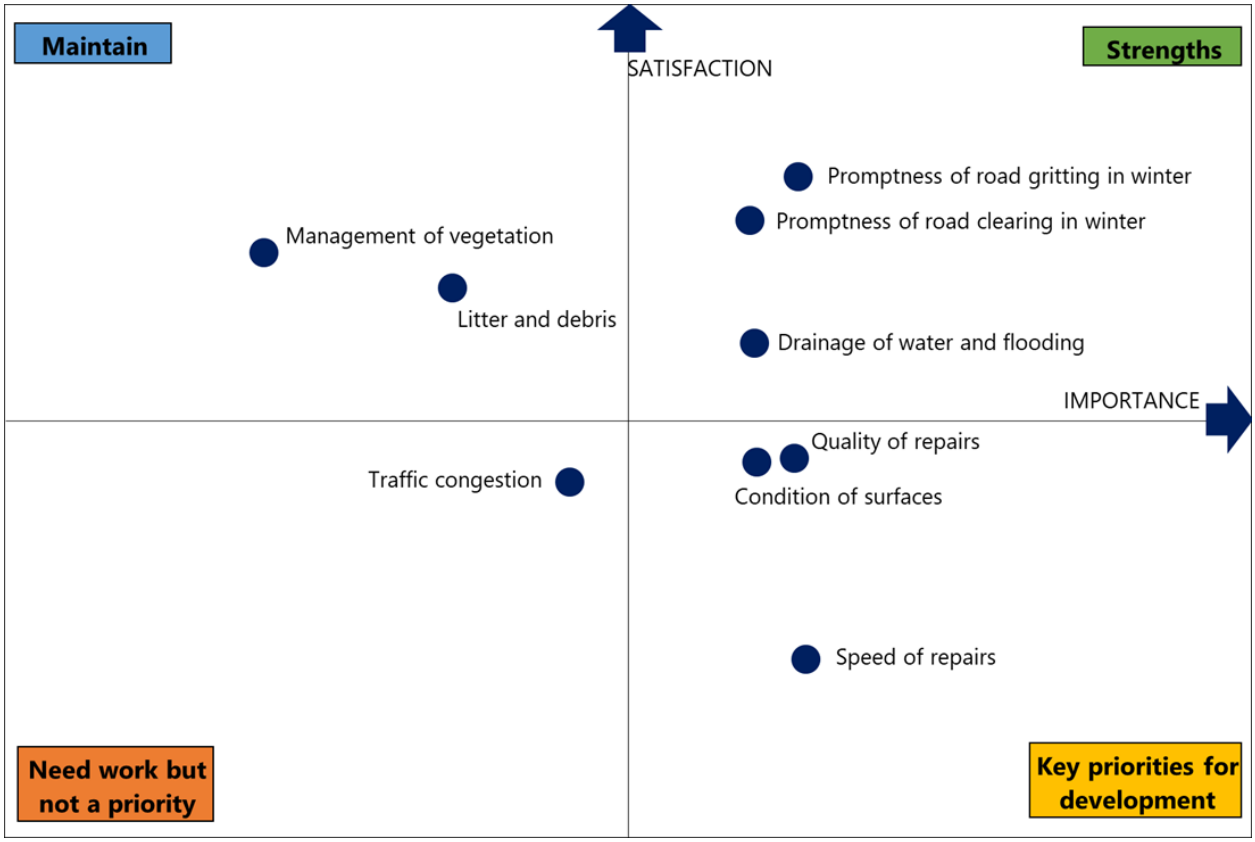
The z scores are plotted on a quadrant chart (Figure B.1). The four quadrants are: Maintain (top left), Strengths (top right), Need work but not a priority (bottom left) and Key priorities for development (bottom right).

In this analysis, the 'ideal' scenario is for aspects accorded the highest level of importance to appear in the top right quadrant of the chart – e.g. those deemed of relatively high importance with high levels of satisfaction ('Strengths'). Aspects that appear in the bottom right quadrant; that is, those deemed of relatively high importance but with which satisfaction is low, should be considered key priorities for development.

As shown in Figure B.1, the aspects that appear in the bottom right quadrant (those deemed of relatively high importance but with which satisfaction is low) and that should be considered key priorities for development are:

- condition of surfaces,
- quality of repairs, and
- speed of repairs.

Figure B.1: Trunk road management and maintenance – importance versus satisfaction



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