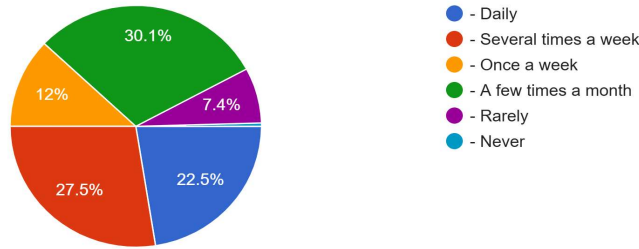


STRANGFORD LOUGH CROSSING

SURVEY RESULTS - 6th NOVEMBER 2024

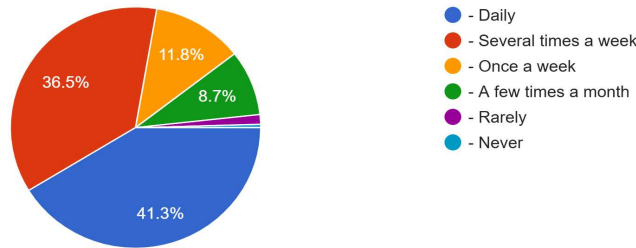
1. How often do you currently use the Strangford Lough ferry service ?

458 responses



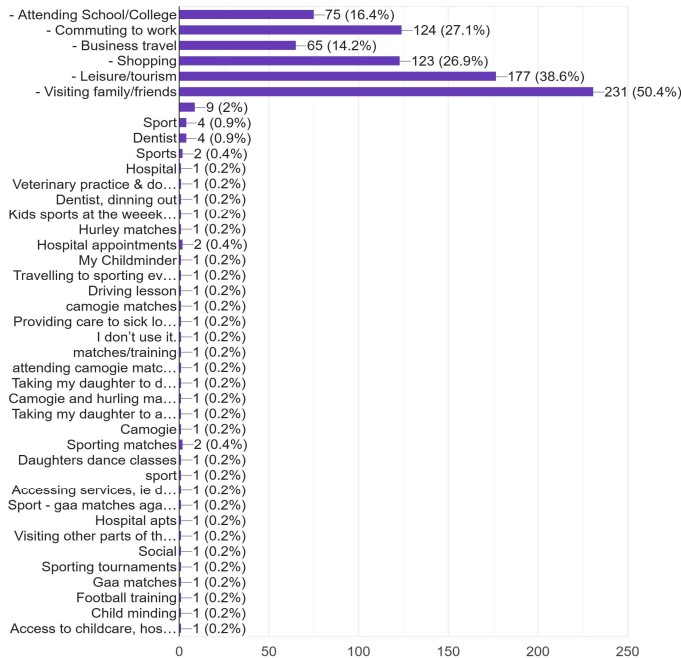
2. If a more convenient crossing option (e.g., bridge or tunnel) were available, how often would you expect to use it?

458 responses



3. What is your primary reason for using the current ferry service?

458 responses

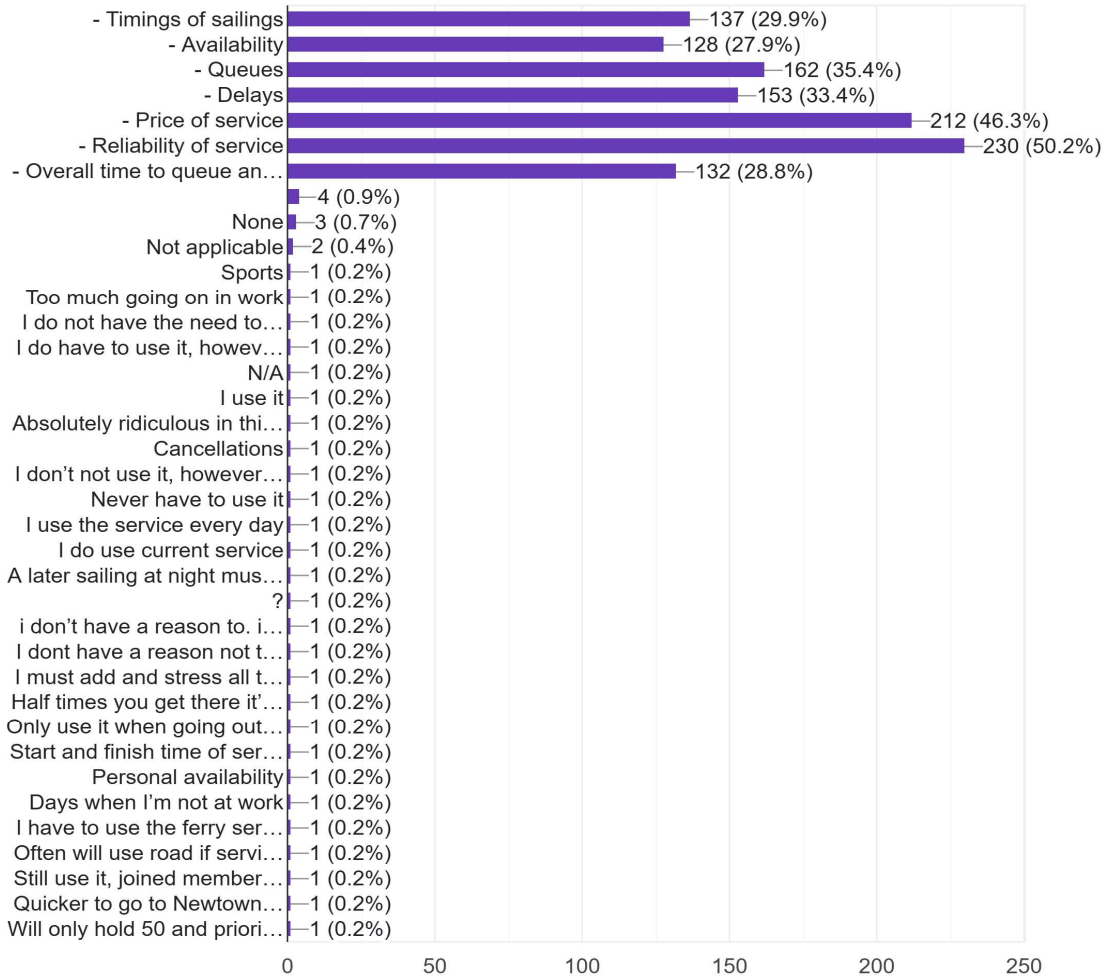


STRANGFORD LOUGH CROSSING

SURVEY RESULTS - 6th NOVEMBER 2024

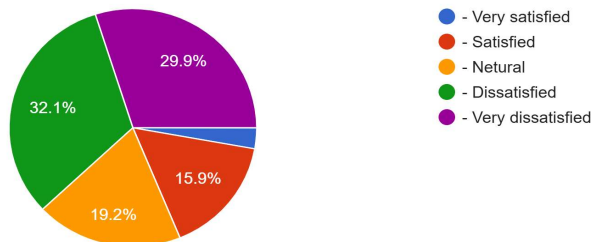
4. What is your primary reason for not using the current ferry service?

458 responses



5. How satisfied are you with the current ferry service ?

458 responses

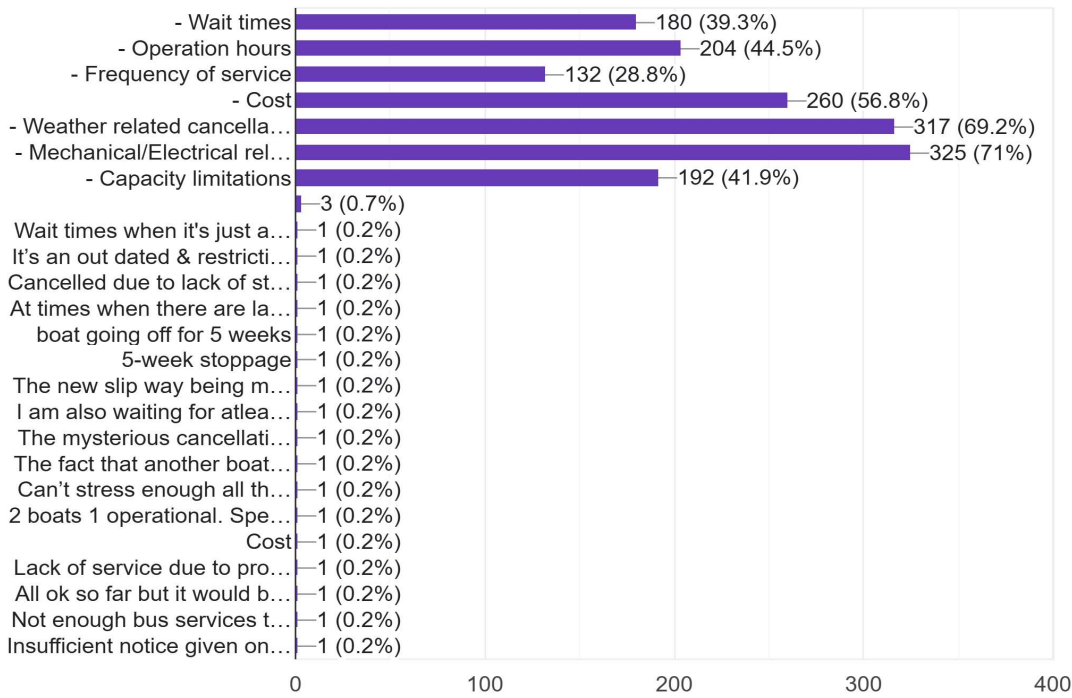


STRANGFORD LOUGH CROSSING

SURVEY RESULTS - 6th NOVEMBER 2024

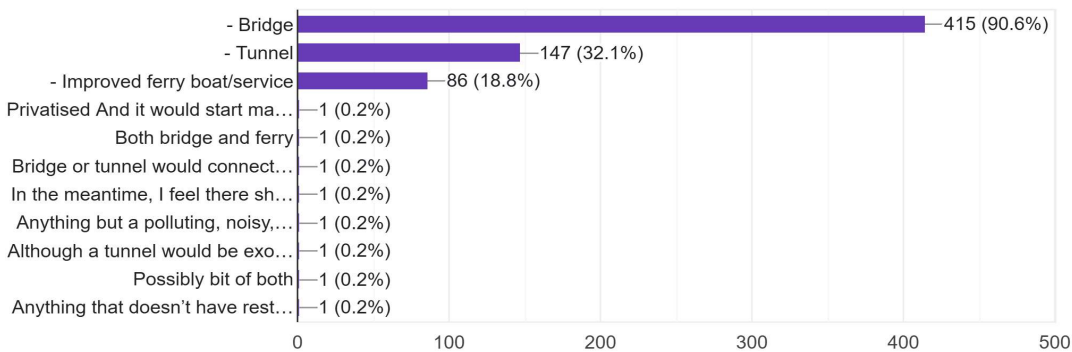
6 . What aspects of the current ferry service do you find most problematic? (Select all that apply)

458 responses



7. Which type of alternative crossing would you prefer ?

458 responses

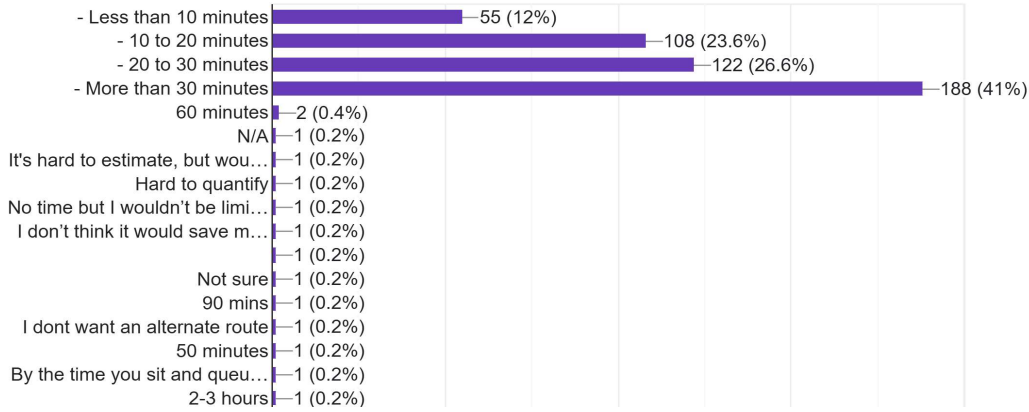


STRANGFORD LOUGH CROSSING

SURVEY RESULTS - 6th NOVEMBER 2024

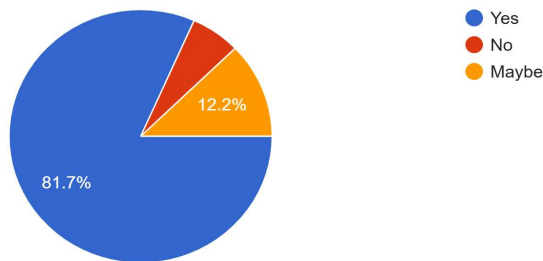
8. How much time do you estimate an alternative crossing would save you per trip?

458 responses



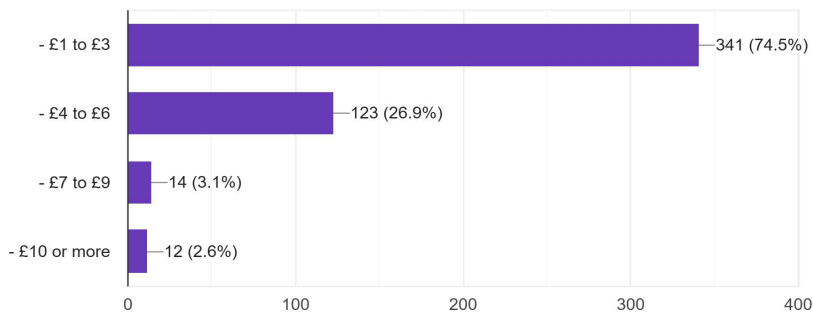
9. Would you be willing to pay a toll for a more convenient crossing option ?

458 responses



10. If yes to the previous question, what is the maximum toll you would be willing to pay for a one way crossing ?

458 responses

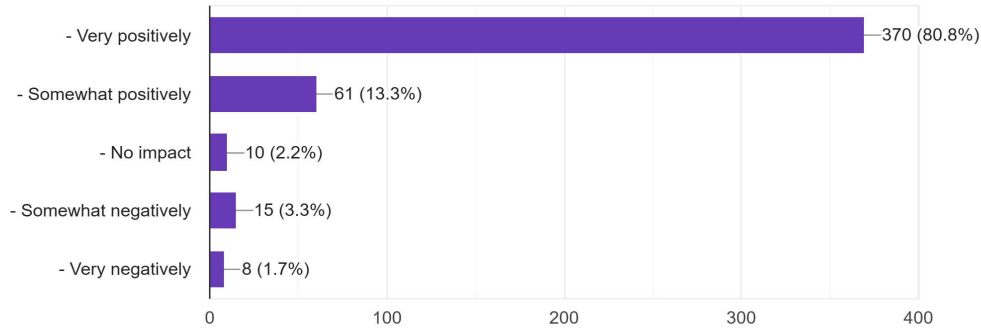


STRANGFORD LOUGH CROSSING

SURVEY RESULTS - 6th NOVEMBER 2024

11. How do you think an alternative crossing would impact the local economy ?

458 responses



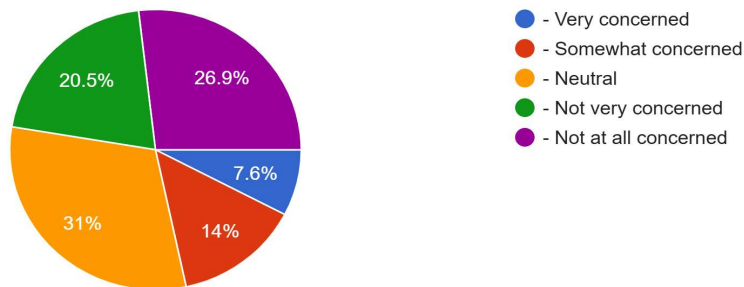
12. Would you miss the ferry service in the event of having an alternative permanent crossing ?

458 responses



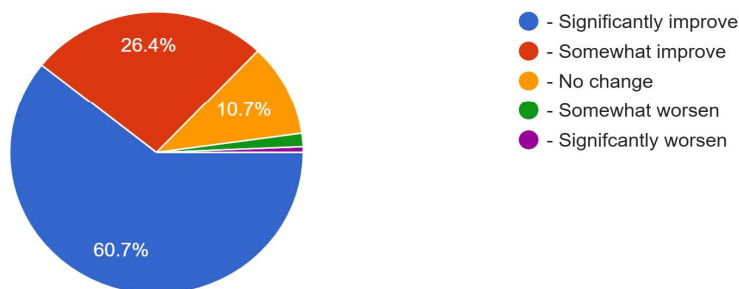
13. How concerned are you about the potential environmental impact of a new crossing ?

458 responses



14. Do you believe an alternative crossing would improve your quality of life ?

458 responses



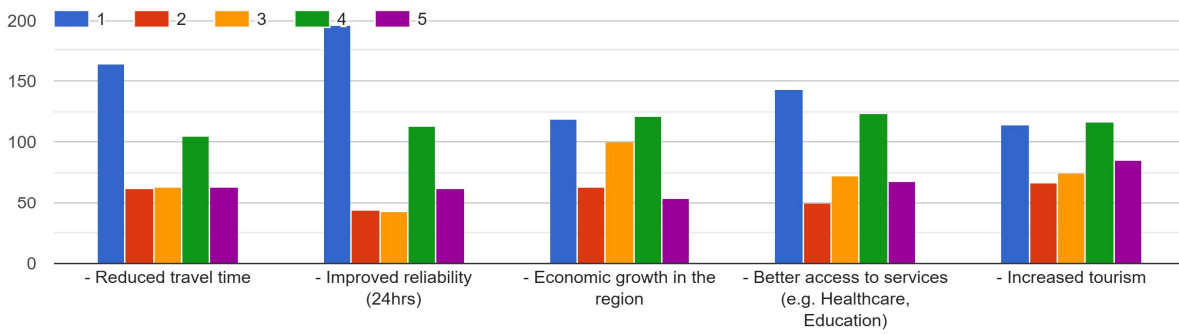
SURVEY RESULTS - 6th NOVEMBER 2024

15. How would an alternative crossing affect your travel plans within the region ?

458 responses



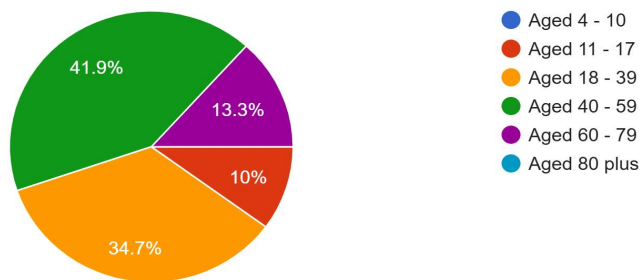
16. What potential benefits of an alternative crossing are most important to you? (Rank in order of importance)



17. Comments shown in separate section

18. Age grouping

458 responses





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Based on detailed analysis of the SLC Comments Summary from November 6th 2024, I provide the following comprehensive assessment:

1. Service Reliability & Operating Hours (40% of comments)

Key Issues:

- Service ends at 22:30, leaving communities isolated overnight
- First sailing from Portaferry at 07:45 too late for many workers
- Frequent cancellations due to:
 - * Weather (particularly fog)
 - * Mechanical breakdowns
 - * Staff shortages
 - * Maintenance requirements

Recent DfI data shows reliability of 96.69% for 2023/24 with:

- 108 sailings cancelled due to fog
- 32 cancelled due to staff unavailability
- 550 cancelled due to industrial action
- 158 cancelled due to mechanical/technical issues

2. Economic & Business Impact (35% of comments)

Identified Issues:

- Business owners report significant lost trade from service interruptions
- Limited evening operating hours affecting hospitality sector
- Additional costs for commuters through ferry fares
- Reduced tourism potential from access constraints
- Lost investment opportunities from unreliable connectivity

From DfI 2023/24 data:

- Operating costs: £3.52m
- Income: £1.43m
- Cost recovery: 41%

This shows significant ongoing subsidy requirement compared to potential toll revenue from fixed crossing.

3. Healthcare & Emergency Services Access (30% of comments)

Critical Concerns:

- No emergency access route between 22:30 and 07:45
- Journey time to hospital:
 - * 7 miles direct via ferry
 - * Over 75km/1.5 hours by road alternative
- Impact on emergency response times
- Difficulties accessing medical appointments
- Particular concerns for elderly and vulnerable residents

4. Education & Social Impact (25% of comments)

Reported Issues:

- Students facing extended journey times
- Service disruption affecting school attendance
- Limited access to after-school activities
- Impact on family connections across the lough
- Social isolation from early service end time
- Constraints on employment and education opportunities

5. Environmental & Infrastructure Considerations (20% of comments)

Mixed Views:

Concerns:

- Visual impact of potential bridge
- Construction environmental impact
- Impact on marine traffic

Benefits:

- Reduced emissions vs current ferry
- Potential for renewable energy integration
- Elimination of queuing vehicle emissions
- More efficient transport routing

6. Cost & Value for Money (15% of comments)

Current Issues:

- High cost of ferry fares for regular users
- Additional fuel costs from alternative route
- Time costs from queuing and delays
- Economic inefficiency of current service

Suggestions:

- Willingness to pay tolls for reliable 24/7 access
- Support for local resident discount schemes
- Recognition of long-term economic benefits

Cross-Reference Analysis:

The 2013 Strategic Review Report identified similar issues, suggesting:

1. Little progress on addressing core community needs
2. Worsening service reliability
3. Increasing capacity constraints
4. Growing economic impact

Historical Context:

Dfl data shows declining service reliability:

2016/17: £2.49m operating costs

2023/24: £3.52m operating costs

41% increase in operating costs over 7 years

Recommendations for Local Politicians:

1. Immediate Term:

- Address current service reliability issues
- Review operating hours
- Implement local user discount scheme

2. Medium Term:

- Commission detailed feasibility study for alternative crossing
- Engage with community on specific crossing options
- Develop business case incorporating social value

3. Long Term:

- Secure funding commitment for preferred solution
- Ensure environmental mitigation measures
- Maintain existing service until alternative operational

The evidence strongly supports community desire for change, with 94% of survey respondents indicating current service is not fit for purpose. The economic and social impacts appear to significantly outweigh visual or environmental concerns in community feedback.

The full comments database provides compelling evidence of daily impacts on local residents and businesses, suggesting this is a critical infrastructure issue requiring urgent political attention.