

COMMUNITY SHUTTLE TRIAL FINAL REPORT November 2023



Report prepared by:

Joanna Perry
Community Development Coordinator - Community Networks/LINK

For further information, contact Community Networks/LINK:

03 443 7799 | info@link.org.nz
www.communitynetworks.co.nz

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Community Networks/LINK is the Upper Clutha's one-stop community support and connection centre, serving the community across the full health and welfare spectrum. One role we play in community development is to enable action on key grassroots community issues that emerge, such as the growing need for public transport. Throughout 2021, we received anecdotal feedback about the lack of transport from segments of our community, including commuters, youth, seniors and other vulnerable residents without access to their own transport options. Our market research confirmed that residents were seeking more affordable transport options and looking to reduce their carbon footprint through shared transport. Community Networks/LINK saw an opportunity for both short-term service provision and data collection to test and inform longer-term planning.

Public transport is a long-term issue to be addressed by multiple parties, including local and regional government. While it was not within the limited scope of this project to provide a full service that comprehensively met the needs of the whole community, the Community Shuttle Trial set out to capture the need for and feasibility of a more comprehensive public transport system going forward. It was a ground-breaking, community-led first for the region.

Community Shuttle Trial I

The first trial ran from September 28 – December 21 2022. It connected Hāwea, Hāwea Flat, Albert Town, Three Parks and the Wānaka CBD with six services a day, three days a week. Its aims were:

- To address and enable community led action around the issue of a lack of public transport options in the Upper Clutha;
- To provide a short-term transport service connecting neighbourhoods in Upper Clutha in response to growing need;
- To collect data to test anecdotal demand and inform longer term planning involving multiple parties, including the Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) and Otago Regional Council (ORC), as our population base grows and comprehensive public transport becomes more feasible.

In total, there were 665 rides during the Community Shuttle Trial and feedback from service users was very positive, with a rating of 4.7 out of 5 stars. Following the success of this trial, and in order to test different options, it was decided that a second trial would be conducted with financial support from Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) and Lake Wānaka Tourism (LWT), led by a working group with representatives from QLDC, LWT, Yello (Wānaka Transport Group), Community Networks/LINK and Otago Regional Council (ORC).

Community Shuttle Trial II

The second trial ran from May 29 – September 18 2023. The aims of this second trial were:

- To refine elements of the first phase in response to feedback (particularly around the service being faster and more frequent);
- To test different network design options from the first trial and collect further patronage data;
- To gather additional data about the potential decarbonisation effect of public transport in the Upper Clutha through vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) reduction.

The second trial featured a streamlined Hāwea - Wānaka express service with four centralised stops, running five days a week, as well as an intra-city loop service connecting outlying areas of Wānaka to the

CBD. It was hoped this would make the service more convenient for commuters - thereby reducing cars on the road at peak times - while still suiting the needs of most.

In total, there were 645 rides taken during the second trial, 552 of which were on the Hāwea-Wānaka express service. There was an element of familiarity to this aspect of the service, while traction on the new intra-city loop service was slower to build. The service was rated 4.5 out of 5 by service users. We estimate that the second trial resulted in a light vehicle fleet VKT reduction of 48,935.8 kms.

Both trials were promoted widely through Community Networks/LINK and QLDC channels. Marketing included print and digital media; radio; paid social media advertising; roadside and vehicle signage. The timetable was published on the Community Networks/LINK website and in *The Messenger* weekly.

Conclusion

The Community Shuttle Trial project supported the need – and progressed long-term planning – for public transport in the Upper Clutha, in particular for connecting outlying townships to Wānaka as populations grow. Despite the limited time and scope of both trials, patronage continued to grow over each three-month period. A more substantial trial is needed to find out what patronage is achievable in the long-term.

The trials demonstrated some of the benefits public transport would offer to our community. Users valued the service provided by Yello, from its reliability and timeliness to the friendliness of the drivers. The shuttle supported connection, both on the bus itself and by offering a new way for people to access work, recreation and community activities. In the face of increased living and fuel costs, the shuttle was an affordable way to travel. And finally, the shuttle proved itself to be a viable way for our community to contribute to decarbonisation.

At the time of writing, both QLDC and ORC have contracted transport experts to look into potential public transport improvements for the Upper Clutha – through the Wānaka Network Optimisation Single Stage Business Case and Regional Public Transport Plan respectively – and a Public and Active Travel Advisory Group, comprising members from both Councils, has been established to advise on public and active transport matters.

Acknowledgements

Community Networks/LINK would like to thank everyone who helped make both Community Shuttle Trials happen. We are grateful for the contribution of Community Shuttle Trial working group members – Kathy Dedo; Andrew Edgar (QLDC); Bill Nicoll (QLDC); Katherine Durman (QLDC); Quentin Smith (QLDC); Ramash Swamy (Yello); Elaine Kelly (LWT); and Sierra Alef-Defoe – our delivery partners at Yello, QLDC and Downer; our advisers at ORC; and our funders – Otago Community Trust; QLDC; and LWT.

Thanks also to the local businesses who helped with promotion of the project – Cinema Paradiso; *The Messenger*; *The Wānaka App*; Pukka; Print It Wānaka; and Threethirds Graphic Design – and those who kindly allowed us to place bus stops on their properties – Countdown Metro Wānaka and Distinction Wānaka. Finally, a huge thank you to the Upper Clutha community for their support of and engagement with this project – particularly the service users; survey respondents; and focus group participants.

CONTENTS

Overview of services.....	Page 1
Community Shuttle Trial I findings	
Passenger numbers summary.....	Page 6
Service user survey.....	Page 7
Focus group summary.....	Page 8
Data presentation.....	Page 12
Community Shuttle Trial II findings	
Passenger numbers summary.....	Page 18
Service user survey.....	Page 19
VKT reductions.....	Page 22
Data presentation.....	Page 23
Additional feedback.....	Page 29
Conclusions.....	Page 30
Appendix	

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Upper Clutha population

The Upper Clutha (Makarora; Wānaka, Albert Town; Luggate and Hāwea) has a resident population of over 17,000 (Stats NZ Subnational population estimates: at 30 June 2023). As a popular tourist destination, we see large numbers of short and long-term visitors (including seasonal workers and working holiday visa holders). We're growing at one of the fastest rates in New Zealand – 5.6% since 2022. 32% of residents in the Upper Clutha are born overseas (Census 2018) and we have a growing senior population, with a projected growth rate of 214% over the next decade (QLDC 2022).

Population stats for individual communities (QLDC Demand Projections 2023) are as follows (Makarora falls within the Hāwea projections):

- Wānaka: 11,040
- Albert Town: 2,470
- Lake Hāwea: 2,000
- Cardrona: 790
- Luggate: 640
- Hāwea Flat: 600

Research and development

Following anecdotal demand for public transport from vulnerable groups in these communities (particularly seniors, youth and young families), further market research to understand the trial's target audience and their requirements included:

- Gathering data from residents of the Upper Clutha via [WAO's 'Get Smart, Get Moving' 2021-2022 report](#) (250 respondents)
- Gathering additional data from members of the Hāwea and Albert Town communities through individual surveys (25 respondents)
- Conversations with staff and elected members from ORC, QLDC, Wānaka Community Board, Southern District Health Board
- Conversations with community leaders and community association members.

Based on this research, we drew up a list of basic requirements for the service to approach potential providers with.

Procurement process

A Request for Expressions of Interest went out to local transport providers in September 2021, followed by a Request for Proposal in December 2021. In January 2022 a working group with representatives from Community Networks/LINK, QLDC and Public Health met to assess and score proposals. Proposals were scored based on five criteria: track record; capability to deliver; capacity to deliver; proposed solution; and price. Based on criteria and price quality assessment, Yello (Wānaka Transport Group) was identified as the preferred provider. A representative for Transport Planning at ORC peer-reviewed this assessment in February 2022.

Marketing

Both trials were promoted widely through Community Networks/LINK and QLDC channels. Marketing included:

- Print and digital media (*Wānaka App*; *Wānaka Sun*; Radio Wānaka; local NZME radio stations)
- Paid social media advertising
- News articles (*Wānaka App*; *Wānaka Sun*; *Otago Daily Times*; *Crux*)
- Radio interviews on More FM and Radio Wānaka
- Vehicle signage (pictured on pages 3 and 5)
- Roadside signage (for Community Shuttle Trial II, placed at SH6 roundabout coming into town – pictured on page 5)
- Promotional video shown at Cinema Paradiso and available on the Community Networks/LINK website and YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSL3PMz3l0w&t=53s>

The timetable was published on the Community Networks/LINK website and in *The Messenger* weekly. An extensive FAQ section was also featured on our website.

Media coverage examples:

- Hāwea-Wānaka express bus service to be trialled (*Wānaka App*, May 2023): <https://wanakaapp.nz/news/news/h-wea-w-naka-express-bus-service-to-be-trialled?id=646d45679098aa00284b1a04>
- Wānaka to Hāwea shuttle trial to return (*Wānaka Sun*, May 2023): http://digital.thewanakasun.co.nz/html5/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=WKA%2F2023%2F05%2F12&entity=Ar00802&fbclid=IwAR106j669CTLA-73vrQPKUnbDnZ3KfEkG5pC8Kth0i1X_a_SOVksKiUXR7M&mode=text&sk=1197BED8
- Coping without a car: Lake Hāwea shuttle gives freedom to seniors, students (*Crux News*, December 16 2022): <https://crux.org.nz/crux-news/coping-without-a-car-lake-hawe-a-shuttle-gives-freedom-to-seniors-students>
- Taking the Mercedes into Town (*Wānaka App*, November 10 2022): <https://wanakaapp.nz/news/news/taking-the-mercedes-into-town?id=636b3bc34c3442002cd31993>
- Kathy Dedo talks Community Shuttle Trial with Joel Palmer (More FM, September 28 2022): <https://www.communitynetworks.co.nz/s/MORE-FM-Kathy-Chats-to-Joel-on-new-community-shuttle.mp3>
- Public bus trial begins today (*Wānaka App*, September 28 2022): <https://wanakaapp.nz/news/news/public-bus-trial-begins-today?id=63327138ef749208f1f0f6a8>
- [Kathy Dedo and Ramash Swamy talk Community Shuttle Trial with Mike Regal \(*Radio Wānaka*, September 23 2022\): <https://www.communitynetworks.co.nz/s/Community-Shuttle.mp3>](https://www.communitynetworks.co.nz/s/Community-Shuttle.mp3)
- Shuttle in three-month trial (*Otago Daily Times*, September 20 2022): <https://www.odt.co.nz/regions/wanaka/shuttle-three-month-trial>


Service overview - Community Shuttle Trial I

- September 28 – December 21 2022
- Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays
- Three inbound and three outbound services per day
- Thirteen stops between Wānaka CBD; Wānaka Lakes Health Centre; Three Parks; Albert Town; Lake Hāwea; Hāwea Flat
- \$2 per person per ride
- Mercedes Sprinter 12-seater bus with wheelchair hoist and bike rack (2 bikes)
- Booking (online or on the phone) was not required, but highly encouraged.



Community Shuttle Trial

September 28 – December 21
MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AND FRIDAYS



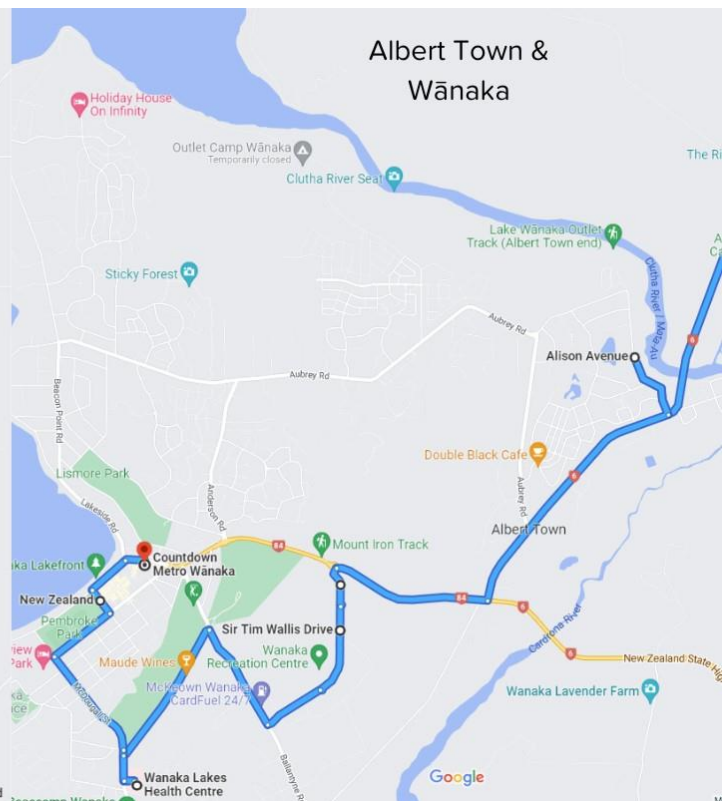
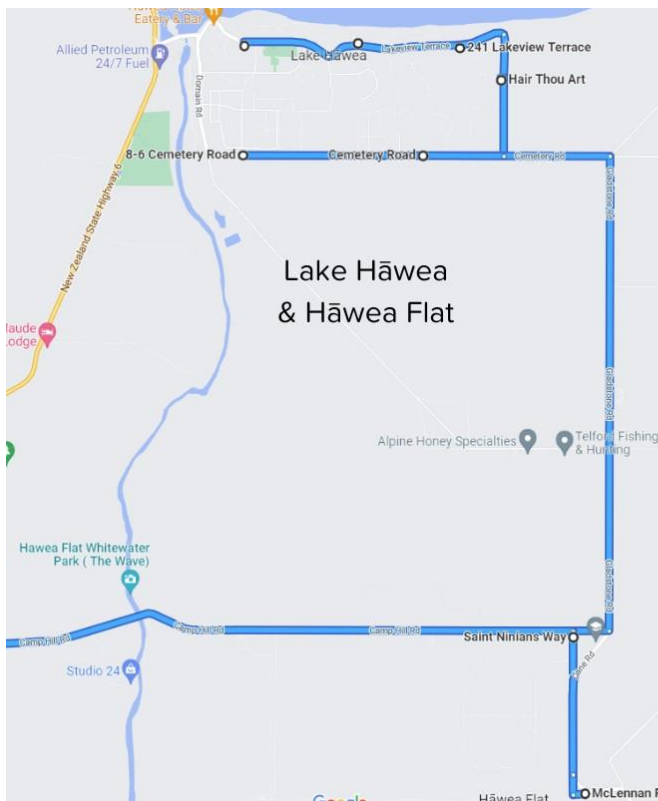
For more info: communitynetworks.co.nz
For bookings: yello.co.nz or 0800 443 5555

TIMETABLE

Inbound			
HĀWEA			
Bodkin St - near Capell Ave	07.45	09.00	13.30
Lakeview Terrace - East of Skinner Cres	07.47	09.02	13.32
Lakeview Terrace - East of Hāwea Espl. Rd	07.49	09.04	13.34
Muir Road - near Foote Lane	07.51	09.06	13.36
Cemetery Road - Little Maude to Cemetery walkway	07.56	09.11	13.41
Cemetery Road - West of Sam John Pl	07.59	09.14	13.44
HĀWEA FLAT			
Windmill Corner	08.05	09.20	13.50
Hāwea Flat Hall	08.07	09.22	13.52
ALBERT TOWN			
Albert Town shops - Alison Ave	08.19	09.34	14.04
WĀNAKA			
Three Parks - Sir Tim Wallis Drive	08.23	09.38	14.08
Wānaka Lakes Health Centre	08.30	09.45	14.15
Wānaka CBD - Dungarvon St Bus Stop	08.35	09.50	14.20
Wānaka CBD - Ardmore Street Countdown	08.37	09.52	14.22

Outbound			
WĀNAKA			
Wānaka CBD - Ardmore Street Countdown	12.00	17.00	18.15
Wānaka CBD - Dungarvon St Bus Stop	12.02	17.02	18.17
Wānaka Lakes Health Centre	12.07	17.07	18.22
Three Parks - Sir Tim Wallis Drive	12.13	17.13	18.28
ALBERT TOWN			
Albert Town shops - Alison Ave	12.19	17.19	18.34
HĀWEA FLAT			
Hāwea Flat Hall	12.28	17.28	18.43
Windmill Corner	12.30	17.30	18.45
HĀWEA			
Cemetery Road - Little Maude to Cemetery walkway	12.40	17.40	18.55
Cemetery Road - West of Sam John Pl	12.43	17.43	18.58
Muir Road - near Foote Lane	12.45	17.45	19.00
Lakeview Terrace - East of Hāwea Espl. Rd	12.48	17.48	19.03
Lakeview Terrace - East of Skinner Cres	12.50	17.50	19.05
Bodkin St - near Capell Ave	12.52	17.52	19.07

Timetable is subject to change and may vary due to traffic, road conditions or other unplanned circumstances.




Service overview - Community Shuttle Trial II

- May 29 – August 18 2023
- Five days a week, Monday – Friday
- Express service:
 - Four stops (Lake Hāwea; Camphill Road; Albert Town; Wānaka CBD)
 - Two inbound and two outbound services per day
- Intra-city loops service:
 - Six stops (Health Centre; Three Parks; Albert Town; Northlake; Anderson Road; CBD)
 - Five services per day
- \$2 per person per ride
- Toyota Hiace 11-seater bus with bike rack (4 bikes)
- Booking not required for either service, but encouraged for the express - whereas the intra-city loops ran on a purely hop-on, hop-off basis.

Community Shuttle Trial

May 29 – August 18
MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS

\$2 FARE



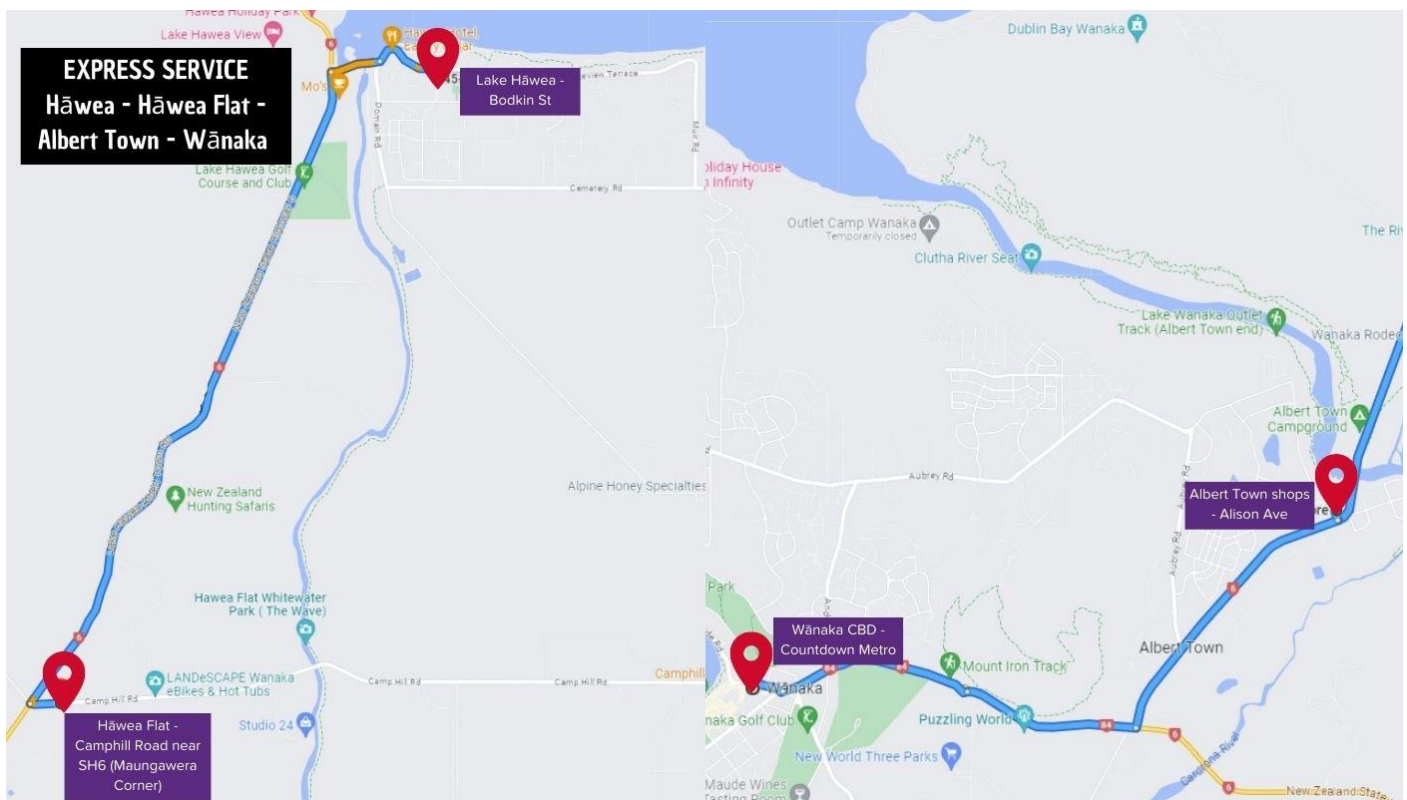
For more info: communitynetworks.co.nz
For bookings: yello.co.nz or 0800 443 5555

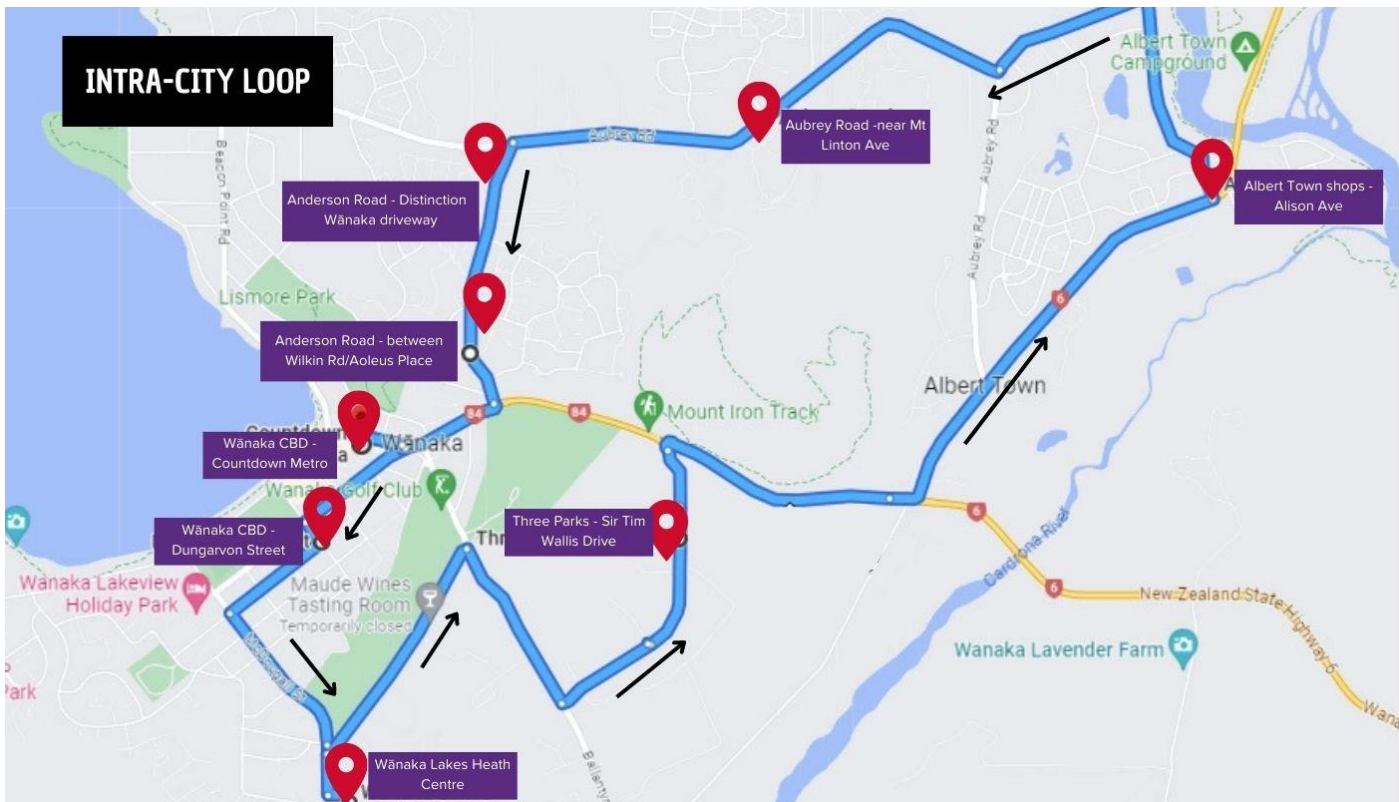
TIMETABLE

Express Service	Hāwea - Wānaka	Wānaka - Hāwea	Hāwea - Wānaka	Wānaka - Hāwea
Lake Hāwea - Bodkin St	08.00	-	12.00	-
Maungawera Corner - Camphill Road nr SH6	08.06	-	12.06	-
Albert Town shops - Alison Ave	08.15	-	12.15	-
Wānaka CBD - Countdown Metro	08.25	11.30	12.25	17.15
Albert Town shops - Alison Ave	-	11.40	-	17.25
Maungawera Corner - Camphill Road nr SH6	-	11.49	-	17.34
Lake Hāwea - Bodkin St	-	11.55	-	17.40

Intra-City Loop					
Wānaka CBD - Countdown Metro	08.30	10.30	12.30	15.30	16.30
Wānaka CBD - Dungarvon Street	08.32	10.32	12.32	15.32	16.32
Wānaka Lakes Heath Centre	08.38	10.38	12.38	15.38	16.38
Three Parks - Sir Tim Wallis Drive	08.45	10.45	12.45	15.45	16.45
Albert Town shops - Alison Ave	08.52	10.52	12.52	15.52	16.52
Aubrey Road - near Mount Linton Ave	08.57	10.57	12.57	15.57	16.57
Anderson Road - Distinction Wanaka driveway	09.00	11.00	13.00	16.00	17.00
Anderson Road - near Aeolus Place	09.03	11.03	13.03	16.03	17.03
Wānaka CBD - Countdown Metro	09.06	11.06	13.06	16.06	17.06

Timetable is subject to change and may vary due to traffic, road conditions or other unplanned circumstances.





COMMUNITY SHUTTLE TRIAL I SUMMARY OF FINDINGS September 28 – December 21 2022

Passenger numbers summary

In total, there were 665 rides during the Community Shuttle Trial. The number of unique users is estimated at 150*.

The visual data presentation on pages 7-12 depicts the following trends:

- Passenger numbers gradually increased over the three-month period, but remained fairly low, with the majority of days seeing between 10 and 25 rides taken across the 6 services.
- Usage was highest on a Friday out of the three days the Trial ran (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays).
- The spread of people using inbound (Hāwea- Wānaka) and outbound (Wānaka -Hāwea) services was fairly even.
- Pick-ups in Hāwea were spread out across the stops with Hāwea Flat usage in general (and Hāwea Flat Hall in particular) being the lowest.
- Pick-ups in Wānaka tended to be more concentrated to the Countdown stop.
- The booking system did not allow us to see drop-off locations, so this data is unavailable.

***Note:** there are some limitations with this estimated number as booking data only shows the name of the person booking. If multiple bookings were made under one name, we cannot tell whether the other passengers were unique users or repeats, so we have discounted them.

Service user survey

There were 83 responses to the customer feedback survey. Users were able to complete the survey multiple times, and responses were anonymous unless users submitted their email address to receive a focus group invitation at a later date. Two email addresses were submitted twice. The survey results are summarised here:

- Survey respondents were of all ages, though the most represented age group was 65+ (25%)
- The majority of survey respondents (78%) were female
- Just over half (52%) of survey respondents were employed
- The most common reason for using the Shuttle was to go to work or a meeting (27%), while 17% of survey respondents used it to go shopping. Other purposes included visiting friends or family (10%), after-school activities (9%), and sports or outdoor recreation (7%).
- The service received an average 4.7 out of 5 star rating from users, with “comfortable,” “safe,” “convenient,” and “friendly” the most commonly used words to describe it.

Tag analysis of two open evaluative questions showed what people most liked about the Shuttle:

- The driver (37 mentions)
- The cost (33 mentions)
- Comfort and cleanliness (27 mentions)
- Efficiency (11 mentions)
- Ease of use (11 mentions)
- Bike rack (7 mentions)
- Environmental benefits (7 mentions)

And what could have been better:

- Frequency (35 mentions)
- More/different connection points (15 mentions)
- Nothing (15 mentions)
- Speed/directness of service (11 mentions)
- Booking system (6 mentions)
- Connection to Queenstown Airport shuttle (5 mentions)

Focus group summary

This is a summary of our findings from two focus groups held in Wānaka on March 16 2023 (6 in attendance) and Hāwea on March 21 (10 in attendance).

1. MOTIVATIONS FOR USING FIRST TRIAL

The key themes in participants' motivations for using the Community Shuttle Trial were as follows:

Environment/climate action

- "You see so many cars coming in from Hāwea with one person in it."
- "Reducing carbon is a key issue in our household."

Changing habits/mindshift

- "Everyone is talking about climate change, but they but don't change their habits... In New Zealand, people are obsessed with their cars... If people would walk a little bit instead of taking their car, there'd be less parking problems... We have to start changing that habit."

Enjoyment

- "I found surprising things when I did use it. It was way more relaxing, I got to see stuff, meet people, and I could work on it if I wanted to."
- "It was so relaxing – I looked forward to my little bus rides... when you walk to and from a bus stop, you're in a totally different space than when you're driving and looking for a park."

Independence

- "It gave my husband a break from driving me around"
- "Not having to rely on rides from the community"

2. BARRIERS TO USING SHUTTLE DURING FIRST TRIAL

Common barriers for participants or those they knew using the Community Shuttle Trial included:

Three days a week

- "If you're not using it to commute, it either didn't go late enough or not on the weekend."
- "You couldn't use it to go to work every day, so you don't get into the routine."

Timetable

- "It took too long."
- "If I lived in Hāwea and started at 9, but had to be on bus at 8, I wouldn't keep using it."
- If you're reliant on other people's schedules for, the shuttle doesn't always suit. You might have 5 hours to wait in town between trips."
- "The timetable was confusing."

Hāwea-centric route

- "It didn't go anywhere I needed it to go. I live in Wānaka, and it was more for Hāwea people."
- I had no reason to go out to Hāwea or anywhere the route took you. Didn't need to use it.

3. ROUTE FOR SECOND TRIAL

We asked participants where they thought the key connection points for the second shuttle trial should be and what they thought of this draft design option: “Similar to trial #1, a full route in from Hāwea to Wānaka at the start of a day / a full route out at the end of a day / with abbreviated route run multiple times in between (which would include Northlake but exclude Hāwea).”

Connection points suggested multiple times were:

- Northlake
- Aubrey and Anderson Road
- Aspiring Retirement Village
- Old Mitre 10/new community centre
- Connections to Ritchie’s airport shuttle

Conversation around design brought the following key suggestions to light:

A) Express route in the AM and PM (Hāwea – Albert Town – Wānaka CBD)

There was agreement across both focus groups that a quicker trip in the morning and afternoon with more direct stops would be useful for commuters needing to get into town by a specific time.

- “In a city, you would travel to a bus stop. If you had one stop at the Hāwea Store, and one in Hāwea Flat, it would be much faster. There should be an ‘Express’ route going in, and one coming home.”
- “The route did meander quite a lot.”
- “Not stopping if people don’t request it – waiting in town if no one is getting on wastes time for people wanting to get to other spots.”
- “Beginning and end of day needs to be express. It could stop on Camp Hill Road for anyone who needs to get in from Hāwea Flat?”
- “Hāwea store, Lakeview Terrace, Camp Hill Road, AT, into town, Three Parks, Ballantyne Road, CBD (skate park), Countdown. Then head up Anderson Road?”

B) Shorter Wānaka route during the day

Some, particularly those in the Wānaka focus group, would like shorter loops to run during the day that would allow people to get around Wānaka and surrounding areas like Anderson Road, Northlake.

- “I would use an in-town loop to get from the CBD to Three Parks, even if it stopped in a couple places first. For example, Anderson Road, Northlake, Albert Town, Three Parks, Medical Centre.”
- “Left hand turns across State Highways would be better.”
- “I found the stops in Wānaka quite good.”
- “It would be nice to trial a route incorporating Wānaka where people are picked up in different places (e.g. Northlake, Meadowstone, Beacon Point) and taken into town. The places people want to get to are mainly the same, it’s where they start/finish that’s different. We should start planning some of those potential places for a future service, if not for this trial.”
- “A smaller circuit of Anderson Road, Three Parks, Medical Centre, CBD, so you could tick off all your chores.”

C) Longer Hāwea route during the day

A more complete route (similar to the first trial) was still wanted by some in Hāwea and Hāwea Flat during the day to complete errands or attend medical appointments without the time constraints. Some felt Windmill Corner/ Hāwea Flat could be dropped, while others knew someone who got on there.

- “If people in Hāwea Flat are using their car to drive to a stop, they think, ‘I might as well keep going into town.’”
- “Growing population along Cemetery Road.”
- “We would still want a longer route during the day.”
- “Driving down to Windmill Corner and then back up was a waste of time.”
- “For those wanting to go in shopping etc, the 9.00 service returning at midday worked well. We can adjust our appointments to fit around that timing and we just have to get used to it.”

4. FREQUENCY / TIMING

We asked participants how long is too long for a ride in/out? For many, the route times needed to be shorter and more suited to a working day. For others (particularly those who are not working), there was less urgency.

We also asked how many days a week would be ideal – across the board, the answer to this was 7. But, understanding the need to compromise, 5 weekdays was a consensus (with some suggesting children would make more use of the shuttle on weekends).

Journey time

- “Half an hour is the max – anything else, I’m looking at my car.”
- “If I’m going home to Hāwea, I want to be home by 6. I might have to walk home from the bus stop.”
- “The bus needs to leave later than 5 – 5:10 or 5:15 for commuters.”
- “Most people start at 8.30 or 9.00 – could you accommodate both?”
- “I’m prepared to hang around for half an hour to get home.”
- “People our age can get on during the day. We’re not in a rush.”

Days a week

- “If we’re prioritizing something, weekdays is the best solution for habit forming (as opposed to three week days plus weekends).”
- “5 workdays is near essential to get commuters using it regularly”

5. COST

We asked participants how much they would be willing to pay. Overall, participants felt the \$2 price point was attractive and would want to continue at that rate. It was generally understood that, in any future full service, the cost would likely be higher.

- “The \$2 fare is what appealed to me.”
- “If you start punching price up, commuters might start thinking they could just take their car.”

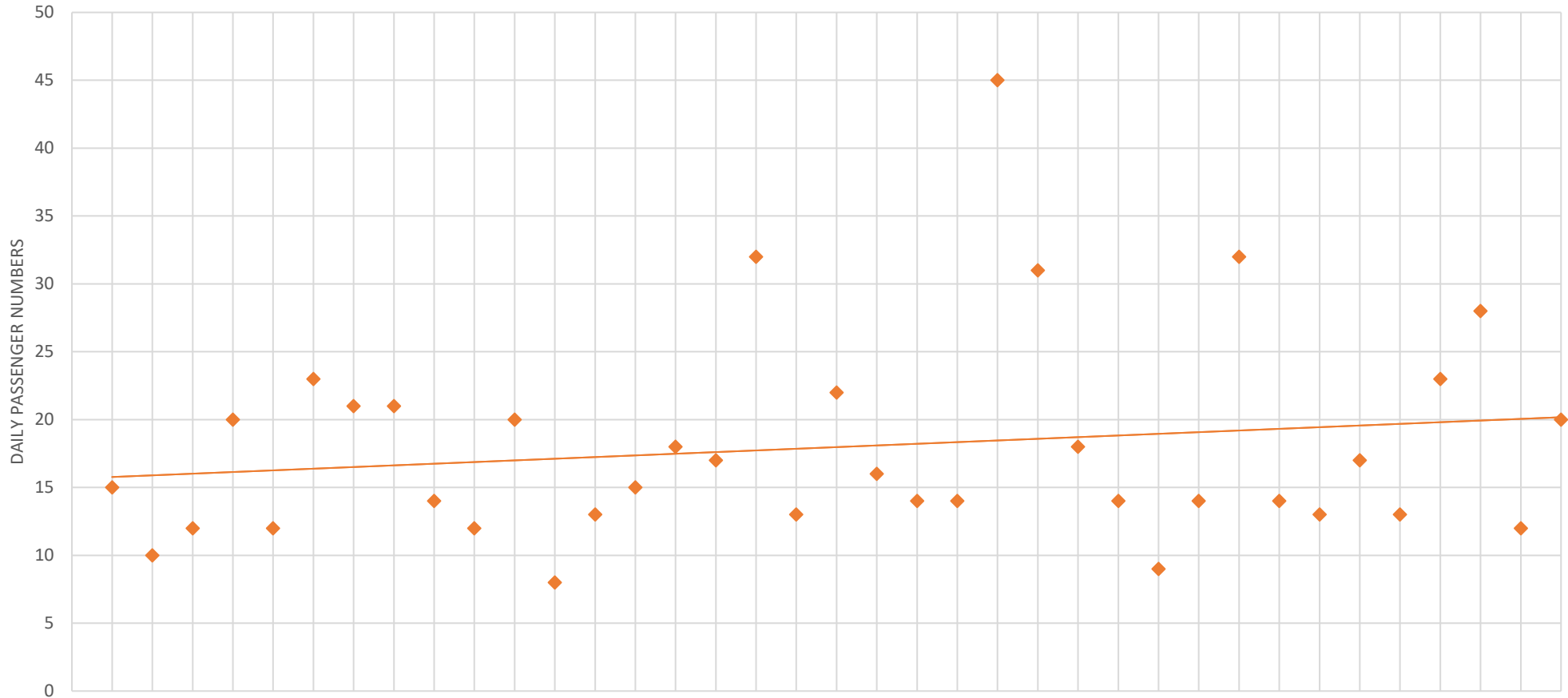
- “The Queenstown bus is \$2, why should we pay more?”
- “Hook people in at a low cost, and once it becomes indispensable then it can go up.”

6. BOOKING SYSTEM

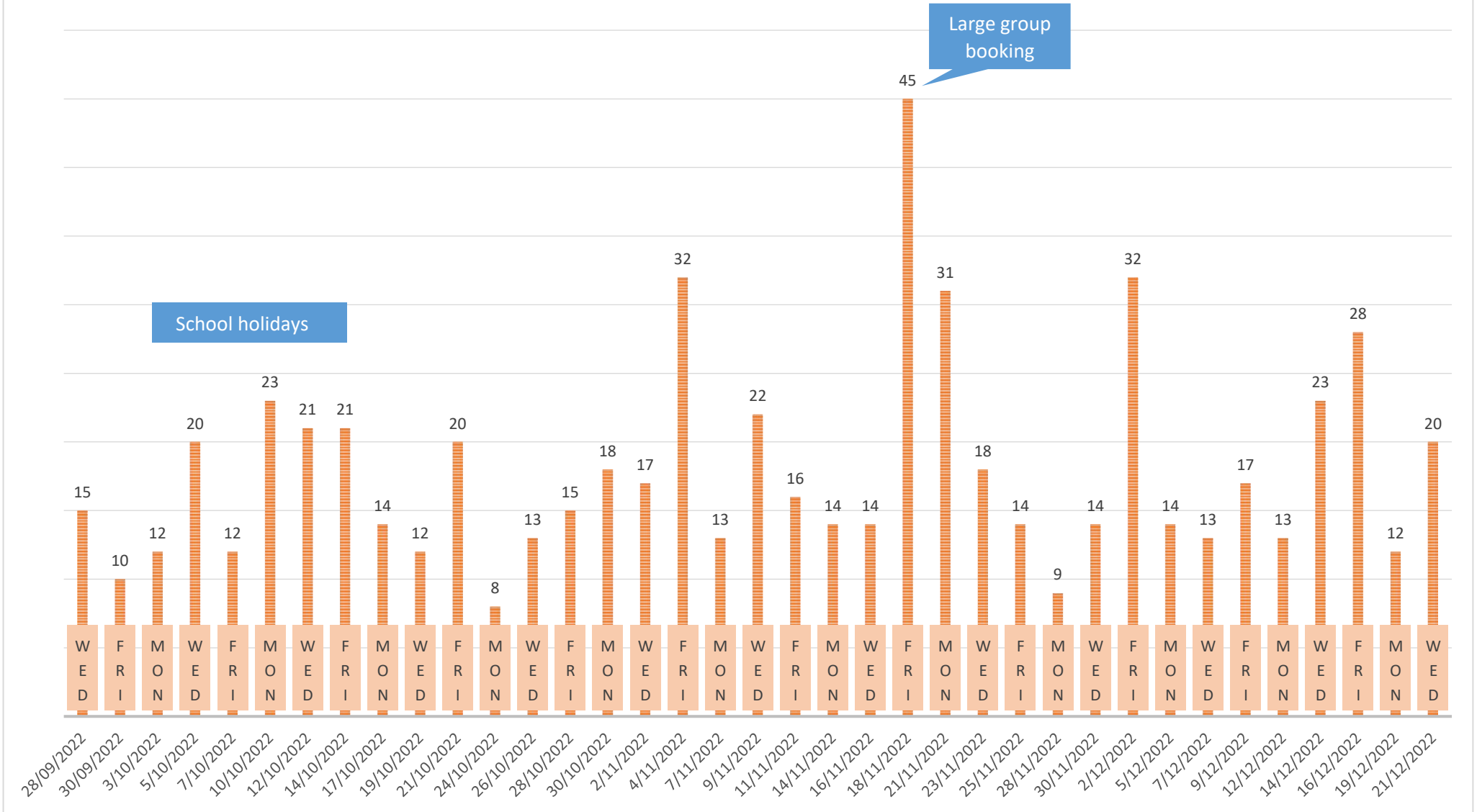
We asked participants to what extent the booking requirements were either a barrier or enabler. The booking system was a barrier for some; an inconvenience for others (especially needing to book return as two separate bookings); and no problem for others. Overall, a system where you could either book or show up was agreeable. It came up several times that being able to make only booking at a time was a hindrance.

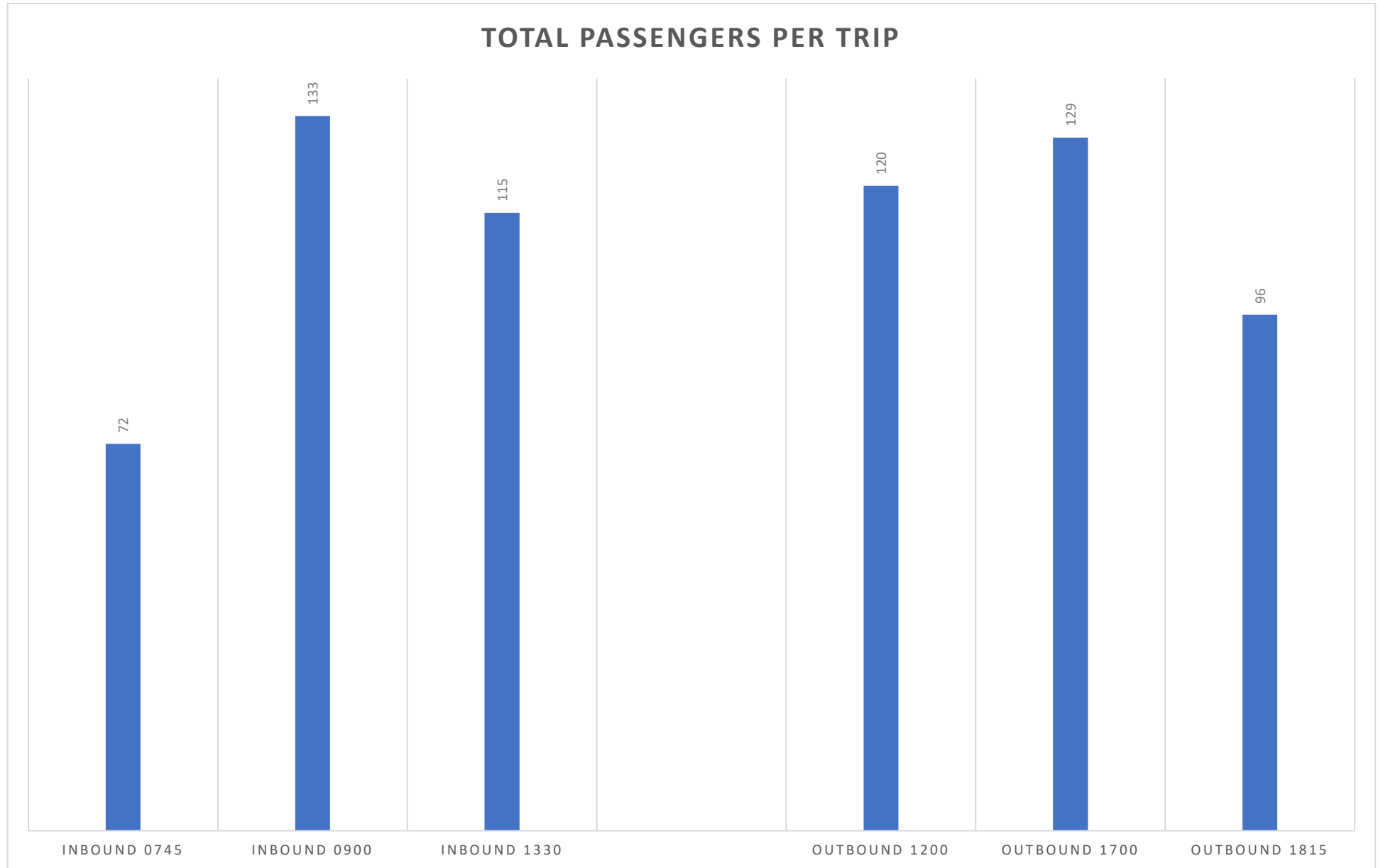
- “Booking was not an issue for us.”
- “I liked ringing up. They were always very friendly and chatty.”
- “The online element was an issue for older people.”
- “We found it fiddly – every transaction has to be a separate booking.”
- “I didn’t book – I just turned up.”
- “You could say you can just show up, but if you want to guarantee your seat you book?”

DAILY PASSENGER NUMBERS OVER THREE MONTH TRIAL SEPT. 28 - DEC. 21 2022

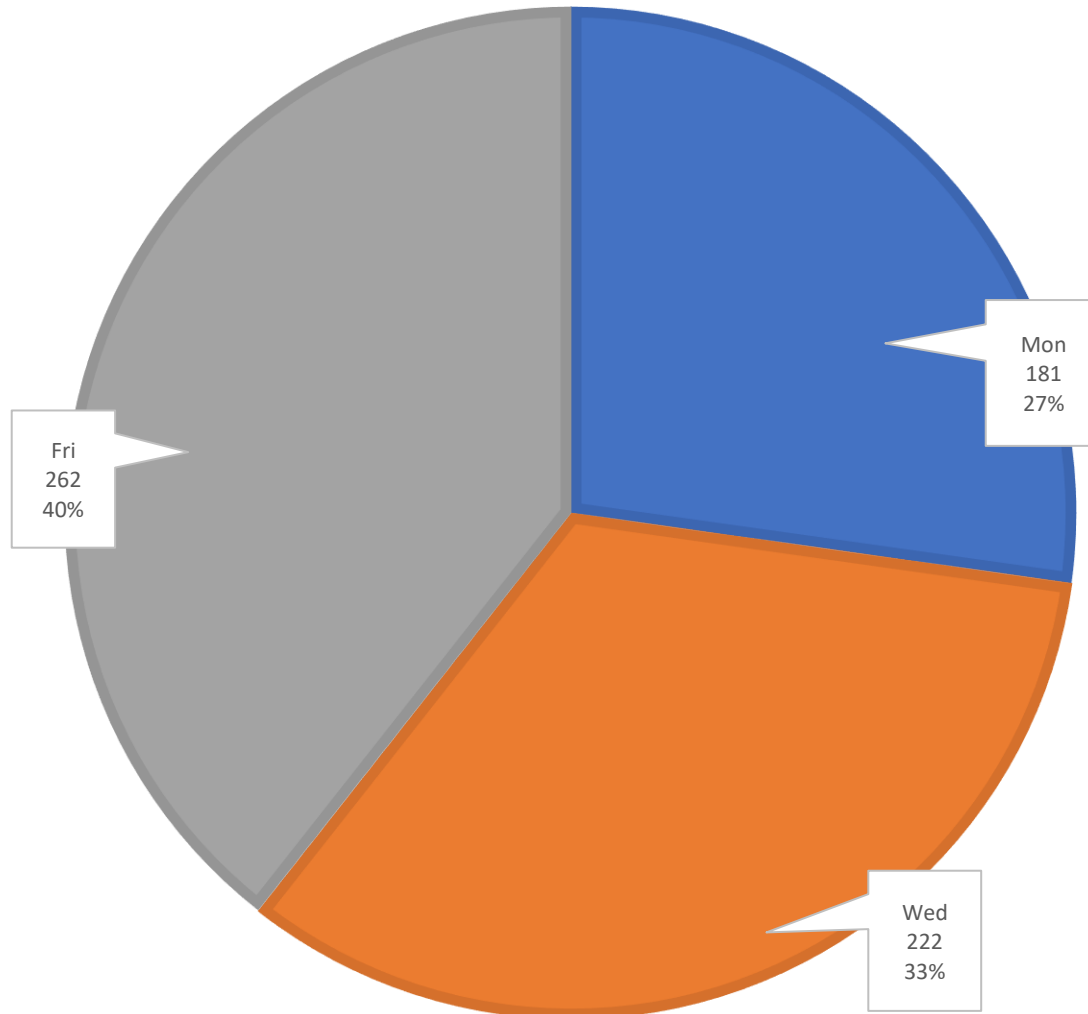


PASSENGER NUMBERS BY DATE

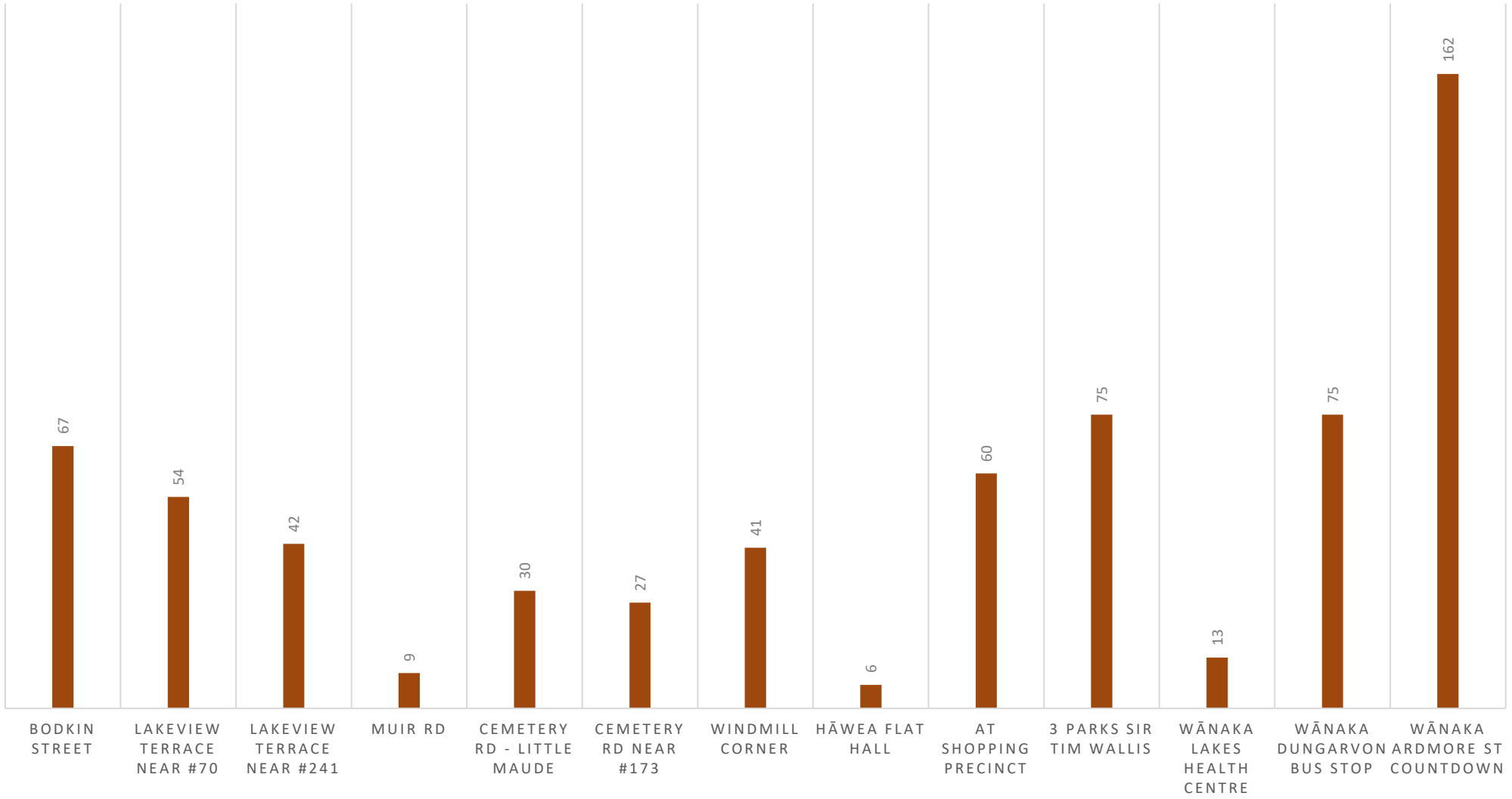




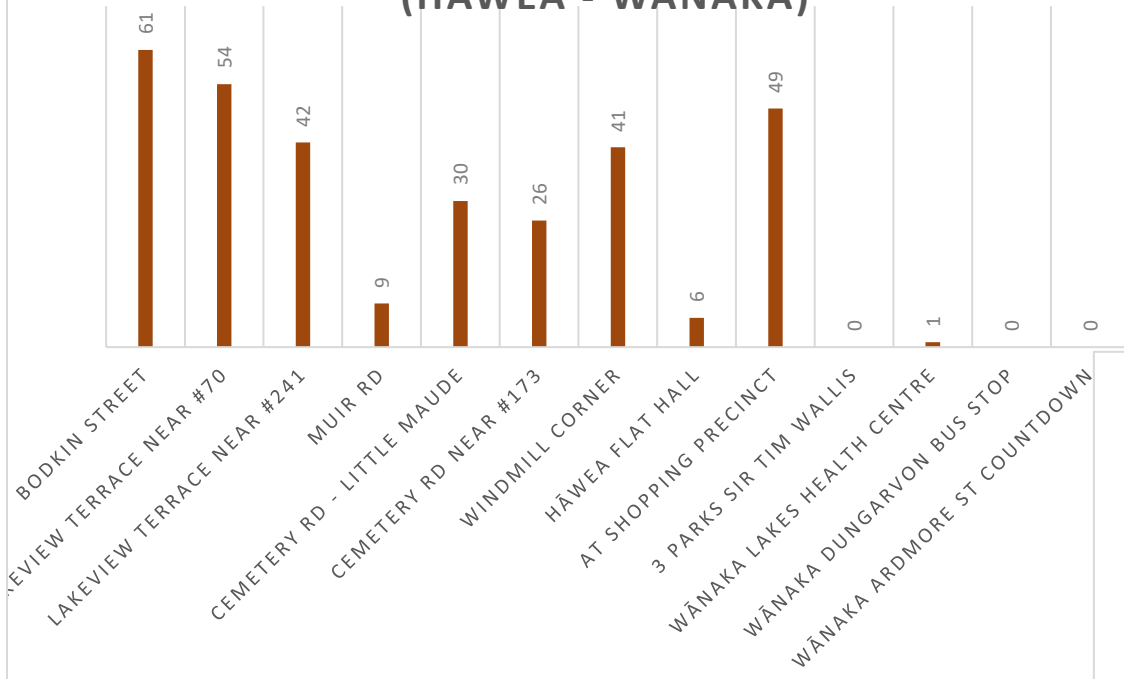
TOTAL PASSENGERS PER WEEKDAY



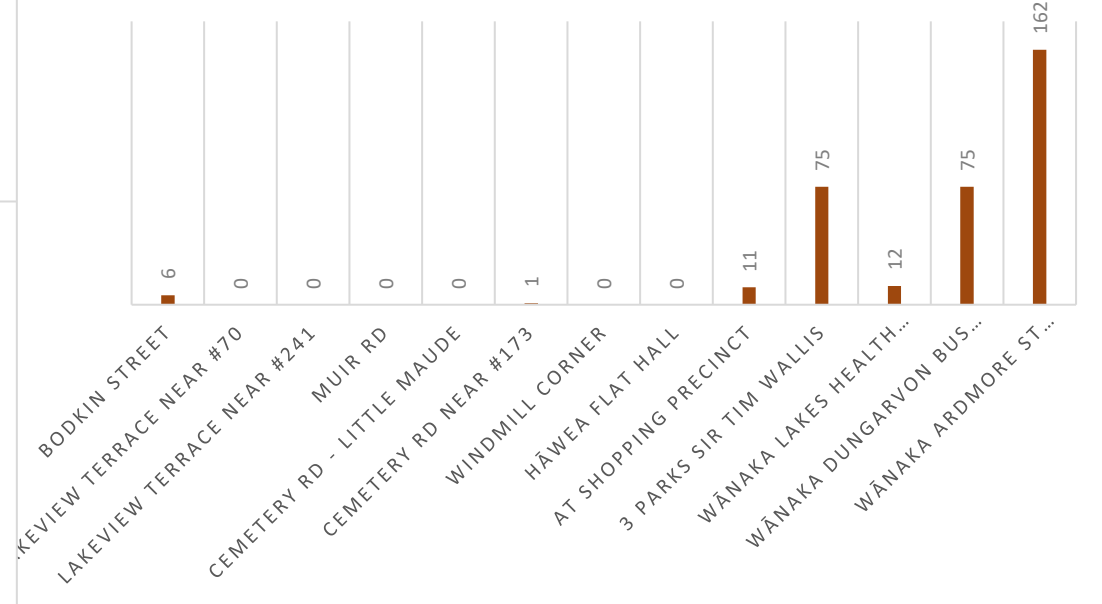
PICK UPS PER LOCATION (TOTAL)



PICK-UPS PER LOCATION (HĀWEA - WĀNAKA)



PICK-UPS PER LOCATION (WĀNAKA - HĀWEA)



COMMUNITY SHUTTLE TRIAL II SUMMARY OF FINDINGS May 29 – September 18 2023

Passenger numbers summary

In total, there were 645 rides taken on the shuttle, 552 of which were on the Hāwea-Wānaka express service. Total ridership was slightly lower than in the first trial (665 rides), despite offering a more frequent service (operating 5 days a week rather than 3).

The number of unique users is estimated at 100* for the express service. Again, this is lower than the first trial (150). Booking was not available for the intra-city loop service, so the information we have on passengers for this service is very limited and we're unable to estimate the number of unique users of this service.

The data presentation on pages 19-24 depicts the following trends:

- Passenger numbers for the express service gradually increased over the three-month period. The mean average ridership per day of 9 is fairly low, but demand was generally concentrated across the first and last services of the day. 79% (n=435) of express patronage was across these two commuter-focused services.
- Passenger numbers on the intra-city loops service remained very low throughout the trial, with a slight increase during school holidays (July 1 – 17). There were several days where ridership across all 5 loops was 0.
- Usage was fairly even across days of the week, with Mondays and Thursdays somewhat preferred by express service users. Intra-city loop usage was slightly higher on Mondays and Fridays.
- The spread of people travelling in either direction (Hāwea- Wānaka or Wānaka-Hāwea) on the express services was fairly even. Wānaka-Hāwea usage was largely limited to the 17:15 service (n=254), with only 36 pick-ups on the 11:30 throughout the three months. The 12:00 Hāwea-Wānaka received more patronage (n=81), but 8:00 was the more popular time (n=181).
- The 12:30 intra-city loop was the most popular with 29 pick-ups, followed by the 15:30 (n=25). The 10:30 loop saw the least ridership (n=10).
- The Hāwea – Bodkin Street stop saw the largest number of pick-ups on inbound express routes (n=168). The Camphill Road stop was poorly used (n=15).
- The booking system did not record drop-off locations, so this data is unavailable.

*Note: there are some limitations with this estimated number as booking data only shows the name of the person booking. If multiple bookings were made under one name, we cannot tell whether the other passengers were unique users or repeats, so we have discounted them.

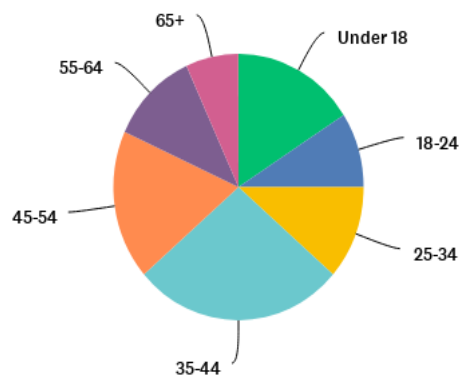
Service user survey

There were 44 responses to the service user survey. Users were able to complete the survey multiple times, and could remain anonymous or submit their email address. Two email addresses were submitted twice and one was submitted three times. The survey results are summarised here.

Age

Survey respondents were of all ages, though the vast majority were of working age - 18-64 (77.3% n=34). In contrast to the first trial, where the most represented age group in survey data was 65+ (25.3% of respondents), this age group is the least represented here (6.8% n=3). This is consistent with our understanding that the express service was less attractive to non-commuters (particularly retirees) than the first trial, which offered 3 services each way and had more frequent stops in residential areas. The proportion of under 18 year olds (15.9% n=7) was similar to the first trial (16.9% n=14).

Q1 How old are you?



Employment

The majority (61.3% n=27) of survey respondents were employed. This was similar to data from the first trial survey (52.4% n=44). Notably, the number of retired respondents represented 22.6% (n=19) in the first trial survey, and only 6.8% (n=3) in the second. The student designation was similar (17.9% n=15 in the first survey; 18.2% n=8 in the second).

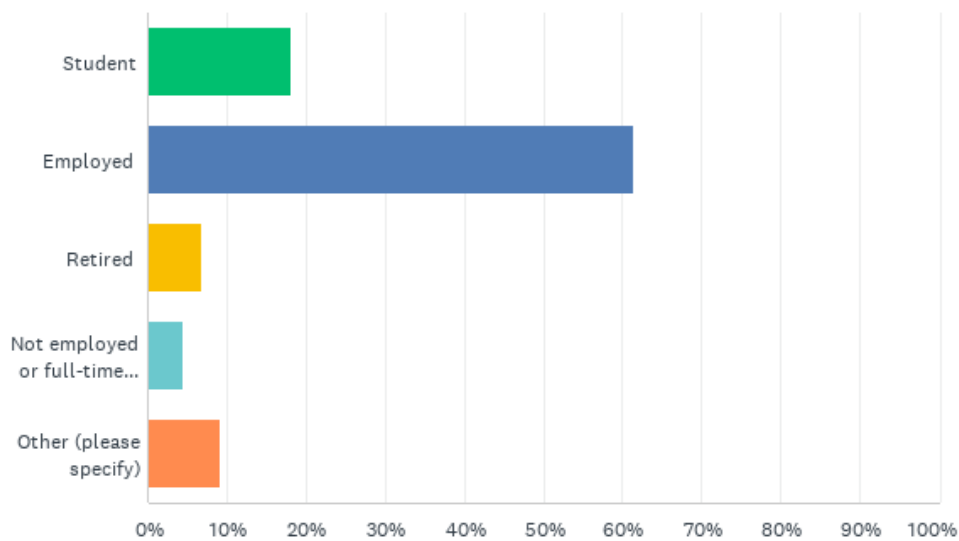
Purpose for travelling

The most common reason for using the shuttle was to go to work or a meeting (40.9% n=18). This was an increase from 27.4% (n=23) in the previous trial. A number of people who selected 'other' were in fact using the shuttle for work or recreation purposes. Two were using it as tourists; one picking up their car from a service; one trialling the service; and two respondents did not provide further details.

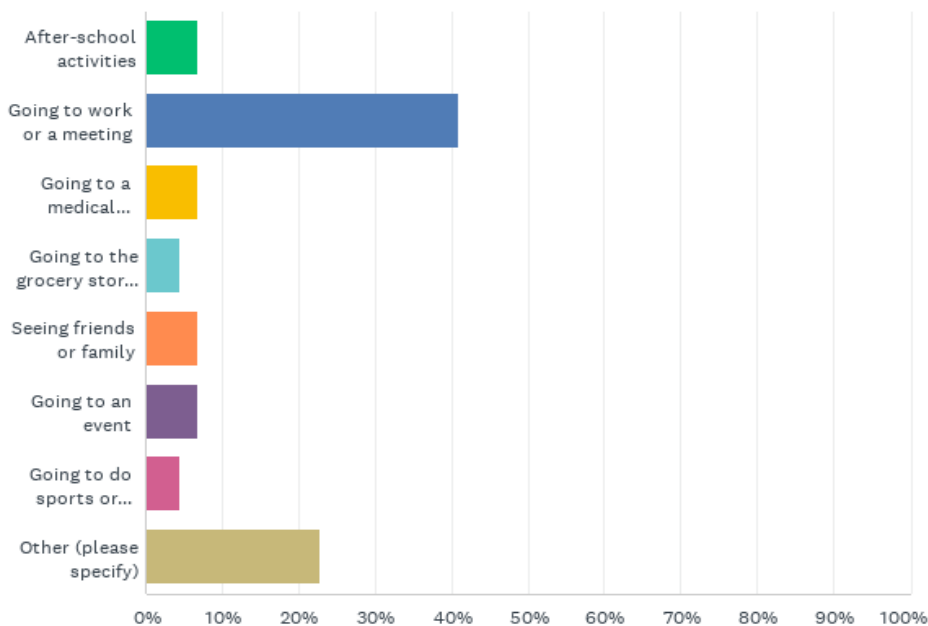
User rating

The service received an average 4.5 out of 5 star rating from users, with “friendly,” “comfortable” and “convenient” the most commonly used words to describe it. This was a very similar outcome to the first trial (rated 4.7).

Q2 What is your primary occupation?



Q3 What was the primary purpose of your journey this time?



Open questions

Tag analysis of two open evaluative questions showed what people liked most about the shuttle:

- Convenience (36.96% n=17)
 - *"I used the journey to take time for myself and read my book! I also enjoy not having to find a park in town! I also enjoy the crew that get on at Albertown, they are always excited to ride the bus - so atmosphere."*
 - *"It was easy to book, and the times were good."*
- Friendly service (26.09% n=12)
 - *"I liked the cheerful attitude of the drivers and the punctuality."*
 - *"Friendly and on time and helpful driver."*
- Cost (23.91% n=11)
 - *"Cheap fares!"*
 - *"Convenient and economical"*
- Efficiency (21.74% n=10)
 - *"On time, no hassles"*
 - *"Quicker service with less stops than last time. Good value."*
- Schedule (13.04% n=6)
 - *"The express route! Great times 8am and 5:15pm. Perfect!"*
 - *"Like the timing, the 8:15 express and 10:30 loop worked well for me today."*

Other frequent comments were around comfort/cleanliness (n=5); the social element (n=5); the use of a bike rack (n=4); and the environmental benefits (n=3).

And what could have been better:

- Nothing (43.48% n=20)
 - *"The service was great exactly what I needed"*
 - *"Nothing. It was awesome and would love to see a permanent version."*
- Frequency (17.39% n=8)
 - *"More services, more frequently. Obviously this requires more passengers but if you build it they will come."*
 - *"If there were more trips during the day I would use it more frequently."*
- More/different bus stops (10.87% n=5)
 - *"If the shuttle would be running more than twice a day, and maybe to the end of Hawea."*
 - *"Having no stop at Hawea Flat has prevented our family from using the shuttle except once! It is such a shame not to travel back to windmill corner and leaves all our teenagers stranded! We love the kids having some independence after school and not being able to walk home from the last stop just doesn't work."*
- Earlier/later service (8.7% n=4)
 - *"Timetable for work commuters, 15 minutes earlier in the morning and 15 minutes later in the afternoon would be ideal."*
 - *"Extended hours if targeting commuters with 8 h shifts."*
- Booking system (6.52% n=3)
 - *"The online booking system could allow multiple trips per booking and then 1 payment at the end."*

- “A pass so that we didn't have to have \$2 available for every ride. A 10 trip ticket would be great that could just get stamped or clipped each time you used it and then you could buy another one.”

Having a bigger bus and more widespread publicity were also mentioned twice each.

VKT reductions

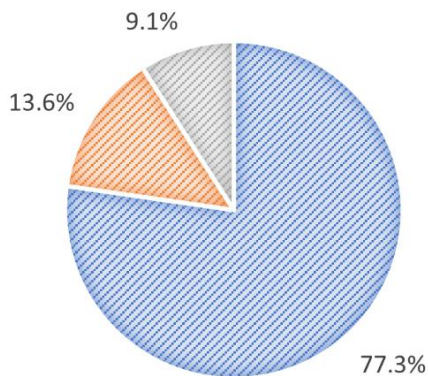
We estimate that the trial resulted in a light vehicle fleet VKT reduction of 48,935.8 kms. This calculation was based on data from a sample group of 22 survey respondents who used the express service. For full calculations, see *Appendix 1*). We are pleased to observe these reductions, particularly given that – considering the limited dataset used in our calculations – the impact of the trial as a whole would have been greater.

77.3% (n=17) of this sample group said they would have travelled by car if the shuttle was not an option. 13.7% (n=3) said they would not have travelled, and 9.1% (n=2) said they would have walked or biked.

45.5% (n=10) of the sample group said they used the shuttle 2-4 times a week. 22.7% (n=5) said they used it as one-off. 3 people used it once a week, and 2 used it 1-3 times a month or everyday respectively.

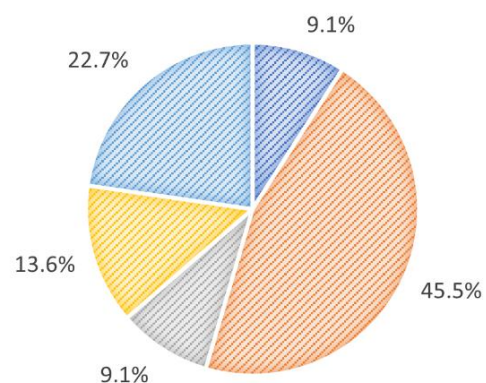
HOW ELSE WOULD YOU HAVE TRAVELLED?

■ By car ■ Would not have travelled ■ Walk/bike

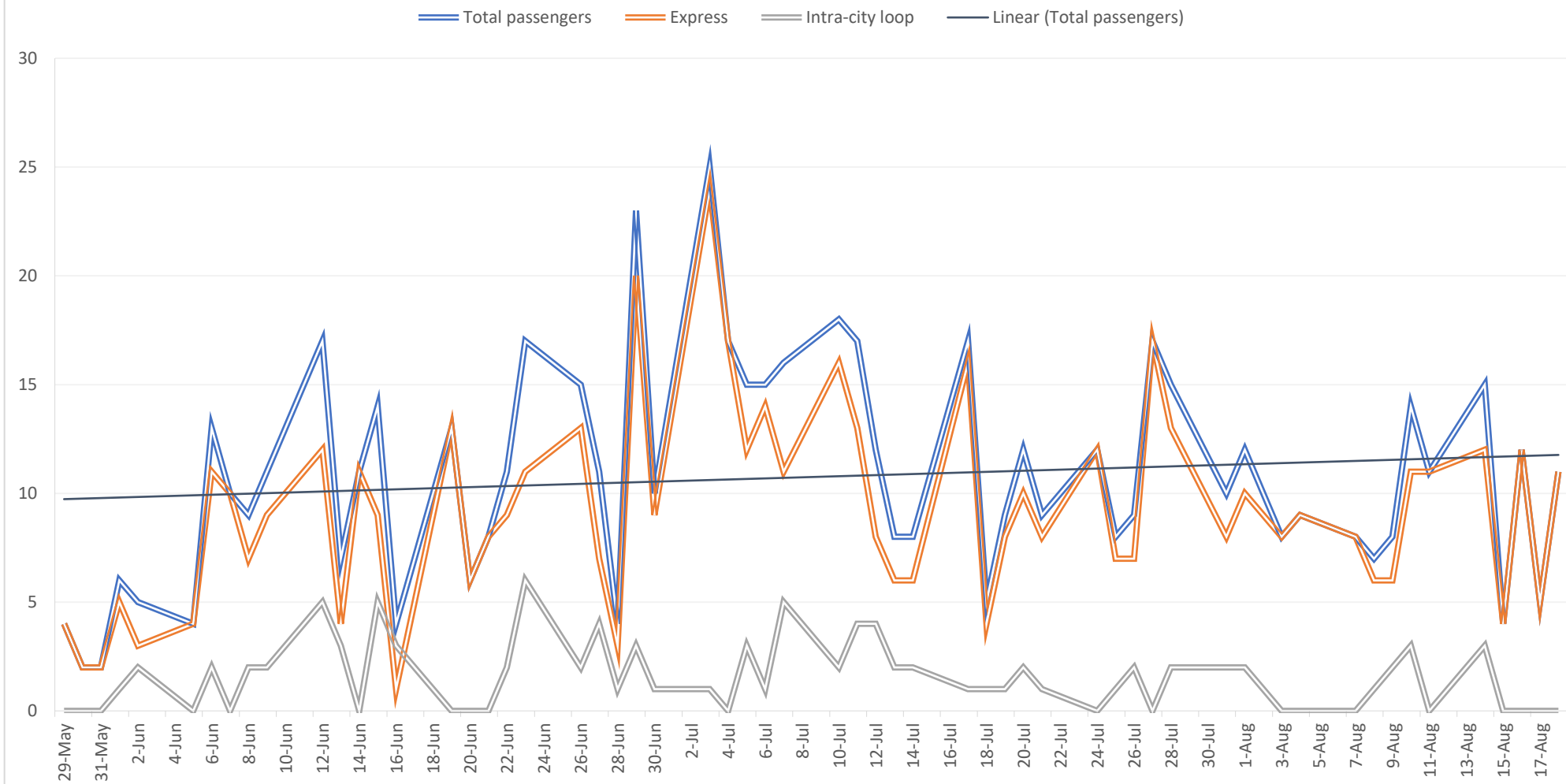


HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THE SERVICE?

■ Every day ■ 2-4 times a week ■ 1-3 times a month
 ■ Once a week ■ One-off



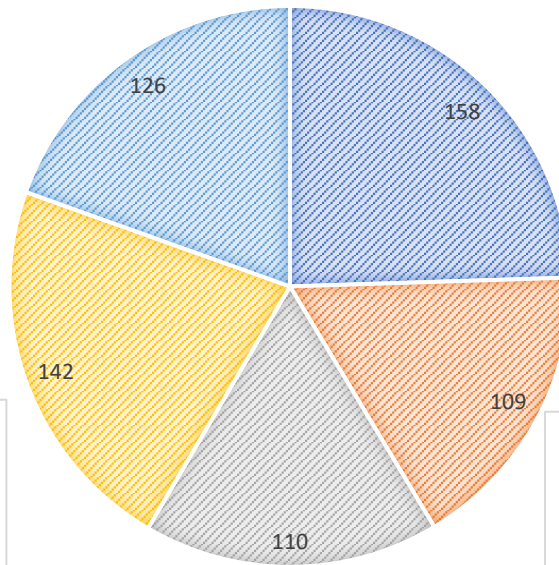
PASSENGER NUMBERS THROUGHOUT TRIAL



SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

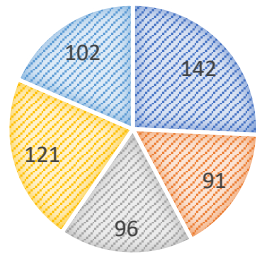
PASSENGER NUMBERS BY DAY OF THE WEEK - TOTAL

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday



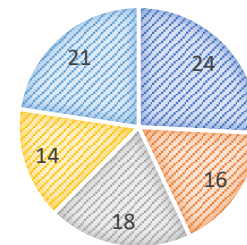
EXPRESS

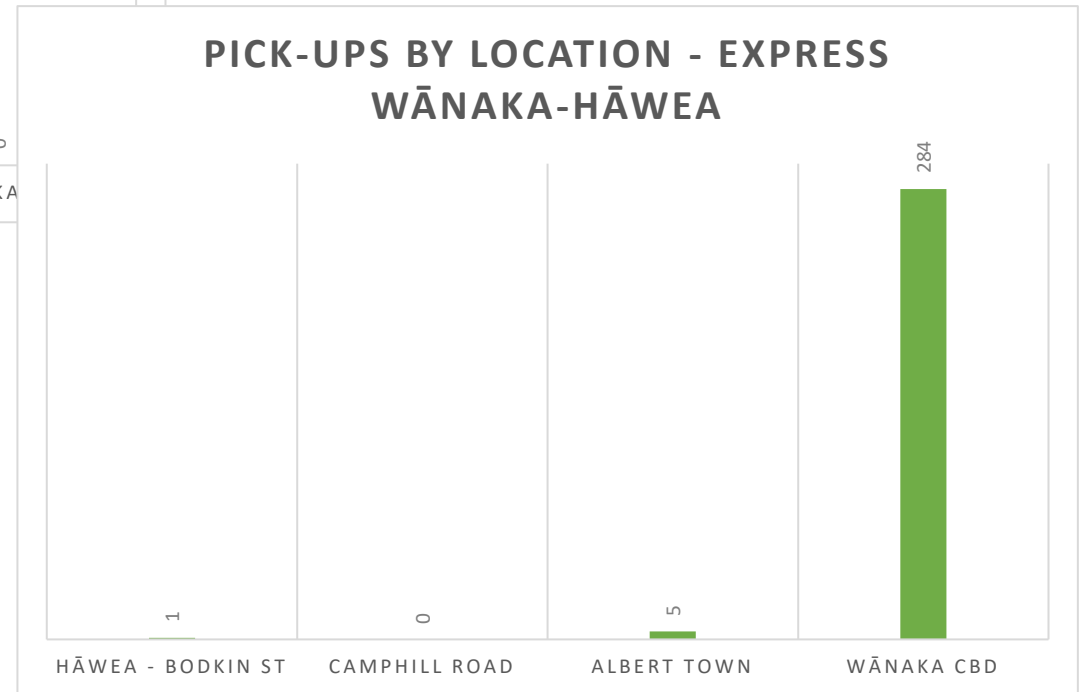
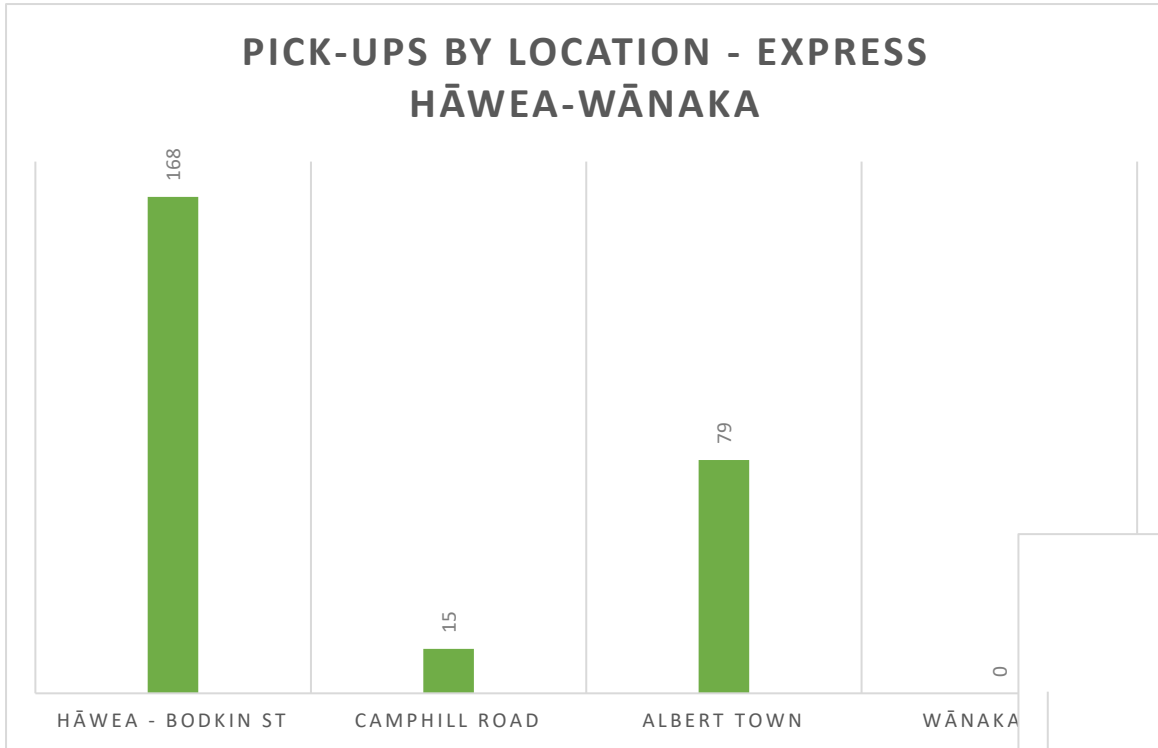
Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday



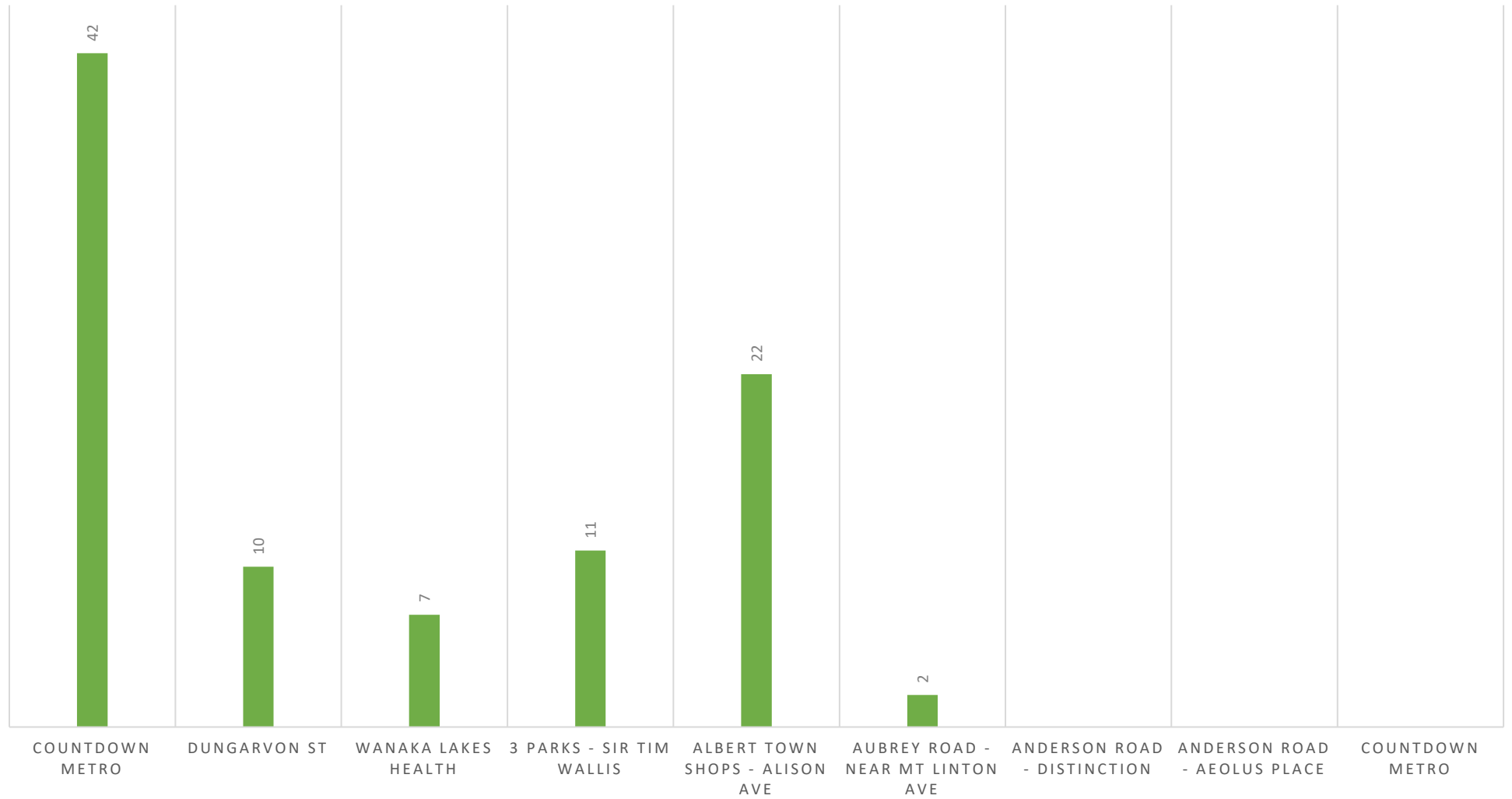
INTRA-CITY LOOPS

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

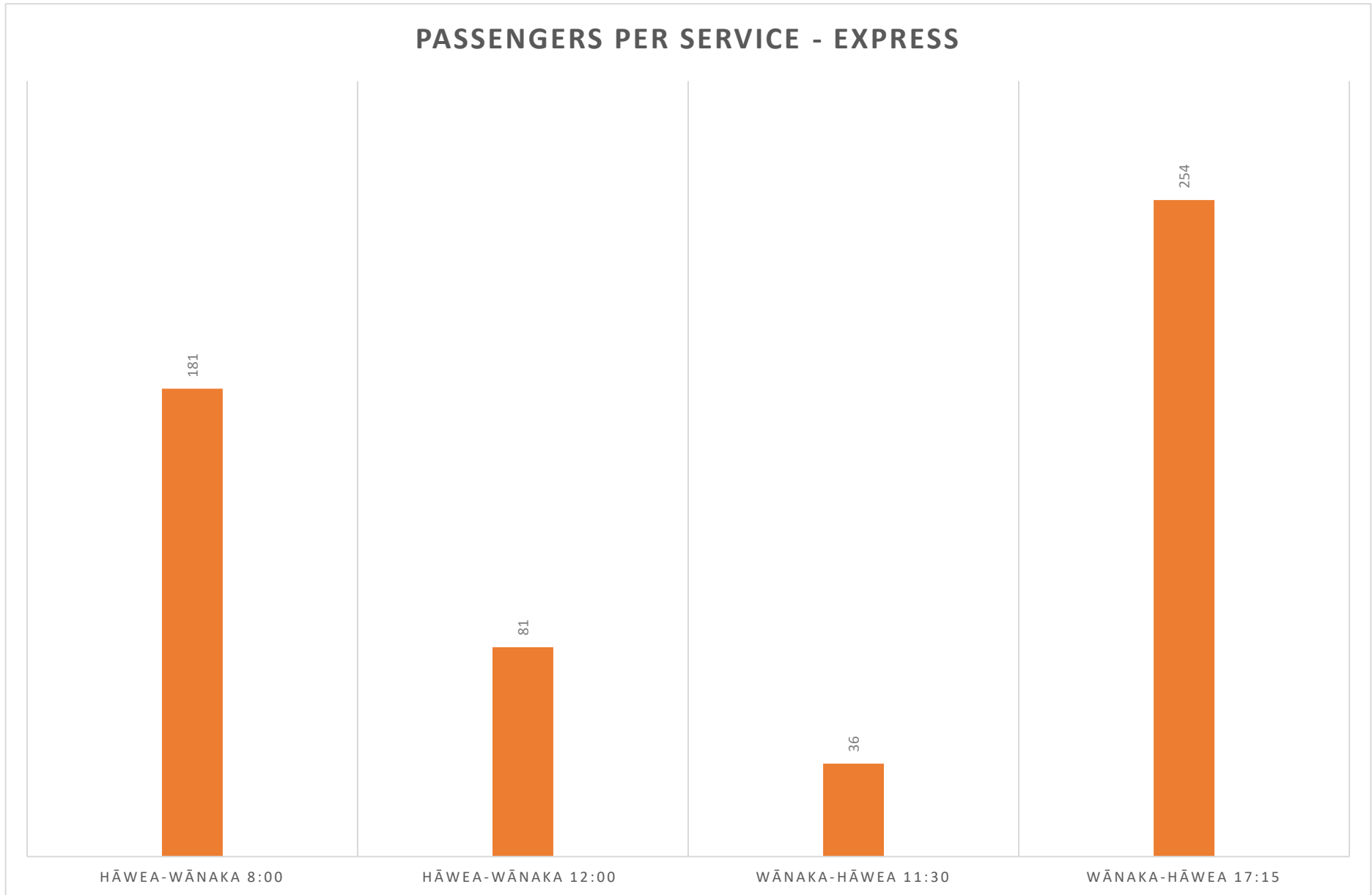




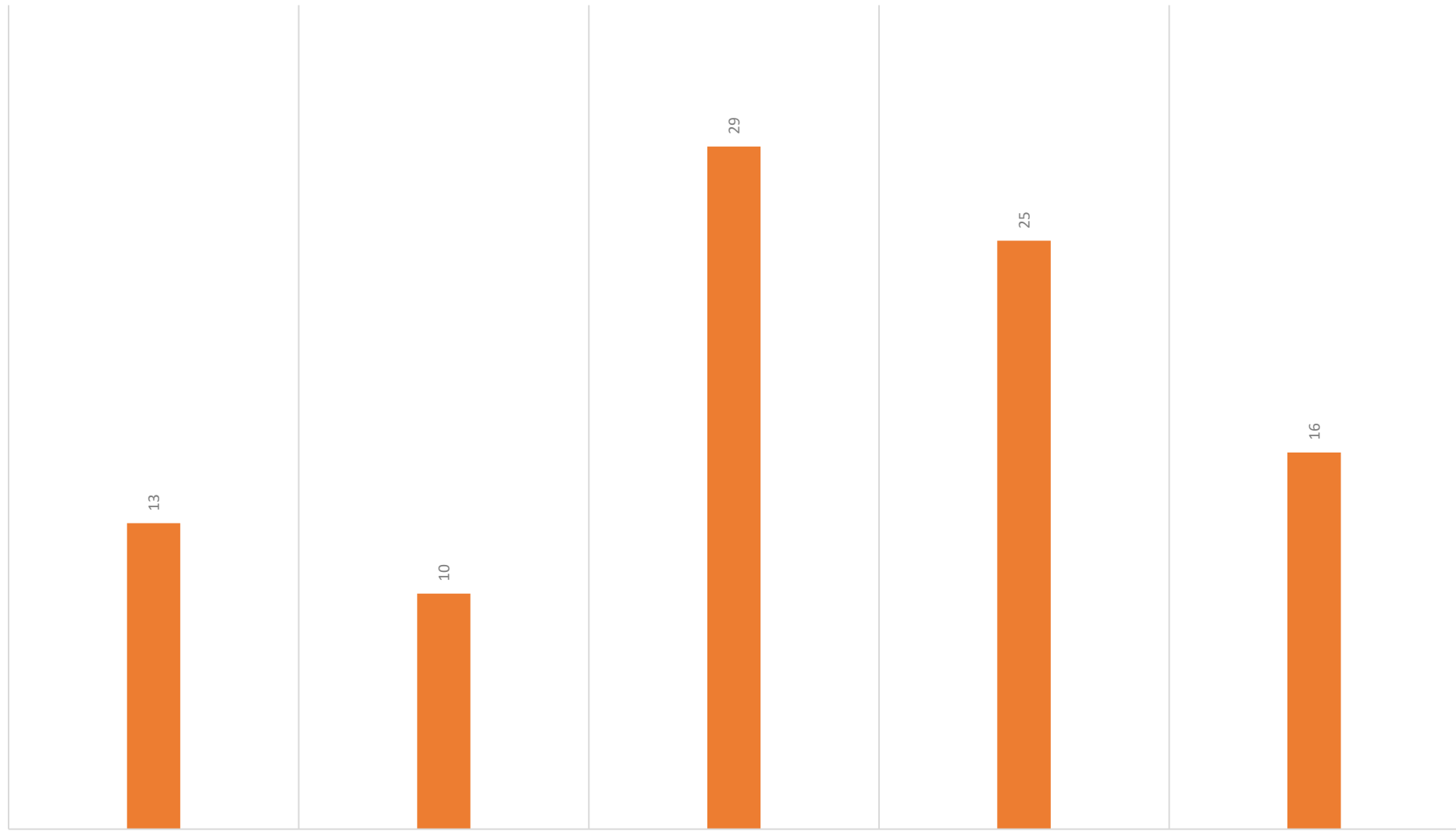
PICK-UPS BY LOCATION - INTRA-CITY LOOPS



PASSENGERS PER SERVICE - EXPRESS



PASSENGERS PER SERVICE - INTRA-CITY LOOPS



ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK

Feedback submitted to Community Networks/LINK directly has been logged throughout both trials, the key themes of which are:

Luggate

Throughout both trials we heard that there was demand for transport connecting Luggate to Wānaka. In order to provide a viable service to both Lake Hāwea and Luggate, we would have needed two buses. Given the budget and scope of the project, and taking into account that Lake Hāwea had the larger population of the two townships (2,000 over 640), it was decided early in the planning process to exclude Luggate from this trial. However, given the consistent feedback and growing population of Luggate, we would recommend that any future public transport service include this community.

“Please include Luggate - many low income earners and elderly live there, we need cheap public transport to and from Wānaka.”

“Any transport links between Luggate and Wanka in the pipeline? Lots of traffic/ commuters into town who could make use of this. Think how many single occupant cars could be taken off the road (and free up parking spaces for businesses) with a service supporting the smaller villages.”

Hāwea Flat

While the first trial offered two stops in Hāwea Flat (Windmill Corner and Hāwea Flat Hall), the express service in the second trial instead offered one stop at Maungawera Corner on SH6. This decision was the result of overwhelming demand for a shorter service, combined with very low pick-up numbers in Hāwea Flat during the first trial and a desire to test new options and gather different data with the second trial. The Hāwea Flat community expressed disappointment that the second trial did not service Hāwea Flat, reporting that several families had used the shuttle regularly during the first trial to come home in the afternoons (because of the limitations with the booking system, we do not have access to drop-off location numbers). The stop at Maungawera Corner was not an attractive option for the community due to its distance from the township – generally if people had driven that far, they felt they may as well keep driving.

“The hall would be a great option! The shuttle was so good for the kids after sport and we are gutted windmill corner is not a stop.”

“The difference coming along Kane Road and stopping at the Hawea Flat Hall would add 1.7km to the trip, which doesn't seem much considering a whole community has to drive over 6 km to access the bus.”

Extended service hours

We received feedback that extended operating hours (e.g. weekend and evenings) would suit more people – particularly families with children and those wishing to socialise or recreate in the evenings.

“A weekend day would be really helpful for the trial. My kids would love to be able to use it to go into town / friends houses on the weekends.”

“There is an interest for a pick up 5-5:30 from the Rec Centre. This is mainly aimed at teenagers needing a ride home after practices. They walk there from MAC after school with all their gear then need a ride home.”

CONCLUSION

The Community Shuttle Trial project supported the need – and progressed long-term planning – for public transport in the Upper Clutha, in particular for connecting outlying townships to Wānaka as populations grow. Despite the short time period and limited scope of both trials, patronage continued to grow over both three-month periods. A more substantial trial is needed to find out what patronage is achievable in the long-term.

While the need is consistent across community segments, the specific requirements of groups in outlying communities (e.g. commuters, seniors and youth), vary greatly. Their motivations for using public transport are also diverse – from financial to environmental to social. The scope of these trials was never to satisfy all of these requirements, but to experiment with different options and gather data. For example, by meeting the requirements of commuters with a faster service, the second trial was less useful to seniors travelling into town during the day or youth living in Hāwea Flat. A more comprehensive service with multiple vehicles servicing different areas would be able to satisfy much more of this need.

Regarding a service connecting areas within the Wānaka urban boundary, despite feedback that strongly indicated this during the first trial, our intra-city loops service in the second did not yield high patronage. Feedback around this has varied. For some, the frequency of the loops was not sufficient to travel to their destination and return home without a wait. The limited number of stops meant people in residential areas such as Beacon Point, Peninsula Bay or Meadowstone would have to walk, bike or drive some distance to access the shuttle. We expect multiple smaller loops servicing different areas of town continuously would have been better used.

With any community-led development initiative, it takes time to build understanding about new concepts, and even longer to change behaviour. While the express service offered a level of familiarity to users of the first trial, the intra-city loops were entirely new and traction was slower to build. We recognise that this is the reality of public transport initiatives across New Zealand, particularly in communities who have relied on their cars for so long. As one service user acknowledged, “Wānaka has some catching up to do having been without public transport for such a long time.” A longer-term and more comprehensive service would build on the awareness and behaviour change that the Community Shuttle Trial has started.

The trials demonstrated some of the benefits public transport would offer to our community. Users valued the service provided by Yello, from its reliability and timeliness to the friendliness of the drivers. The shuttle supported connection, both on the bus itself and by offering a new way for people to access work, recreation and community activities. In the face of increased living and fuel costs, the shuttle was an affordable way to travel. And finally, the shuttle proved itself to be a viable way for our community to contribute to decarbonisation, reduce VKTs and help tackle the climate crisis.

The Community Shuttle Trials have captured the attention of a community ripe for new options, and catalysed conversations about long-term solutions. At the time of writing, both QLDC and ORC have contracted transport experts to look into potential public transport improvements for the Upper Clutha – through the Wānaka Network Optimisation Single Stage Business Case and Regional Public Transport Plan respectively – and a Public and Active Travel Advisory Group, comprised of members from both Councils, has been established to advise on public and active transport matters. We look forward to working with our partners at ORC and QLDC in the coming months and years to keep moving toward the ultimate goal of a full public transport service in the Upper Clutha.

APPENDIX 1

VKT reduction – full calculations

Our calculations for VKT reductions caused by the second trial were based on data from a sample group of 22 survey respondents who used the express service.

Due to an early technical error whereby early users received a link to an older version of the survey, some additional questions related to distance and frequency of travel only received 30 full responses. 8 of these related to journeys on the intra-city loops service. Since we cannot estimate unique users of the intra-city loops service, these 8 responses were discounted from these calculations.

For each of the 17 respondents who would otherwise have travelled by car, we multiplied the distance of their recorded journeys by the number of times a week they said they would use the service to calculate their projected distance travelled over the three months of the trial. This is based on an assumption that they would take the same journey each time.

The total of these projected distances gives us a VKT reduction for the sample group of 10,804kms.

We then applied this to the unique service user number of 100. If 77% of the group would otherwise have travelled by car, we can estimate that VKT reduction for the light vehicle fleet for 77 service users would be approximately 48,935.8 kms over three months.

Sample group data

Origin	Destination	Single/return	Alternative	How often?	Kms	Projected distance
Hāwea	Wānaka	Return	By car	2-4 times a week	31	1,116
AT	Wānaka	Return	By car	2-4 times a week	10	360
AT	Wānaka	Return	By car	Once a week	10	120
Wānaka	Hāwea	Single	By car	One-off	15.5	15.5
Hāwea	Wānaka	Return	Would not have travelled	One-off	31	
Hāwea	Wānaka	Return	By car	2-4 times a week	31	1116
Wānaka	Hāwea	Single	Would not have travelled	One-off	15.5	
Hāwea	Wānaka	Single	By car	2-4 times a week	15.5	558
Wānaka	Hāwea	Single	Walk/bike	1-3 times a month	15.5	

Wānaka	Hāwea	Single	By car	One-off	15.5	15.5
Hāwea	Wānaka	Return	By car	2-4 times a week	31	1116
Hāwea	Wānaka	Return	By car	2-4 times a week	31	1116
AT	Wānaka	Single	Walk/bike	2-4 times a week	5	
Hāwea	Wānaka	Return	By car	Every day	31	1860
Hāwea	Wānaka	Return	Would not have travelled	One-off	15.5	
Hāwea	Wānaka	Single	By car	Once a week	15.5	186
AT	Wānaka	Single	By car	2-4 times a week	5	180
AT	Wānaka	Return	By car	Every day	10	600
Hāwea	Wānaka	Return	By car	2-4 times a week	31	1116
Hāwea	Wānaka	Single	By car	1-3 times a month	15.5	93
Hāwea	Wānaka	Return	By car	2-4 times a week	31	1116
AT	Wānaka	Return	By car	Once a week	10	120