

Background

LLTC held a market stall as part of the CBC Community Action Day, Tues 13th July 2021. The stall was located at the end of the market and provided leaflets on the Council services and was used as a base to conduct a survey to get public opinion on the market. (Survey in appendix)

The survey ran from 9am until 3pm and was conducted by 3 staff, there were 69 respondents who took part, not all answering all of the questions. The staff wrote each the individuals answers and made note of other comments made. In general, people were happy to be asked and those who did not wish to take part usually gave their reason as not having enough time to spare.

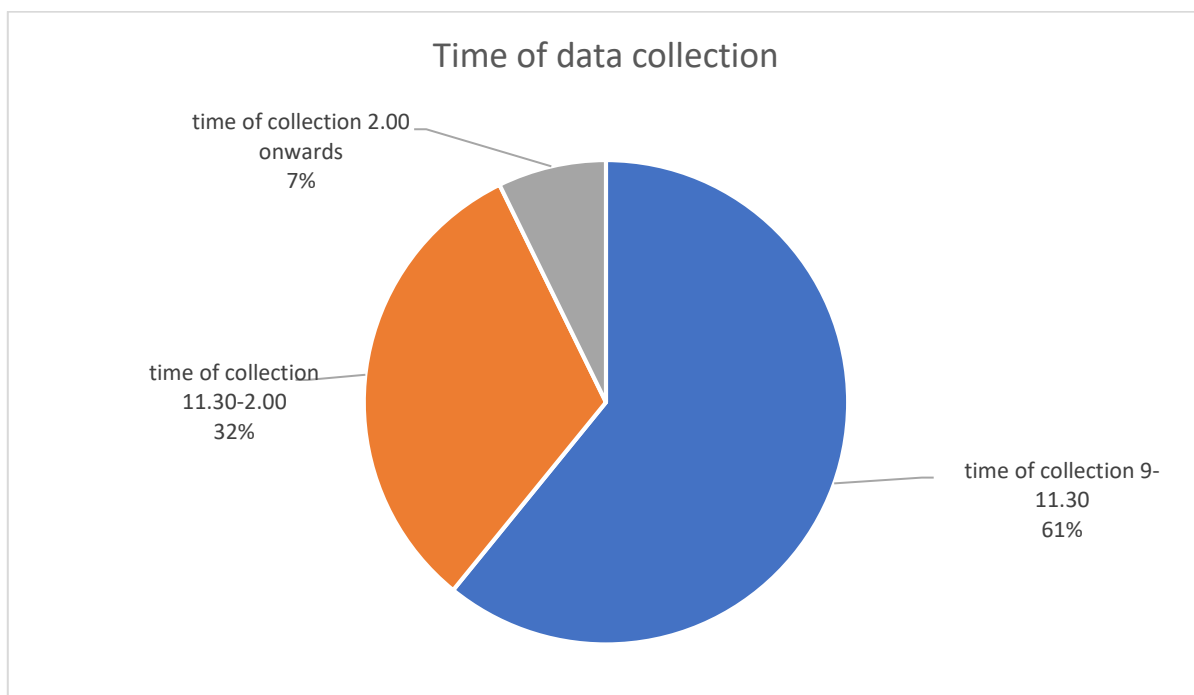
There were times throughout the day that staff felt that personnel from neighbouring stalls (both CBC and the police) gathering in large numbers was off putting to the public and people were observed walking around a different route rather than walking by as previously. This may be in part due to social distancing, but could have skewed the numbers of people willing to take part.

The time each survey was asked was noted as being in one of three categories, in order to see how the audience changed over the course of the day.

The results

The numbers of responses collected was much larger in the morning: -

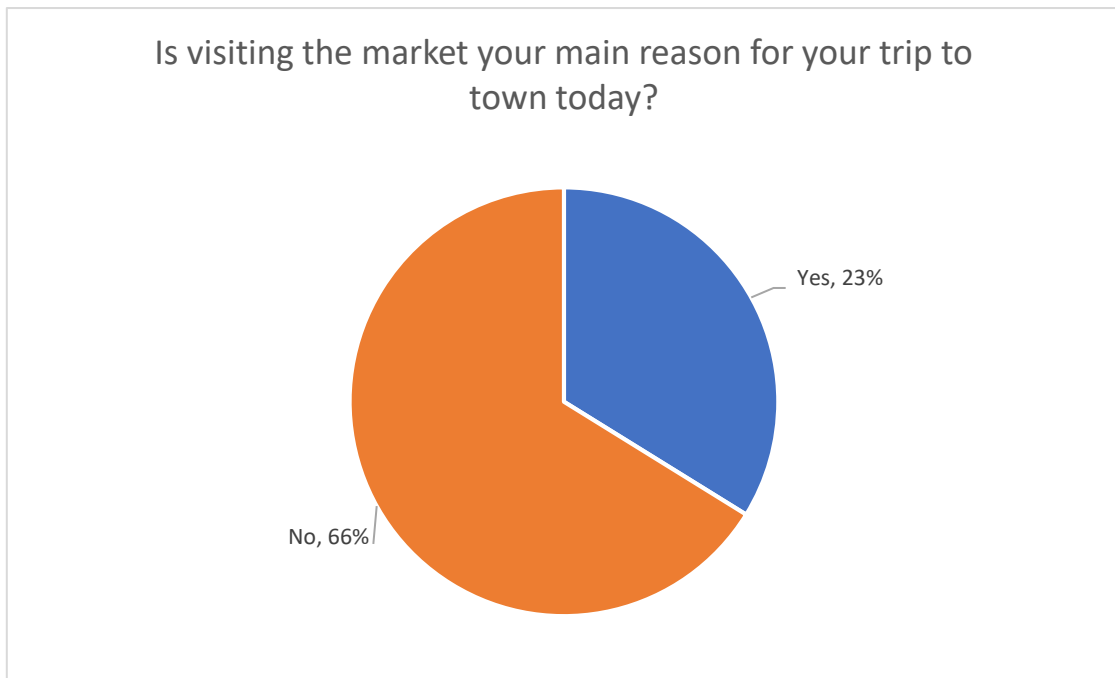
Time of Collection		
9-11.30	11.30-2.00	2.00 onwards
42	22	5
(61%)	(32%)	(7%)



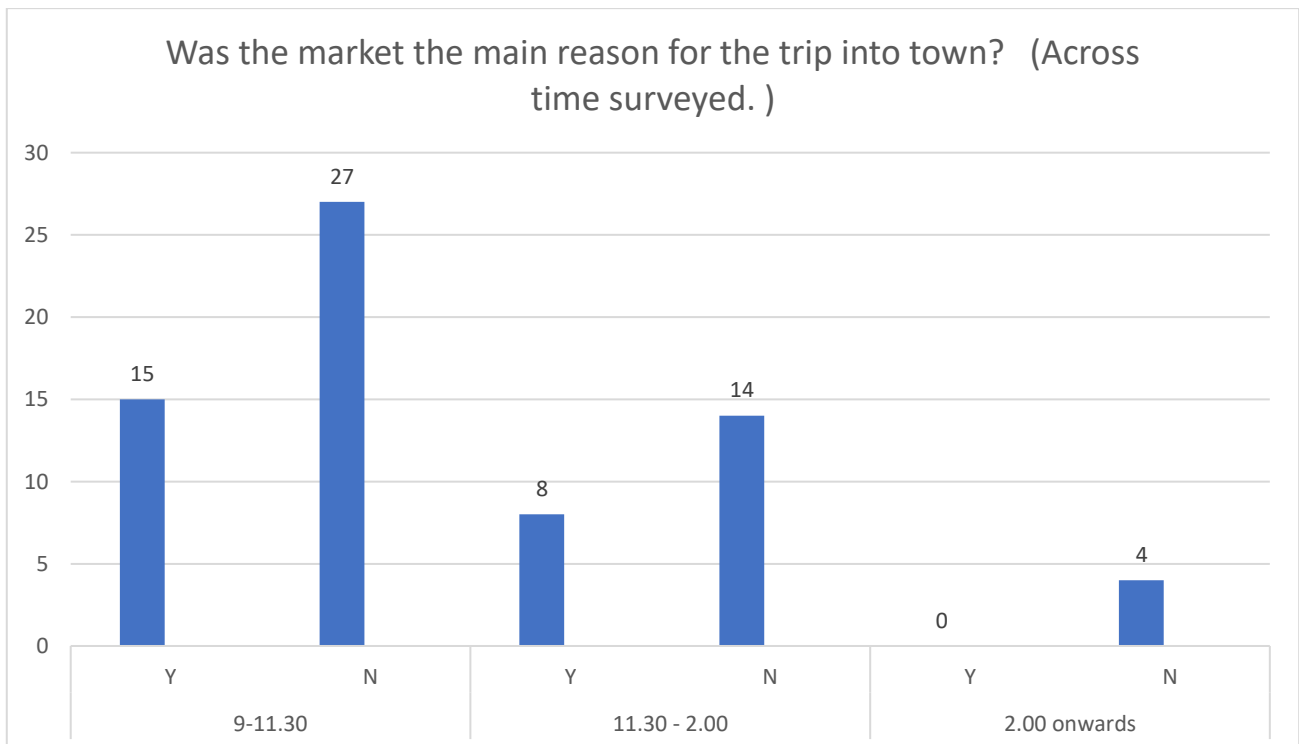
The first question set out to see if people were mainly coming to visit the market, or if the market was a secondary reason for the trip into town. It is worth noting that respondents were walking through the market stalls when asked, rather than around the back of them and so they were in effect, visiting the market whether that was intended or not.

1. Is visiting the market the main reason for your trip into town today?

The market was not the main reason for visiting town for most people.

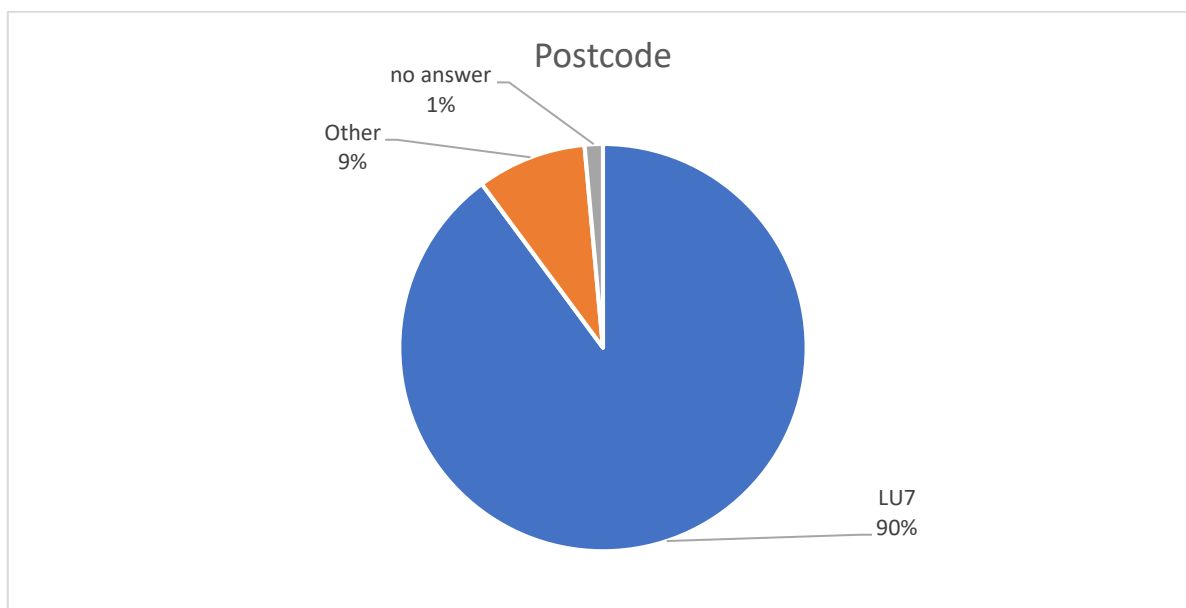


If you compare this question over the time the surveys were taken, it shows that more people deliberately come to the market in the morning, rather than the afternoon: -



Question two was to identify local people from within the town, separate to those on day trips etc and asked about the home postcode, 90% lived in LU7. (LU7 prefix including Leighton Buzzard and other areas eg. Cheddington)

2. What is your home postcode?



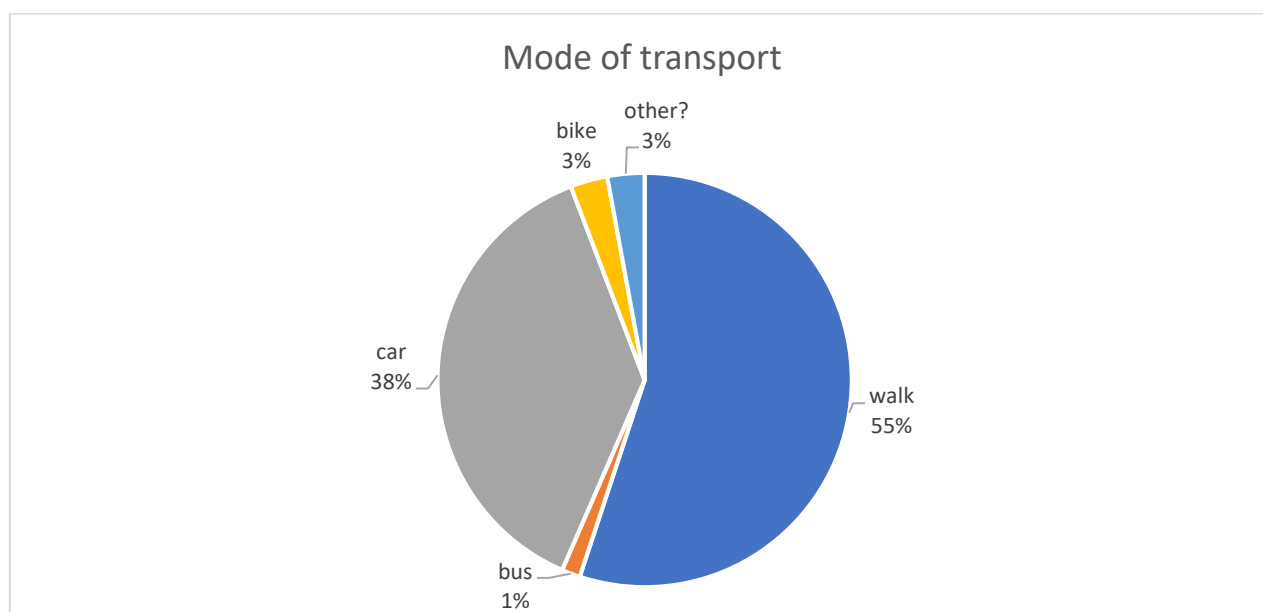
The next question was about mode of transport, it is worth noting that data was collected on a fine, warm, dry July day.

3. How did you get here today?

- Walk
- Bus
- Car
- Bike
- Other – what? _____

3a – transport for all respondents

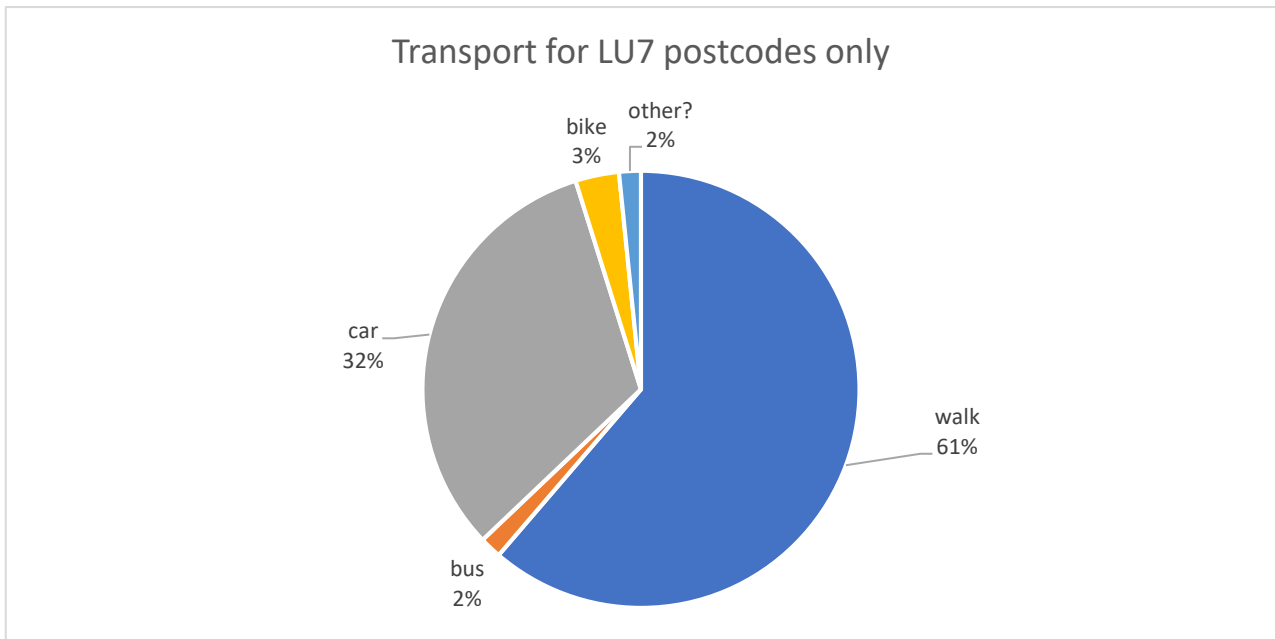
walk	bus	car	bike	other?	what?
38	1	26	2	2	taxi
					lift



In order to understand those visiting from within Leighton Buzzard, respondents from in LU7 were separated out from the others, which showed a higher number of pedestrians over drivers.

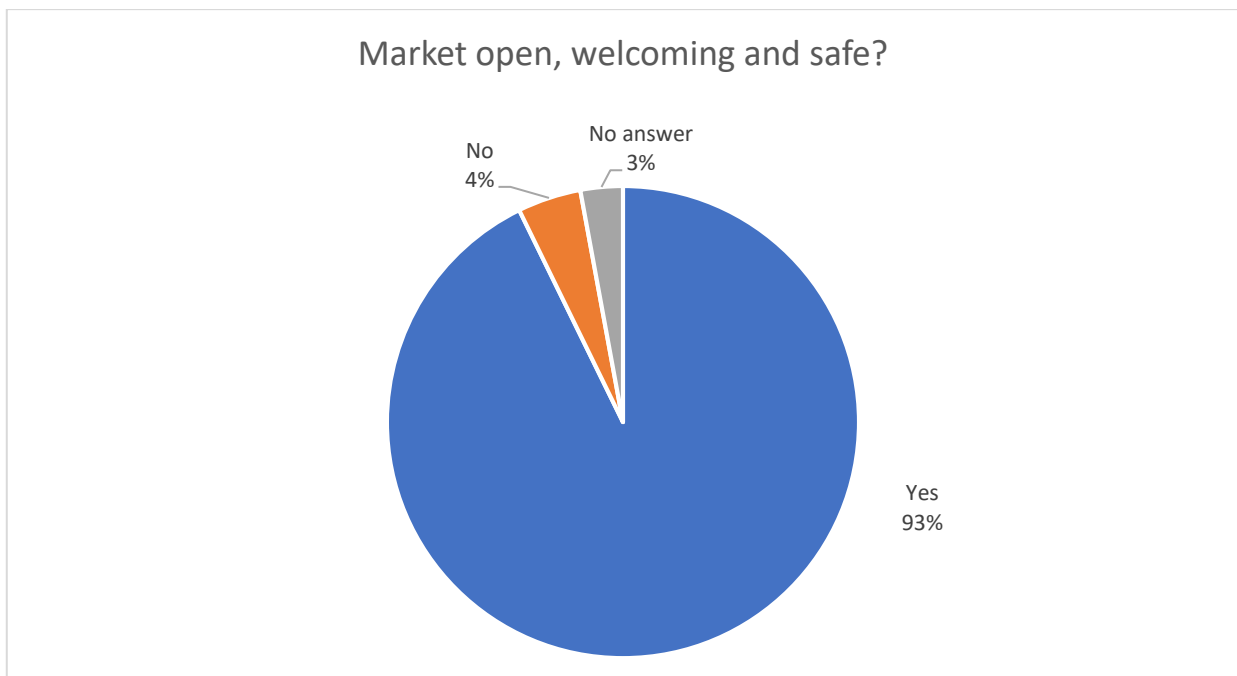
3b – transport for those in LU7 only

walk	bus	car	bike	other?	
38	1	20	2	1	(taxi)



Question 4 was a general overview of the market and got a 93% positive response:

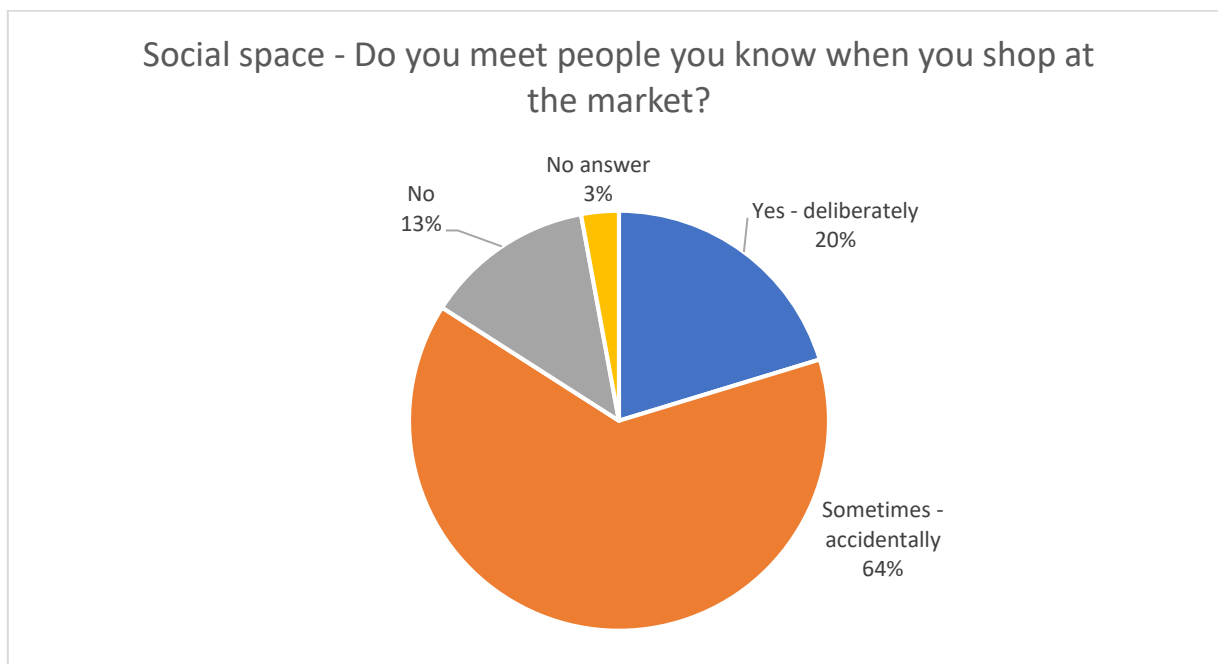
4. Do you feel that the market is open, welcoming and safe to shop in?



The following question was designed to consider if the market was used as a social space, with so many respondents living locally, it's perhaps not surprising that 64% of people often accidentally meet people they know at the market.

5. Do you meet people you know when you shop at the market?

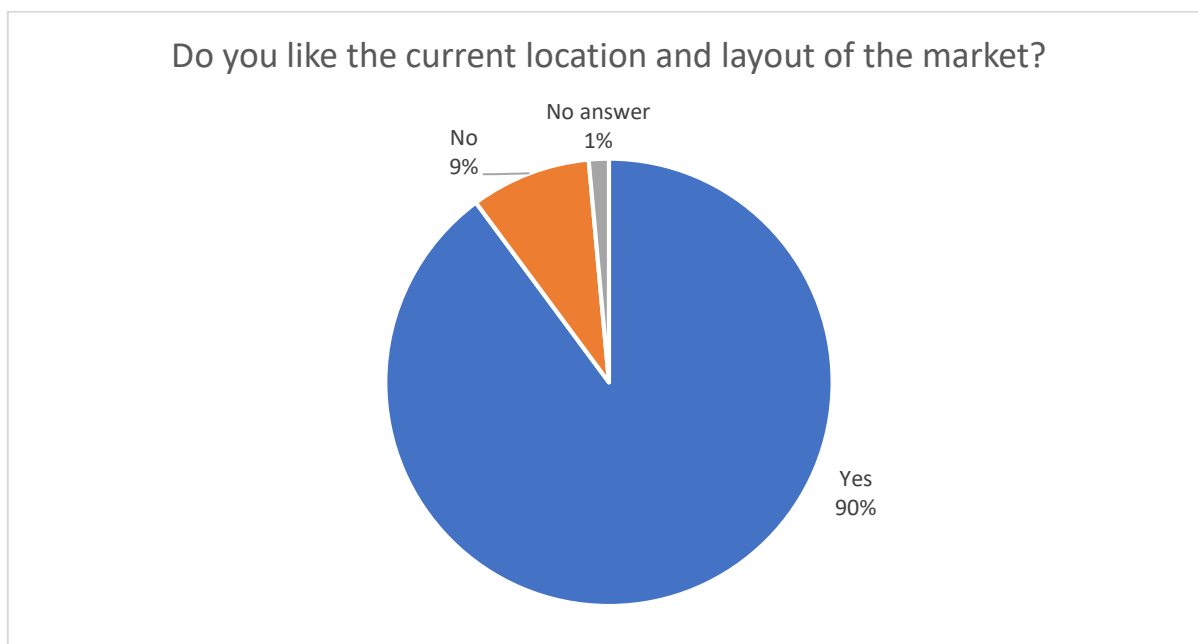
- Yes – I deliberately arrange to meet people here
- Sometimes – I bump into people I know
- Not usually



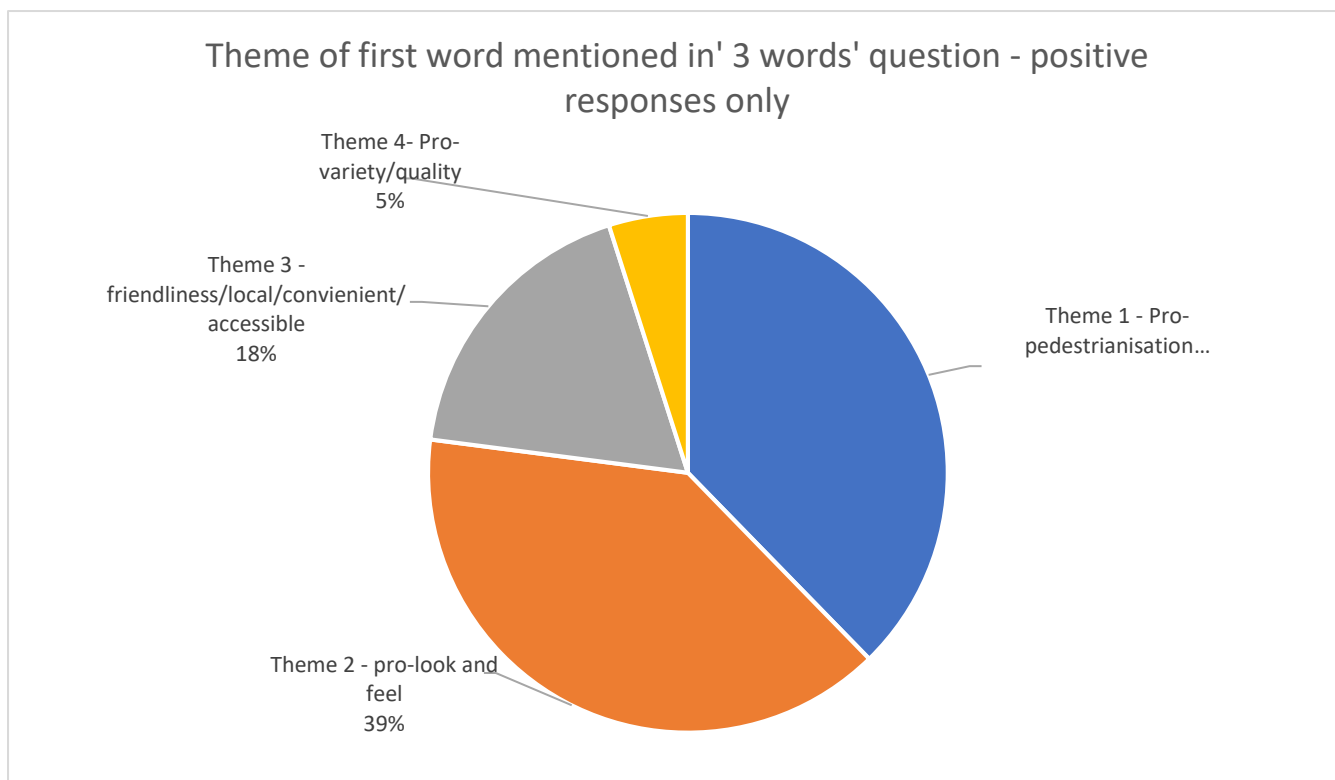
The last two questions were designed to get broader feedback about how people perceive the market. The first being in two parts:

6. Do you like the current location and layout of the market?

- Yes
 - No
- a. Can you explain why in 3 words?



Looking at only the **first** comments people made, the breakdown is slightly different:



NB – the mention of ‘openness’ (which occurred 10 times) is included in the 2nd theme – the look and feel, as it’s ambiguous, it could also refer to the road being open to pedestrians temporarily. Similar comments using words comparing to an earlier time – ‘easier’, ‘safer’ etc could also possibly be referring to the temporary pedestrianisation or possibly the social-distancing layout of the market and so are also included in the 2nd theme.

7. Is there anything else you’d like to tell us about the market specifically?

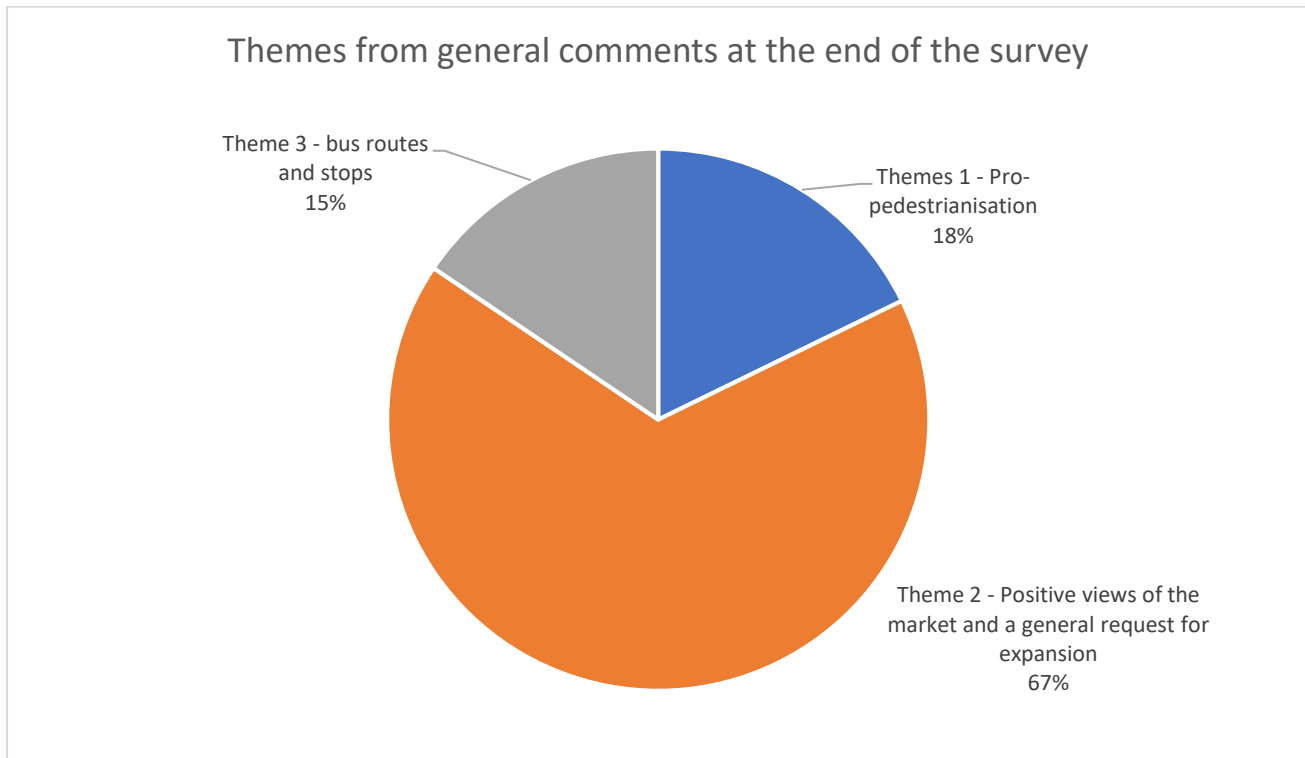
There were 50 responses to this question, many of them were following on from the ‘3 words’ question, if added to the word cloud, similarly to above, you can see some themes emerging.

Word cloud of all comments together, using words used twice or more: -



Taken separately to the other comments, there are 3 main themes that emerge from the responses to the final question:

- Themes 1 - Pro-pedestrianisation
- Theme 2 - Positive views of the market and a general request for expansion
- Theme 3 - bus routes and stops



Conclusions

The survey results have supported some of the suspected habits and opinions of the shoppers:

- that the main market shoppers visit earlier in the day and those who are in the market later are browsing, rather than visiting for anything specific
- that it is mostly used by local people, many of whom walk to the market
- the market is widely liked and is seen to be opening, welcoming and safe
- the market is a social space with over 80% of respondents meeting people they know there (either deliberately or accidentally)
- people like the current layout of the market (90% of respondents)
- people support the pedestrianisation of the market, but would like buses to stop nearer to it
- the stallholders and variety of products are both well-liked
- people would like to see the market grow and expand

Appendix 1 – survey

Customer Survey

Time:

9-11.30am	
11.30-2pm	
2pm onwards	

1. Is visiting the market the main reason for your trip into town today?

- Yes
- No

2. What is your home postcode? _____

3. How did you get here today?

- Walk
- Bus
- Car
- Bike
- Other – what? _____

4. Do you feel that the market is open, welcoming and safe to shop in?

- Yes
- No

5. Do you meet people you know when you shop at the market?

- Yes – I deliberately arrange to meet people here
- Sometimes – I bump into people I know
- Not usually

6. Do you like the current location and layout of the market?

- Yes
- No

a. Can you explain why in 3 words?

7. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about the market specifically?

Appendix 2 – Lists of comments received - ‘3 words’ question

NEGATIVE comments
it should be condensed to one end
It sometimes looks cheap and nasty
needs diversity
not enough variety
there’s nothing here
want more seats
The pedestrianisation is ok on a Tuesday

Theme 1 - Pro-pedestrianisation
great for pedestrians
Pedestrian
pedestrian
pedestrian
pedestrianisation
pedestrianisation
pedestrianised
pedestrianised
pedestrianised
pedestrianised
pedestrianised
pedestrianised
pedestrianised
pedestrianised
pedestrianised
pedestrianised
pedestrianised
The pedestrianisation is ok on a Tuesday
no cars
no cars
no cars
no cars
no cars
no cars
no cars
no traffic
no traffic
no traffic

Theme 2 - pro-look and feel
open
open
open
open
open
open
open
open - no cars
openness/look and feel
spacious and open
welcoming
welcoming
ambience
appealing
attraction to the town
bright
designed
easier
easy
easy access
easy to get around
easy to shop in
facing inwards [is better]
feels alive
good layout
good layout and variety
good social distancing
historic buildings around
I like the look of the gazebos
interesting to look at
it's safe
lively
looks organised
lots of people milling around
lots of space
more choice
more room
more space to move around
movement is easy
nice atmosphere
old and traditional
old-timey feel
openness/look and feel
pleasant
pleasant to walk around
relaxed feel

relaxing
relaxing
safe
safer
safer
safer
safer
safer
safety
socially-distanced
space
spacious and open
space and safety
traditional
traditional
traditional
visible
visible and easy
welcoming
welcoming
well set out
well set out
wide

local
local
location
nice stallholders
nice town

Theme 3 - friendliness/local/convenient/accessible
accessible
accessible
accessible
busy town
can still get around at the back
central
circulate easier
community bonding
convenient
convenient
friendliness
friendly
friendly
friendly
friendly
friendly
friendly and helpful
good
good for locals
It's a market town
it's on the high street
like the stalls
local
local

Theme 4- Pro-variety/quality
excellent variety
expanding
fresh fruit and veg
I like markets
I like the gift stalls
lots of variety
mix of stalls - food and other
quality of stalls
stalls together
straight up and down
supporting independent businesses
supporting people to make a living
varied
variety
variety
variety
variety
variety of stalls

Appendix 3 – Lists of comments received – ‘anything else’ question

Themes 1 - Pro-pedestrianisation

better pedestrianised - easy to get around
brilliant and I like that the town is closed off to cars
I always love the market although it is a bit sad at the moment [because of restrictions]. I'd rather have it double the size. There's a good car park which is big and cheap to use. We like to come for a coffee and shop local. Better than Bletchley [which is my nearest]
needs to stay pedestrian!
Keep it going! No cars! It's much better than before.
Better with no traffic. I like Saturdays, Tuesdays are quieter. The people are friendly, and the stallholders are helpful.
Really like that there are no cars - I have little children
I think it's great, but parking is difficult, I don't have time to stop as only on a 30min parking space

Theme 2 - Positive views of the market and a general request for expansion

I would like the market to be bigger
more stalls please
more children's stuff please
need more variety - should be able to buy anything here!
it's a lovely town. If I didn't live here, I'd visit. I'd like to see more stalls, but the ones here are very good.
I think it's been revitalised recently, there is more space and it being spread out is good. It's open and pedestrianised, which I like. Could the stalls face the same way, so there is a route around them?
I very much feel its open, welcoming and safe. I come and have a coffee with friends.
I'd like to see a wider variety of stalls - crafts and material
More original stalls - not cheap and nasty ones. I am pleased that we still have the market.
I like the stalls, especially the flowers and the bakers, there's a nice mix
Not sure about welcoming. It's good, compared to St Albans, which now looks the same. I'd like more diversity of stalls and new stalls. I'd like it to be open later, especially in the summer.
Fresh fruit and veg better than the supermarket. I like the craft stalls, good for gifts.
Too few stalls, I'd like to see arts and crafts. There are too many nail shops and charity shops. I'd like a fishmonger and bread shop here all the time.
Great, I like the farmers market, crafts etc.
more stalls, clothes stall is too big
needs to be more exciting - more stalls!
Promoting a few more stalls
stalls down either side of the road, looks sparse, nothing to browse.
Better now, no cars, I like the town, I choose to come here. I enjoy a day out. More stalls would be nice, nice area.
Better than before and getting better - good for LB. I like the fish man and the recycled timber. Crafts bring people in, something different and niche.
variety of stalls, used to be better - not just because of covid. Bigger and more stalls needed, ore diversity.
Please keep it [the market] very important!
It's great!
more stalls - variety

I'd like the fishman to be here early. Could you move the market elsewhere - maybe the car park? I'd like more seating and flowers in the high street instead. There are too many potholes. There is pollution in the high street from taxis waiting with their engines on.

Too much catering to the older generation -need variety. I'd like to see gemstones and jewellery.

have different things available

can see shops. Please remove the bikes too and the electric scooters. Encourage new stallholders, competition is good. It's a bonus for the town - needs variety.

more stalls

more stalls would be nice

Theme 3 - bus routes and stops

encourage more local craft stalls and local business, lots of variety, we are very lucky to have our market

parking should be better. Bring the buses back

Maybe buses can drop off nearer?

the market is great, it's a shame they moved the buses. I came by Buzzard Bus.

a bus stop nearby please

I come to the market on Saturdays, [stalls] Both sides are needed. No buses, have to walk to get buses.

Keep it going please! Buses to high street on non-market days please