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Report

Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership Eco Tourism Bus Feasibility Study

Eco Tourism Bus Feasibility Study

Client: Meldreth, Melbourn, Shepreth and Foxton
Community Interest Company

Reference: PC6808-ITP-XX-XX-RP-X-1

Status: Final/1

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Project related



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Cover image: Thameslink train at Shepreth Station. Retrieved 2024, from <https://meldrethsheprethfoxtonrail.org.uk/>

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1 Executive Summary

ITP was commissioned to undertake a feasibility study for a local bus service to link visitor attractions to railway stations on behalf of the Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership.

This project was made possible through funding from the Community Rail Development Fund, administered by Community Rail Network on behalf of the Department for Transport and the Green to Our Core Fund administered by South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Methodology

Our methodology sought to determine current arrangements for access to the sites by public transport via a desk-based review of timetabled rail and bus services and routes. Conversations with representatives of each tourism destination explored: views regarding demand for sustainable travel to the sites; where existing visitors are travelling from; the issues in providing access between public transport and the sites themselves; average dwell times at the sites; and thoughts regarding ticketing and discounts for those travelling by public transport.

Discussions with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) officers explored whether the county's new Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service – Tiger on Demand – might offer a potential solution to improving access to the tourism destinations included within the study.

Discussions with bus and community transport operators considered options for improving access to the three sites, whether via revisions to existing services or the provision of new services. Discussions with rail operators explored the scope for marketing and communications to promote access to the sites via integrated bus and rail provision at the two rail stations.

Consideration was given to potential logistical challenges presented by the operating environment, such as:

- Low latent demand, with existing local bus contracts requiring significant subsidy.
- Scheduling potentially low frequency bus services to meet rail timetables.
- Limitations to station accessibility and facilities for bus waiting environments.

This feasibility study therefore set out:

- A service timetable and route for a potential pilot service.
- Costings and considerations on feasibility of operation.
- Considerations for branding, marketing and ticketing of the service.

Key Findings

A local bus service connecting IWM Duxford, Shepreth Wildlife Park, and National Trust Wimpole Estate with railway stations at Shepreth and Whittlesford Parkway has potential to make these destinations more attractive propositions for day trips from Cambridge and London. The bus service could encourage new groups of visitors to these sites, including those without access to a car, or young people, for example to take advantage of new volunteering schemes at IWM Duxford.



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Options including building on existing home to school provision; revising existing scheduled bus provision; and building on the recently launched TIGER on Demand DRT service were ruled out during discussions with stakeholders.

It is anticipated that subsidy of some form would be required to operate both a pilot, and any service in the future. The scale of this subsidy would depend on the revenue collected from fares on the service. A pilot would enable effective monitoring of costs and patronage.



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2 Introduction and Approach

ITP was commissioned by the Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership (MSF CRP) to undertake a feasibility study to identify and explore options for connecting three local visitor attractions with two local railway stations. This project was made possible through funding from the Community Rail Development Fund, administered by Community Rail Network on behalf of the Department for Transport and the Green to Our Core Fund administered by South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The three local visitor sites, which are major tourist attractions in the area, were:

- Imperial War Museum Duxford
- National Trust Wimpole Estate
- Shepreth Wildlife Park.

The two railway stations included in this study were:

- Shepreth
- Whittlesford Parkway.

These sites are identified in Figure 1.

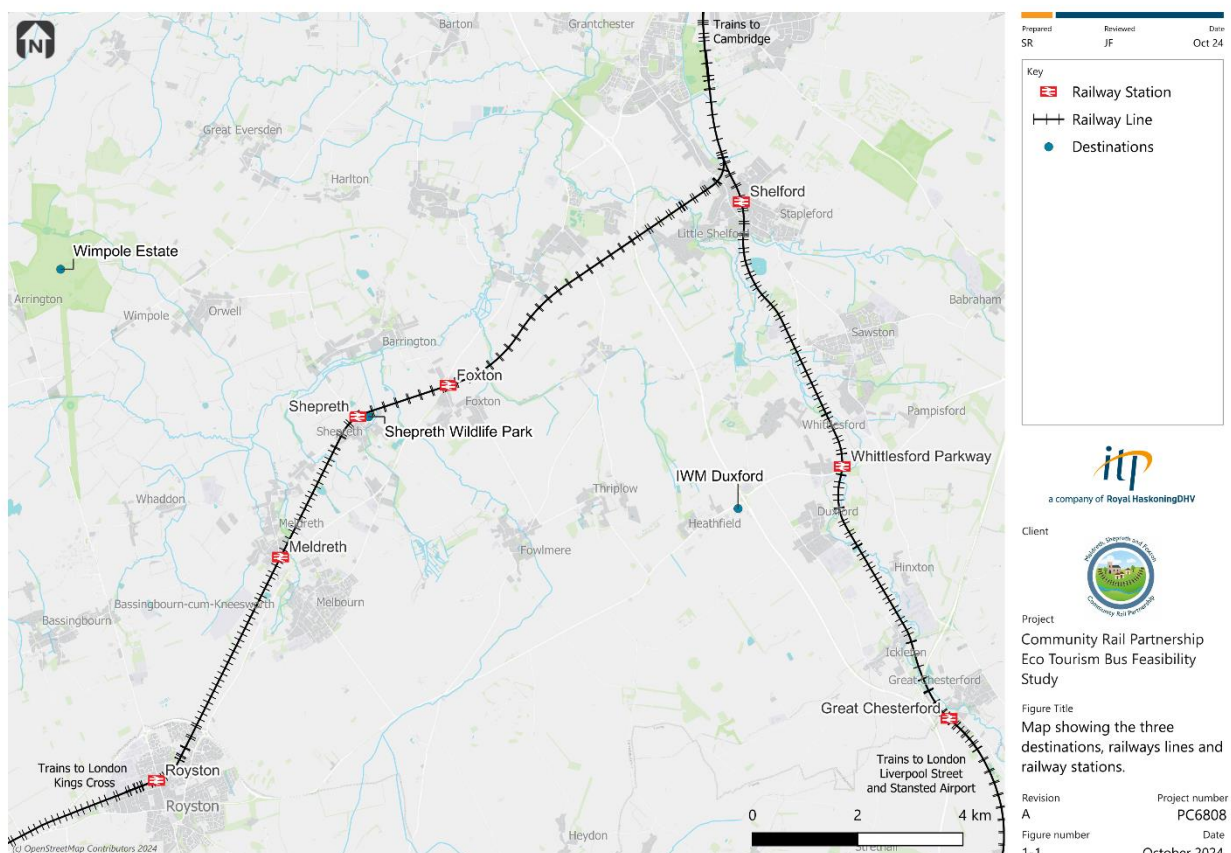


Figure 1 - Area map showing the three destination sites, and local railway lines and stations.



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2.1 Bridging Gaps with Community Rail

The Department for Transport ‘Community rail development strategy’¹ notes how the government will support community rail organisations to deliver the strategy’s key pillars:

- providing a voice for the community
- promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel
- bringing communities together, supporting diversity and inclusion
- supporting social and economic development.



The strategy also notes:

Community rail organisations will provide a voice for their local community through:

- drawing on local insight to understand and act as an **advocate for local people’s views and needs** to the rail industry and inform decisions about services and infrastructure **to improve local transport provision.**

Community rail organisations will support social and economic development through:

- **promoting and enhancing tourism and leisure travel by train**, supporting small businesses and social enterprise development, **by attracting new customers to businesses around the railways** and setting up railway-related enterprises.

Community rail organisations will promote sustainable and healthy travel through:

- collaboration and **partnership working with other transport providers**, authorities and organisations to **develop integrated transport systems around stations that reflect the community’s needs.**
- the provision by community rail organisations of **‘last mile’ information and support at stations**, to help passengers make their onward journey from the station.
- **encouraging modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport by promoting** cycling and walking routes and **public transport options to and from stations, and promoting rail as a key part of sustainable and healthy journeys.**



The Community Rail Partnership already supports various initiatives to boost the local economy and attract visitors to the area, as shown in Appendix A1.

¹ Connecting communities with the railways: the community rail development strategy



The study also considered how it might be possible to ‘create equitable destinations’ using public transport, in line with recommendations from a Travel Foundation report entitled ‘How to manage and distribute tourism’s value to better serve communities’.²

“Transport networks created for tourists can also benefit commuters. Tourists using local services can help reduce ticket prices. However, when public transport is focused on providing access to tourist attractions, it might not address the needs of residents, especially underserved communities whose neighbourhoods are usually not part of tourism itineraries. Ensuring equitable public transport is also complicated by overcrowding during peak seasons”

2.2 Goals of the study

Building on the success of existing Community Rail Partnership initiatives such as leaflets and walking trails to local points of interest, investigating options for a dedicated bus service represented an opportunity to:

- link attractions further afield from the stations, and
- foster a more cohesive and connected community, ensuring visitors and residents can more easily explore the wider area in a sustainable and convenient way.

The initiative aligned with the MSF CRPs ongoing commitments to promote sustainable travel whilst supporting local tourism, ultimately contributing to the economic and social strength of the region.

2.3 Methodology

Our methodology sought to determine current arrangements for access to the sites by public transport via a desk-based review of timetabled rail and bus services and routes. Conversations with representatives of each tourism destination explored: views regarding demand for sustainable travel to the sites; where existing visitors are travelling from; the issues in providing access between public transport and the sites themselves; average dwell times at the sites; and thoughts regarding ticketing and discounts for those travelling by public transport. Mapping of indices of deprivation (IMD), car availability and other demographics across the area sought to identify those whose residents are less likely to have access to private transport, or where population density might support a local bus service.

Discussions with CPCA officers explored whether the county’s new Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service – Tiger on Demand – might offer a potential solution to improving access to the tourism destinations included within the study. Discussions with bus and community transport operators considered options for improving access to the three sites, whether via revisions to existing services or the provision of new services. Discussions with rail operators explored the scope for marketing and communications to promote access to the sites via integrated bus and rail provision at the two rail stations.

² [*Here’s how tourism can better serve communities - Travel Foundation*](#)

2.4 Key Questions

This feasibility study therefore sought to identify:



Figure 2 - Feasibility study aims

3 Tourism Destinations

3.1 An Introduction to Wimpole Estate

The Wimpole Estate, spread over 2,500 acres, is managed by the National Trust and features a broad range of activities and sights, including:

- 17th-century mansion at the heart of the estate
- Vibrant walled kitchen garden, parterre and winding pleasure grounds
- Acres of ancient landscape parkland with abundant wildlife, flora and fauna, a Gothic folly, multi-user trail and miles of walks
- Home Farm, a model for sustainable farming practices and home to many rare-breed animals including Shire horses, pigs, sheep, cows and goats
- The Old Rectory café, gift shop, and second-hand bookshop.

The site is family-friendly, with activities planned regularly³ throughout the year.



Figure 3 - Wimpole Estate Mansion³

Ticket prices for entrance to the site are presented below:

Table 1 - Admission costs for National trust Wimpole Estate

On the day ticket costs	Gardens and Parkland (including gift aid)	Whole Estate – Hall, Garden, Parkland and Farm (including gift aid)
Adult	£9.00 (£9.90)	£18.00 (£19.80)
Child	£4.50 (£4.95)	£9.00 (£9.90)
Family	£22.50 (£24.75)	£45.00 (£49.50)
One adult family	£13.50 (£14.85)	£27.00 (£29.70)

³ [Days out with kids | Wimpole | National Trust](#)



The National Trust also offers membership options for yearly or lifetime periods which allow entrance to over 500 places, free parking at most National Trust car parks, plus other benefits. Some membership options, alongside the opening times of the site are presented below:

Table 2 - National Trust Membership Costs

Membership Costs (1 year)	
Adult	£91.20
Young Persons (18-25)	£45.60
Child	£12.00
Family (2 adults)	£159.00
Family (1 adult)	£99.00

Table 3 - Opening times of National Trust Wimpole Estate

Opening Times	
Hall	12:00 – 15:30
Garden	09:30 – 17:00
Parkland	09:30 – 18:00
Visitor Welcome Centre	09:30 – 16:30

Discussions with the Wimpole Estate team highlighted various entrances to the site, such as via Old Wimpole Road to the east from Orwell, or via the A1198 Ermine Way from Arrington. There are also various public rights of way that bisect the Estate. The preferred entrance is via Hardwick Gate at the visitor centre at the northern end of the car park.

The vast majority (98%) of visitors drive to the site, with free parking available to all. There are 700 car parking spaces in the car parks at Hardwick Gate, with an additional overflow field used between 6-10 times a year when accessible as this can be restricted based on weather conditions.

Although there are several local bus services that serve the surrounding areas, it was noted that the access to the site from Arrington or Orwell is not well suited to walkers, for example there are no pedestrian facilities along Old Wimpole Road. For this reason, and to take visitors to the facilities at Hardwick Gate, any proposed bus service would need to be connected to the visitor centre at the northern edge of the car park.

The audience of the site is primarily National Trust members, who comprise approximately 68% of the 360,000 visitors to the site per year.

Whilst 48% of the audience is senior, 30% is young families, and 14% is comprised of mature independents. The high young family segment is due in part to the Home Farm on site. The Estate team also noted a large number of regular visitors.

The busiest times at the site are between 11:00 and 15:00. The busiest periods noted were school half terms, bank holidays, and school summer holidays. Lambing at the site is also a significant attraction



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around the end of April and May. At Christmas the lights at the Estate bring an additional 100,000 visitors to the site. This event takes place in the evenings between 16:30 and 20:00 and attracts a high proportion of local visitors.

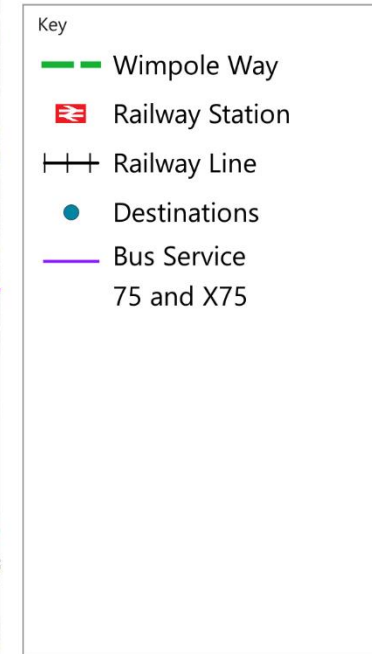
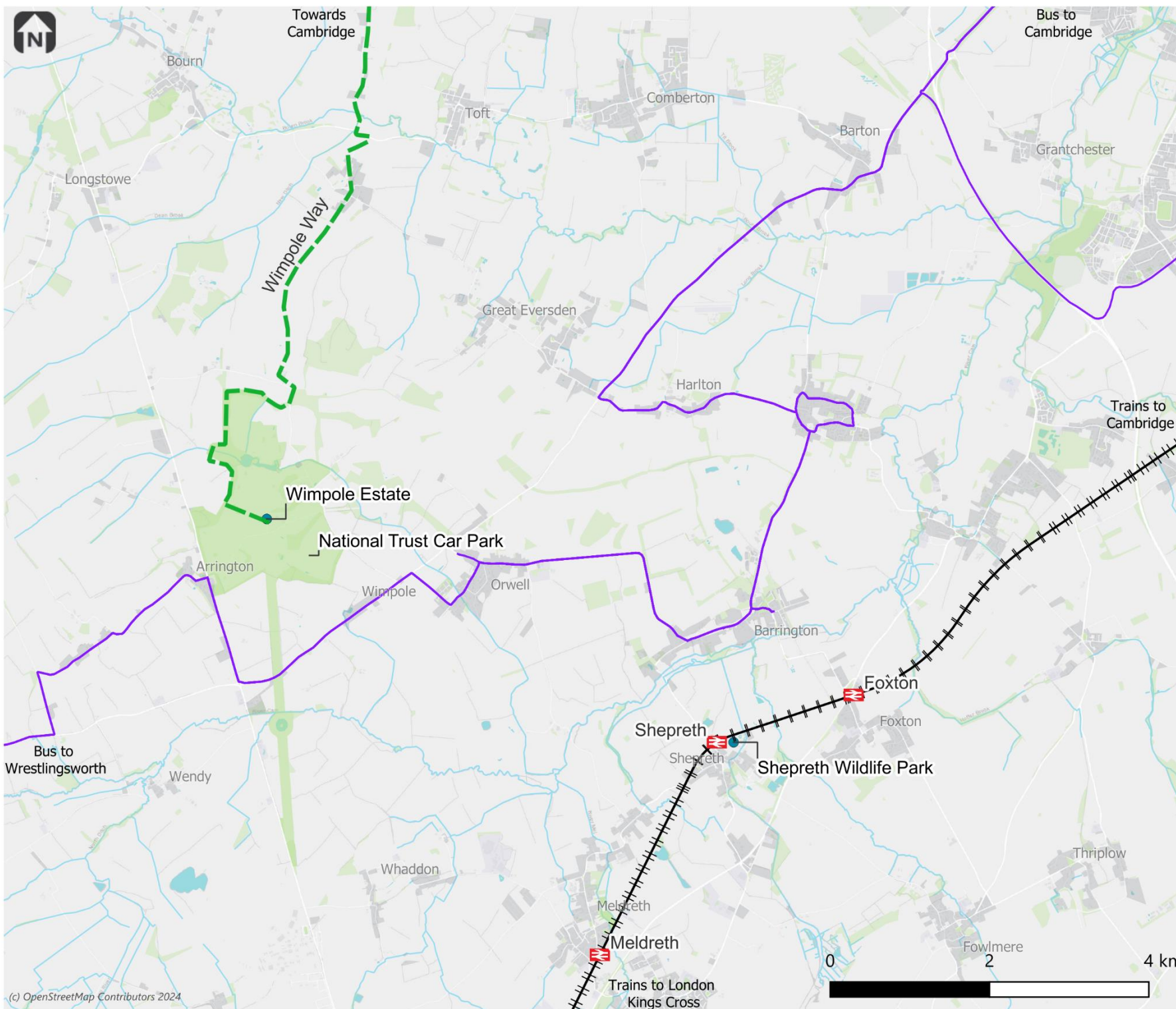
Dwell time at the site tends to vary, with 25% of people visiting the core facilities in less than 2 hours, 50% of people visiting for between 2 and 4 hours, 20% of people between 4 and 6 hours, and 5% spending more than 6 hours at the site.

In discussions with the Estate team, the main benefits of a potential bus service were seen to be engaging and connecting with the local community and improving access to the site by sustainable modes due to the low level of existing connectivity, evidenced by 98% of visitors arriving by car. Key priorities were linking the service to the Hardwick Gate to ensure visitors are brought to the best location on site for information, and to the ticketing office. This also offers the highest quality waiting area compared to the roadside noting the lack of pedestrian facilities.

Wimpole Estate staff suggested marketing the bus service on their social media channels would be feasible, as marketing for the site itself tends to be more event specific.

Discussions with the team at Wimpole Estate explored the types of promotions that the National Trust runs elsewhere to encourage people to travel via sustainable modes, and what might be appropriate for the site. In the context of a high proportion of visitors to the site being National Trust members, a ticketing promotion was not felt to offer the same reach as other incentives. It was highlighted that at some other National Trust sites, a free cup of tea is offered to visitors travelling by sustainable modes, and that a similar approach could be offered to users of the bus service.

Figure 4 shows the Connectivity of Wimpole Estate, National Trust Car Park, Wimpole Way and the route of bus service 75 and X75.



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Client



Project

Community rail Partnership
Eco Tourism Bus Feasibility
Study

Figure title

Wimpole Estate, National
Trust Car Park, Wimpole
Way and the 75 bus route

Revision

A

Project number

PC6808

Figure number

3-1

Date

October 2024

3.1.1 Connectivity of Wimpole Estate

Whilst the website for Wimpole Estate refers to sustainable modes of transport to access the site, these are currently lengthy and inconvenient when compared to the car. Table 4 identifies the current transport information available on the National Trust Wimpole Estate website; the modes are presented in the same order as on the website. The comments column provides some practical narrative on using each mode.

Table 4 - Connectivity of Wimpole Estate

	'Getting here' information available online ⁴	Comments
	Our new entrance and free car park is accessed from Old Wimpole Road, approximately 500yds nearer the A603. Please look out for signs directing you to the entrance.	Parking is free in the large visitor car park.
	Wimpole Way from Cambridge	This route connects Wimpole Estate to Cambridge, over 20.7km (12.9miles) of farmland and villages. ⁵ Shepreth station does not connect to Wimpole Way.
	Shepreth 5 miles. Taxi service from Royston 8 miles	Accessing the site from Shepreth station by foot could take around an hour and a half and footpaths are not appropriate.
	Service 75 from Cambridge drops off passengers at Arrington (1 mile from Wimpole) or Orwell (2 miles from Wimpole).	The timetable for service 75 is infrequent, stopping at Arrington only twice per day in each direction, Monday to Saturday. Services C2 and 15 also pass nearby, albeit infrequently. (See Appendix A4)
	National Trust-permitted cycle path to entrance from Orwell (A603)	There is no National Cycle Network between Shepreth and Orwell. ⁶

⁴ [Wimpole Estate | Cambridgeshire | National Trust](#)

⁵ [Wimpole Way - LDWA Long Distance Paths](#)

⁶ [Detailed maps & routes to explore across the UK | OS Maps](#)

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Table 5 provides further detail regarding the local bus services around Wimpole Estate.

Table 5 - Bus services local to Wimpole Estate

Service	Days of Operation	Route Description	Bus Operator	Frequency	Estimated distance to the site	Notes
75	Monday to Saturday	Cambridge to Wrestlingsworth via Orwell	A2B Bus and Coach	Irregular. Bus service from Cambridge every 2 hours, calling at Arrington (Church Lane) at 14:44 and 18:30. Bus service from Wrestlingsworth, the service calls at Arrington at 07:00, and from Croydon (The Queen Adelaide) at 09:37.	1km (from Arrington)	The bus service is infrequent and poorly timed for access to the site, especially from Cambridge.
15	Wednesday	Haslingfield to Royston	A2B Bus and Coach	One return journey per day. From Haslingfield to Orwell the bus arrives at 09:25, leaving again at 13:27. From Royston, the bus arrives at Orwell at 13:27, but there is no return journey.	1km (from Arrington)	The bus service is infrequent and poorly timed for access to the site, especially from Royston where the service calls at the railway and bus stations.
C2	Thursday	St Neots to The Hatleys	CG Myall and Son	From Hatley to St Neots at 9:00 and St Neots to Hatley at 13:00	1km (from Arrington)	The bus service is infrequent and poorly timed for access to the site.



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3.2 An Introduction to Imperial War Museum (IWM) Duxford

The Imperial War Museum at Duxford is housed in a series of hangars across the site, including:

- AirSpace, Flying Aircraft, Air and Sea, Battle of Britain, Conservation in Action, the 1940s Operations Room, the American Air Museum, and Land Warfare exhibitions.
- Playground and Learning Centre
- Simulator
- Tank Arena
- Royal Anglian Regiment Museum and Memorial
- Café and restaurants
- Shop.



Figure 5 - Imperial War Museum Duxford

The Imperial War Museums have five sites across the country including three London sites: Churchill War Rooms, HMS Belfast, and IWM London; alongside IWM North in Manchester and IWM Duxford. IWM Duxford is a unique site in both the size of the site, and the fact that it is still a live airfield today. Alongside the museum, IWM Duxford hosts large air shows through June to October, mainly at weekends and in the evening. Flying partners fly their vehicles as part of their tenancy at IWM Duxford. Visitors tend to see the site as 'outdoor' due to both the need to walk between the hangars, and the hope of catching glimpses of aircraft on the airfield. As a result of this, and the popular flying days, 46% of visitors to the site each year visit between April and August.

Discussions with the site representative confirmed that peak months are April to August with approximately 25,000 to 45,000 visitors each month (and up to 3,000 a day). The rest of the year is off-peak with 10,000 to 20,000 visitors monthly. The average dwell time at the site is around 4 hours.

In 2023, IWM Duxford welcomed 381,650 visitors, consisting of 252,276 general admissions, 95,644 for flying events (such as airshows) and 33,730 school children. In 2024, members accounted for around 25% of general admissions. IWM Duxford currently has high numbers of repeat visitors (47% repeating visits within 5 years), and disabled visitors (24%). Year-on-year however, there is a gradual but sustained downward trend in visitor numbers, for example in 2007, IWM welcomed 75,319 more visitors than in 2023. The site has only recently reached its pre-Covid visitor numbers.

The 2024 audience growth calculations for the site identified 1,843,000 potential visitors within 90 minutes' drive time. Although 31% have an awareness of IWM Duxford, only 9% actively intend to visit and just 1% have visited. Family audiences are identified as an emerging segment and represent 54% of the 2024 audience. Data gathered via their 2023/24 exit surveys showed family groups' experiences were not as positive as adult groups, with families less likely to recommend a visit and reporting lower value for money.

In recent audience research conducted by the site, visitors cited a lack of a coherent narrative, passive displays, and a perception among non-visitors that IWM Duxford is for aviation enthusiasts. It was



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considered that the visitor experience is repetitive, and a second visit is often felt to be unnecessary if a visitor isn't an aircraft enthusiast. The 'Transforming Duxford Masterplan' has been conceived as an ambitious response to these challenges and to make the most of the opportunities of appealing to new audiences. By the completion of the masterplan in 2032/33, IWM Duxford is forecasting general admission to rise from 252,276 to 375,620.

As well as new exhibitions, several infrastructure improvements will seek to enhance the visitor experience on site, such as formalising parking arrangements to increase capacity at days when overflow parking is required and the creation of a substantial children's play zone.

The voices, experiences and ambitions of young people are an integral part of the Masterplan. IWM Duxford wants to better understand its resonance with younger generations and provide unique opportunities to overcome barriers to cultural participation by helping them find their voice and confidence in a supportive environment.

IWM's 'Youth Volunteer Programme' will recruit 150 14-17 years olds over the next two years, adding to a volunteer force of already 300 adult volunteers on site. It is believed this will be at a scale and ambition that surpasses other UK museums.

IWM's 'Young Producers Scheme' will be designed to enable young adults to shape and develop programmes and content at IWM for their peers and their families, while developing their understanding of vocational opportunities in museums.

Both these schemes will require large numbers of young people to attend the site. The lack of existing public transport links is felt to be a barrier for the recruitment and access to the scheme.

Engagement with the site included discussion regarding promotions or offers for discounted access or other benefits to promote the service. At this stage, although IWM Duxford cannot commit to offering any incentives, it was raised that they may consider charging for parking on site which could make public transport more attractive. The site already has a suitable layby for buses and coaches with a shelter outside the visitor entrance (see Figure 6). This could be used to ensure speedy access to the site.



Figure 6 - Bus layby at IWM Duxford, showing the bus shelter and visitor entrance behind the bus. Note, this image is dated (October 2010), and the service 7 no longer calls at the site. © Google Maps 2024.



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Table 7 - Admission costs for IWM Duxford

General Admission Costs (from July 2025) (including donation)	
Adult	£28.15 (£31.00)
Child (5 to 15)	£14.05 (£15.50)
Child (under 5)	Free
Concessions Senior (65+) / Student / Disabled	£25.35 (£27.60)
Carer	Free

Table 6 - Opening times and Flying Days at IWM Duxford

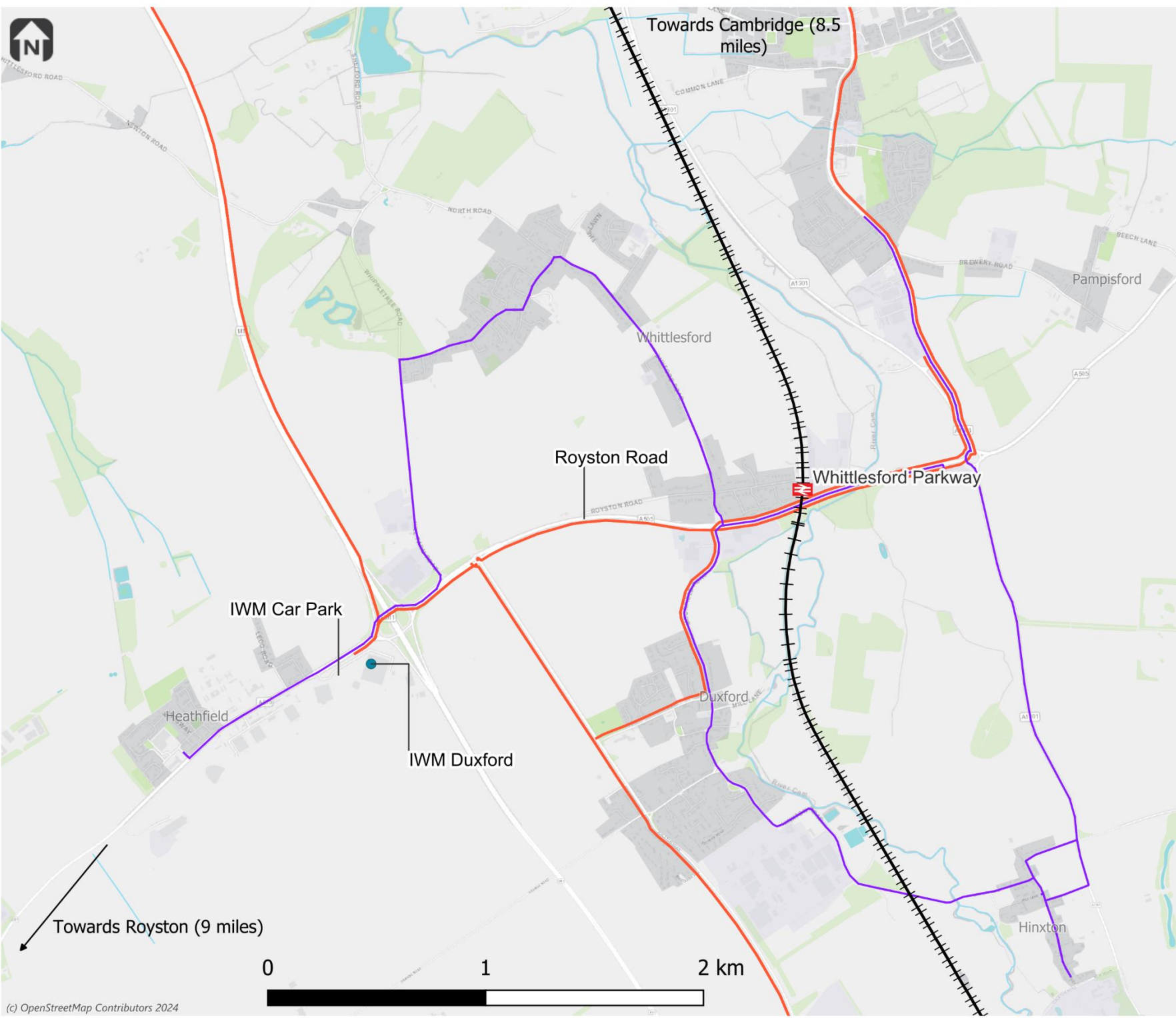
Opening Times	
General	10am to 4pm, last entry 3pm. Open every day except 24 to 26 December.
Flying Days 2025	
Duxford Summer Air Show	Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 June 2025
Battle of Britain Air Show	Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 September 2025
Duxford Flying Evening	Saturday 16 August 2025
Duxford Flying Finale	Saturday 4 October 2025

Annual IWM memberships are also available, allowing free access to the three charging IWM sites (IWM Duxford, Churchill War Rooms and HMS Belfast), alongside benefits such as 10% discount in shops, and a 10% discount on Duxford Air Show tickets & free entry to Duxford Flying Days.

Table 8 – Imperial War Museum Membership Costs

Membership Costs (1 year)	
Individual Adult	From £60 per year
Joint Adult	From £99 per year
One Adult Family One adult and up to 6 children aged between 5 and 15 (under 5s go free)	From £78 per year
Two Adult Family Two adults and up to 6 children aged between 5 and 15 (under 5s go free)	From £126 per year

Figure 7 shows the connectivity of Imperial War Museum Duxford, the IWM car park, Whittlesford Parkway and local bus services (7a and 132).



(c) OpenStreetMap Contributors 2024

Figure 7 – Connectivity of Imperial War Museum Duxford, the IWM car park, Whittlesford Parkway and local bus services (7a and 132)

Prepared

SR

Reviewed

JF

Date

Oct 24

Key

Railway Station

Railway Line

Destinations

Bus Service 7a

Bus Service 132

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Client

Project

Community Rail Partnership
Eco Tourism Bus Feasibility
Study

Figure title

IWM Car Park, Railway
Station and Bus Routes

Revision

A

Project number

PC6808

Figure number

Figure X-X

Date

October 24



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3.2.1 Connectivity of Imperial War Museum (IWM) Duxford

Table 9 identifies the current transport information available on the IWM Duxford website; the modes are presented in the same order as on the website. The comments column provides some practical narrative on using each mode

Table 9 - Connectivity of Imperial War Museum Duxford

	'Getting here' information available online ⁷	Comments
	The nearest train stations to IWM Duxford are: Whittlesford Parkway, Royston, and Cambridge. There are taxi ranks at Royston and Cambridge, or take the 7A bus from Whittlesford Parkway (Monday to Saturday only).	The site is located 1.7 miles from Whittlesford Parkway and 8 miles from Royston & Cambridge Stations. The site advised that the taxi journey between IWM Duxford and Whittlesford Parkway is a short journey of 6 minutes and would not cost more than £10 one-way.
	IWM Duxford is south of Cambridge at Junction 10 of the M11 motorway, less than 50 miles from Central London and approximately 40 minutes from the M25. IWM Duxford is easily accessible from the A1, A14, M1 and the M11. There is free parking for customers of IWM Duxford (with the exception of special event days).	Parking is free in the large visitor car park.
	Monday to Saturday There are no weekday bus services directly to and from IWM Duxford. A2B Bus and Coach Ltd operate service 7a which picks up/drops off at Heathfield, Woburn Place and Heathfield A505, Ledo Road, close to the museum. Sundays and bank holidays Myall's Coaches operates service 132 from Cambridge Station to IWM Duxford every Sunday and across bank holidays.	Service 7a operates once per day to Heathfield in each direction from Trumpington – Thriplow via Whittlesford and Sawston. Service 132 serves the car park of the site on Sundays and bank holidays only, 4 times per day from Cambridge, and 5 times per day from Saffron Walden via Great Chesterford Station, Sawston and Trumpington.
	No walking information given. Bicycle racks are available in the public car park to the left of the main entrance where visitors are welcome to store their bicycle during their visit	The site is situated off the A505, which has a footpath on the northern edge, and pedestrian crossing to access the site. It should be noted that there are no crossing facilities on the roundabout with the M11 and therefore the walking/cycling journey between Whittlesford Parkway and IWM Duxford cannot be recommended as a safe route.

⁷ [How To Get To Imperial War Museum Duxford | IWM](#)



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Table 10 provides further detail regarding the local bus services around Imperial War Museum Duxford.

Table 10 - Bus Services local to Imperial War Museum Duxford

Service	Days of Operation	Route Description	Bus Operator	Frequency	Estimated distance to the site	Notes
7a	Monday to Saturday	Sawston Village College - Hinxton	A2B Bus and Coach	Infrequent, with one or two service runs in either direction per day.	0.6km (from Heathfield Way)	The service does stop opposite the site off the A505, calling at 'Heathfield, opp Garage' twice per day. Originating at Trumpington Park and Ride, the earliest arrival is 13:52, meaning the bus service is infrequent and poorly timed for access to the site.
132	Sunday	Cambridge to Saffron Walden via Duxford	CG Myall and Son	Every 2 hours	0.1km (IWM Duxford car park)	This service calls at the Imperial War Museum (Hangar 1), with the earliest arrival from Cambridge at 10:40, and the latest departure at 17:41. Although infrequent, this does present a viable method of travel from Cambridge or from Shelford, where the bus calls 0.2 miles from the Station (5 minute walk).

3.3 An Introduction to Shepreth Wildlife Park

Shepreth Wildlife Park is an 8-acre zoo in the centre of Shepreth. The park offers:

- A variety of animals including Tigers, Lemurs, Otters, Red Pandas, and Meerkats
- A series of keeper talks throughout the day
- Discovery Centre, and tropical, nocturnal, tortoise and bug houses
- Hedgehog hospital charity
- Café
- Outside play area
- PlayBarn Interactive Play
- Gift shop.



Figure 8 - Map of Shepreth Wildlife Park

Discussions with the Shepreth Wildlife Park team highlighted the importance of its proximity to Shepreth Station, with between 7 and 10% of its visitors arriving by train. The walking route from the station is fully accessible and takes around two minutes through the car park. It was noted that very few visitors walk or cycle to the site.

With around 100,000 visitors per year, and a site capacity of 800, the 150-space car park often reaches capacity, with visitors also making use of the nearby village hall car park which has an additional 50 spaces. Both car parks offer free parking, however there is a discount on the entry price available to visitors who travel to the site via Shepreth station.

Ticket prices for entrance to the site are presented below:

Table 11 - Admission costs for Shepreth Wildlife Park

On the day ticket costs	General
Adult	£14.50
Child	£12.50
Concession	£13.50
Other concessions NHS / Forces, Disabled visitors, Carers for disabled visitors, Shepreth Resident, Shepreth Train Ticket Holders.	£10.00
East Anglia Zoo Member Pass Holder	30% off



The Wildlife Park also offers yearly membership options which allow unlimited entry to the site for a year, presented below:

Table 12 – Membership costs for Shepreth Wildlife Park

Membership Costs (1 year)	
Adult	£80.00
Child	£60.00
Concession	£50.00
Disabled Person or Carers	£40.00

Table 13 - Opening times for Shepreth Wildlife Park

Opening Times	
General Opening Times	10.00 – 16.00
Last Entry	15.00

Although there is a local bus service (service 26) that serves the surrounding areas, it was noted that it operated infrequently and was not used by many visitors. It was suggested that any potential future bus service to the site should wait on Station Road for both Shepreth Station and the Wildlife Park.

The audience for the site is primarily families, whilst the over 60s represent less than 15% of the audience. The catchment of the park was generally thought to be around an hour's drive, including Stevenage and Cambridge. As well as regular visitors, there are membership options, and discounted rates for members of 'East Anglia Zoos' - a consortium including other local zoos.

The busiest times at the site are approximately between 11:00 and 13:00, with the site largely quiet by around 15:00. The busiest periods noted were school half terms, bank holidays, and school summer holidays, whilst the period between October to February was quieter due to the weather-dependent nature of the site. Between November and February, the site is closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. School visits tend to peak between March and July, with around 10,000 students visiting each year.

Dwell time at the site tends to vary, with most people staying for a few hours. The attraction is promoted as a half day visit.

Most people buy tickets at the site on the day, and around 10% book online in advance. This is partly due to the weather-dependent nature of the site.

In discussions with the Wildlife Park team, the main benefits of a potential bus service were considered to be connecting with the local community in the east towards Whittlesford Parkway, as a result of the existing good level of access from Shepreth Station. It was noted that there is signage at Shepreth station to welcome people to 'the home of Shepreth Wildlife Park', and that there are also audio-visual announcements on the train.



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Shepreth Wildlife Park staff suggested they could market the bus service on their social media channels, and that marketing along the railway lines would be beneficial. Historically the Wildlife Park was advertised at stations along the Shepreth line, however this is not currently the case.

The types of promotions that might be appropriate for the Wildlife Park were also discussed, and it was agreed that they could incentivise travel in the same way as is done with users of the railway line at Shepreth, with a discounted entry price. This could be offered using Whittlesford Parkway train tickets, or a bus ticket.

The planned Park and Ride close to the M11 was also discussed as offering the opportunity to connect with a potential new bus service to connect to the site. East-West Rail and the new station being constructed at Cambridge South were also discussed as developments with potential to attract new visitors.

Figure 9 shows the connectivity of Shepreth Wildlife Park, the car park, Shepreth station and the local bus service 26.



Key

 Railway Station

 Railway Line

 Destinations

 Bus Service 26



(c) OpenStreetMap Contributors 2024

Figure 9 - Connectivity of Shepreth Wildlife Park, the car park, Shepreth station and the local bus service 26



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Client



Project

Community Rail Partnership
Eco Tourism Bus Feasibility
Study

Figure title

Shepreth Wildlife Park, Car
Park, Bus Route and Railway
Station

Revision

A

Project number

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Figure number

Figure X-X

Date

October 24

3.3.1 Connectivity of Shepreth Wildlife Park

Table 14 identifies the current transport information available on the Shepreth Wildlife Park website; the modes are presented in the same order as on the website. The comments column provides some practical narrative on using each mode

Table 14 - Connectivity of Shepreth Wildlife Park

	'Getting here' information available online ⁸	Comments
	Information given from Cambridge, and from London via the A1 and M11.	Car park is located off Station Road. The small free car park is situated adjacent to the free station car park.
	We are a 2-minute walk from Shepreth Railway Station. Regular Great Northern services run to Shepreth – just a few minutes from either Cambridge or Royston. We offer a discounted entry price of £10 per train user on production of your valid train ticket to Shepreth at our reception.	The site has a brown tourism sign from the road, and access from the station is particularly good due to the proximity of the station and Wildlife Park sites.
  	Further information for car-free visitors can be found at Good Journey ⁹	The Wildlife Park is situated in the centre of Shepreth, within short walking distance from the High Street and railway station. There is no National Cycle Network in the area. Service 26 ¹⁰ is noted, with the Wildlife Park a short 5-minute walk from the Shepreth High Street stops. This service stops at Shepreth once per day in either direction from Royston and Cambridge.

⁸ [Wimpole Estate | Cambridgeshire | National Trust](#)

⁹ [Good Journey – Getting to Shepreth Wildlife Park Car-free](#)

¹⁰ [Service%2026%2003.06.24-4.pdf | A2B Bus & Coach Ltd.](#)

Project related



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Table 15 provides further detail regarding the local bus service to Shepreth Wildlife Park.

Table 15 - Bus Services local to Shepreth Wildlife Park

Service	Days of Operation	Route Description	Bus Operator	Frequency	Estimated distance to the site	Notes
26	Monday to Saturday	Cambridge to Royston via Melbourne, Meldreth, Shepreth, Fowlmere and Foxton.	A2B Bus and Coach	Service operates roughly every 1- 2 hours, calling at Shepreth for one return journey from Royston per day.	0.6km (from Meldreth Road)	Connects Foxton, Meldreth and Royston stations. Service connects towns, including those with rail services to Shepreth.

4 Engagement with transport providers

Interviews were conducted with transport providers in the area, including local bus operators and train operating companies. Meetings with local bus operators aimed to:

- consider options for diverting existing services
- ascertain interest in operating a dedicated bus service
- explore likely costs of different models of provision

Meetings with train operating companies aimed to:

- explore options for promoting the bus service to rail passengers
- explore thoughts regarding ticketing options to promote sustainable access to the sites

4.1 Greater Anglia (managers of Whittlesford Parkway station)

Discussions with the Partnerships Manager and the Stakeholder, Community and Customer Engagement Manager at Greater Anglia highlighted the feasibility of including poster boards and directional signage at the station. Funding would be required to support this.

Accessibility of the station was discussed, including the history of the station having a road crossing over the tracks. This has since been removed, creating a divide between Station Road West and Station Road East. Although access to the platforms is level, access across the platforms is via a footbridge and the alternative accessible route is circuitous. There is community desire for installation of a lift, however Greater Anglia have been unsuccessful in funding rounds with the Department of Transport (DfT) thus far.

Although it might be possible to access both platforms with a bus service, the western side is particularly constrained, and a three-point turn might prove difficult in this location. On the eastern side, there is more scope for a vehicle to access the large car park, although it was felt that it may prove difficult to navigate a vehicle around the car park if the parking was busy.

Audio-visual announcements to advertise the service and upcoming departures are also feasible, depending on panel approval. The station public address system could also be used for this purpose.

Advertising of the service and attractions along the railway line was discussed, and subject to marketing department approval, this would be feasible if aligned with Greater Anglia's marketing strategy.

The seamless transition between rail and bus was discussed, including the station waiting environments. Although the Station side has covered seating and generally more facilities, the London-bound platform has less facilities. The station is staffed every morning, and the conversation included refreshing the waiting environment at the station to include more information about IWM Duxford and the bus service. The information could also look to provide more narrative about the connection to Duxford, and the history of the site.

The opportunity for integrated ticketing was also discussed, and Greater Anglia agreed that working with Govia Thameslink Railway to deliver ticketing and promotion depending on the service would be a feasible option that could be progressed. The use of, and advertising of, PlusBus was also discussed as a potential opportunity to be considered.



Discussions included the suggestion of linking the service with local hotels (such as the [Holiday Inn](#) next to Whittlesford Parkway station) which presents an opportunity for people to make use of the service over a longer period of time as well as for a day trip. The facilities here also present an opportunity, for example: seating, toilets, and refreshments. This could be considered to make the service more attractive, and the hotel may benefit from increased trade in refreshments and stays. Other ideas raised included the use of a heritage bus to form part of the experience.

4.2 Govia Thameslink Railway (managers of Shepreth station)

Discussions with the Station Manager and the Senior Community Partnership & CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) Manager at Govia Thameslink Railway highlighted the feasibility of including posters in existing poster frames at the station and along the line. Signage is clear at the station and roadside for the Wildlife Park as they share the same entrance lane. There are currently posters at the station for Shepreth Wildlife Park and it is feasible to include more posters both at the station and along the line, between Royston to Ely for example, to advertise the attractions and bus service.

The Long-Line Public Address system at the station could be used to play audio announcements at the platform to advertise the service. An initial message could be shared to promote the launch of the new service before it was changed to a more standard message. Existing posters and bus information could be updated to reflect any new service.

The seamless transition between rail and bus was discussed, including the station waiting environments. The station building is not usable and has been closed for several years. Seating and shelters are present on both platforms, and there is additional unsheltered seating. There is seating but no shelter available in the car park. Any waiting by a vehicle on Station Road was not seen as feasible. Currently the rail replacement bus does stop on Station Road, but there is no wait time built in, avoiding blocking the road close to the level crossing.

A localised ticketing option was discussed as feasible, depending on demand.

4.3 Officers at Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA)

Discussions with CPCA officers aimed to:

- understand how such a service might fit with future plans for the local bus network in South Cambridgeshire.
- explore potential funding sources for such a service.

A meeting with the Assistant Director, Public Transport Services at CPCA included discussions around the existing services identified in Table 5, Table 10 and Table 15.

It was felt that there was no scope to amend the existing supported services identified.

CPCA does not typically consider seasonal services as a high priority for funding, and year-round services are considered more favourably. Despite this, it was agreed that the benefits to the visitor economy should be considered, and the Business Team could be further engaged with to consider this further into the process.

Innovative funding and fare strategies featured as a topic of discussion, such as introducing a mechanism in the pricing of admission to set some funding aside for the local bus service. This kind of pilot, featuring innovative ticketing with local tourism destinations providing match funding would be more attractive for CPCA to support, linking to their strategic targets.

CPCA may be able to assist in managing the procurement and contracting of a service, if desired.

4.3.1 Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)

The plans for the local bus network in South Cambridgeshire were discussed, including the 'Tiger on Demand' roll out, with a South Cambridgeshire zone due to go live shortly after the meeting in December 2024. Since this conversation, the zone is now live.



TIGER
On Demand

"TIGER on Demand is a new, flexible concept for delivering public transport services. Rather than being restricted to travelling along specific routes and at specific times, you can book a journey to and from anywhere within the TIGER on Demand travel zones using any of the virtual bus stops. Please scroll down to view the available zone and stops." ¹¹

Figure 10 - TIGER on Demand vehicle and branding

The service runs Monday to Saturday from 6:30am to 7:00pm. There is no service on Sundays or bank holidays.

The service area for the South Cambridgeshire zone is shown below in Figure 11, alongside the virtual bus stops within the zone.

Expanding this zone to cover more of the study area was discussed, although it was not felt possible since the zone will utilise only one vehicle, and expanding the zone so broadly could significantly hinder the vehicle from serving more rural areas where there is little or no public transport provision. It was however felt feasible to explore options for adding a vehicle to this DRT zone, which could operate a fixed route for certain times of the day.

Although the zone encompasses National Trust Wimpole Estate, the nearest virtual bus stop would be located in Wimpole, on Cambridge Road (A603), and would not be suitable for accessing the site via Old Wimpole Way due to the lack of an existing footpath, as discussed previously. Therefore, as the zone is relatively small, and does not encompass any railway stations, the zone could currently only meet the needs of local residents traveling to the towns and villages within the zone, and not those looking to visit the site.

CPCA manages the data and back-office functionality of the app and service bookings, and monitoring and evaluation of the DRT success might bring further opportunities.

¹¹ [Tiger On Demand - Combined Authority Transport](#)

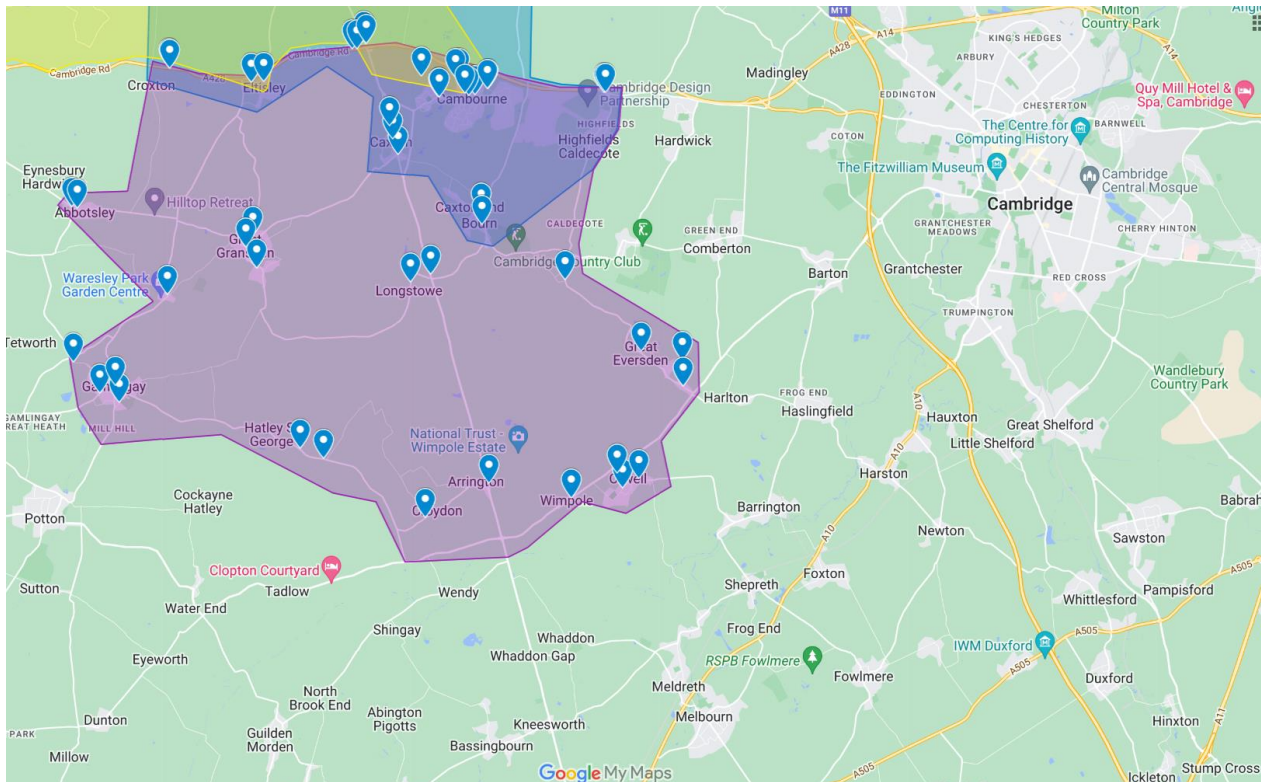


Figure 11 - TIGER on Demand - South Cambridgeshire Zone shown in purple, with virtual bus stops marked in blue.¹² © Google Maps 2025. Accessed January 2025.

4.4 Stagecoach East

Discussions with the Head of Commercial at Stagecoach East included conversations on the popular Duxford shuttle buses which run from the Park & Ride sites in Cambridge to IWM Duxford on event days. These services are well used, with between 9 and 10 buses providing a 10-to-15-minute frequency to the site.

Stagecoach's nearest depot location is in Cambridge, and it was noted that although Stagecoach East would be interested in running the service, this was not expected to be a commercial service due to the rural nature of the area, and the quantity of free parking at the destination sites. The main passengers Stagecoach anticipated would use such a service were concessionary travellers.

During discussions around hail and ride, it was noted that it would be difficult to stop in some areas, and that this type of service may not suit the user group. Consideration would need to be given to using physical bus stops to ensure accessibility.

Stagecoach East operate a large fleet of single and double decker vehicles. The Cambridge depot does have existing charging infrastructure for buses, although as minibuses use chargers similar to electric cars, this could be installed relatively easily for depot charging.

¹² [Tiger On Demand - Combined Authority Transport](#)



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Suggested costings for a six-month pilot service were around £60,000 for a diesel vehicle, or £80,000 for an electric minibus.

4.5 Royston and District Community Transport

Royston and District Community Transport offers a community car scheme for medical and social purposes to villages in South Cambridgeshire around Royston. They also offer wheelchair accessible transport using their MPV vehicle, plus a 9- and a 16-seater minibus for groups or clubs.¹³

When approached for inclusion in this study, they declined our invitation due to the capacity of the organisation. The operating hours of existing provision are between 9am to 3pm Monday to Friday.

4.6 A2B Bus

No response to our invitation for a meeting was received from A2B Bus.

¹³ *Produced by the Passenger Transport Group, Cambridgeshire County Council, 2003*

5 Contextual Information

5.1 Local Population

Shepreth Station is situated in the centre of Shepreth, whilst Whittlesford Parkway Station is situated at the southeast end of Whittlesford parish. Both parishes are within the South Cambridgeshire District.

The population of the Shepreth Parish is recorded as 786 in the 2021 Census¹⁴, with the population of Whittlesford Parish being 1,865. Both Parishes reflect national age distributions.

Table 16 - Population Statistics of Shepreth, Whittlesford, South Cambridgeshire, Cambridgeshire, and England.

	Shepreth Parish	Whittlesford Parish	South Cambridgeshire District	Cambridgeshire	England
Population	786	1,865	162,119	678,852	56,490,047

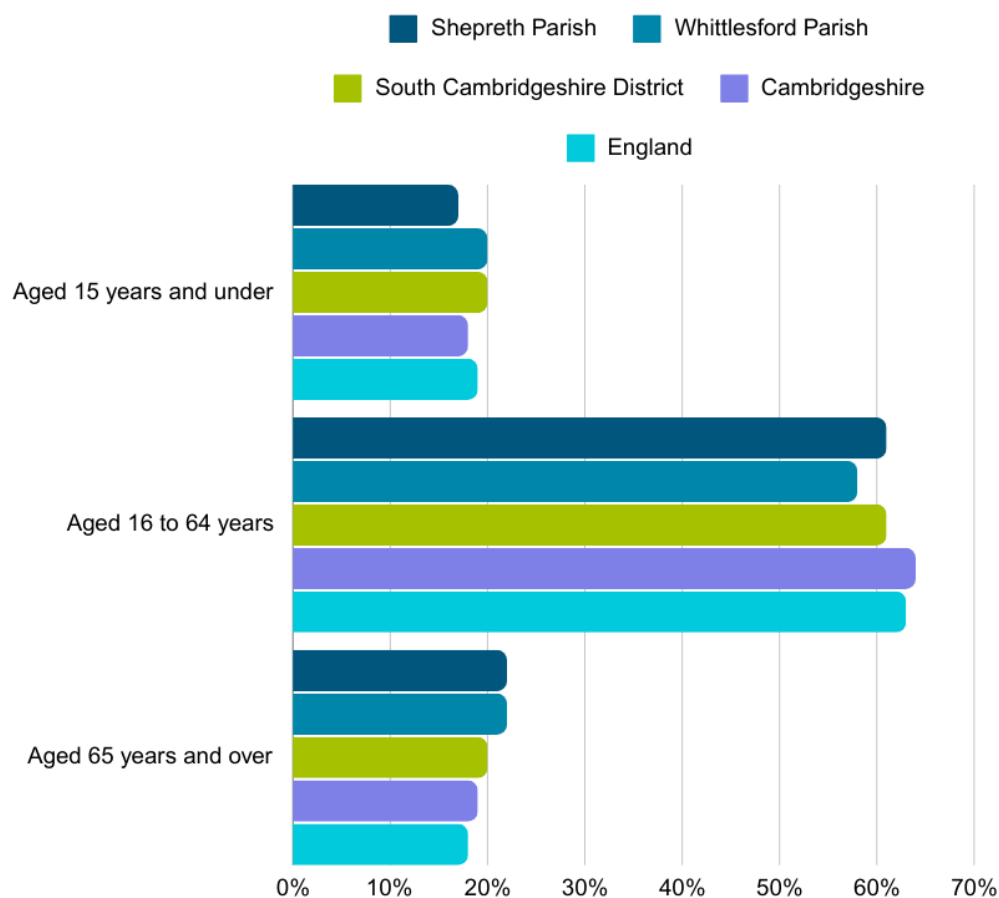
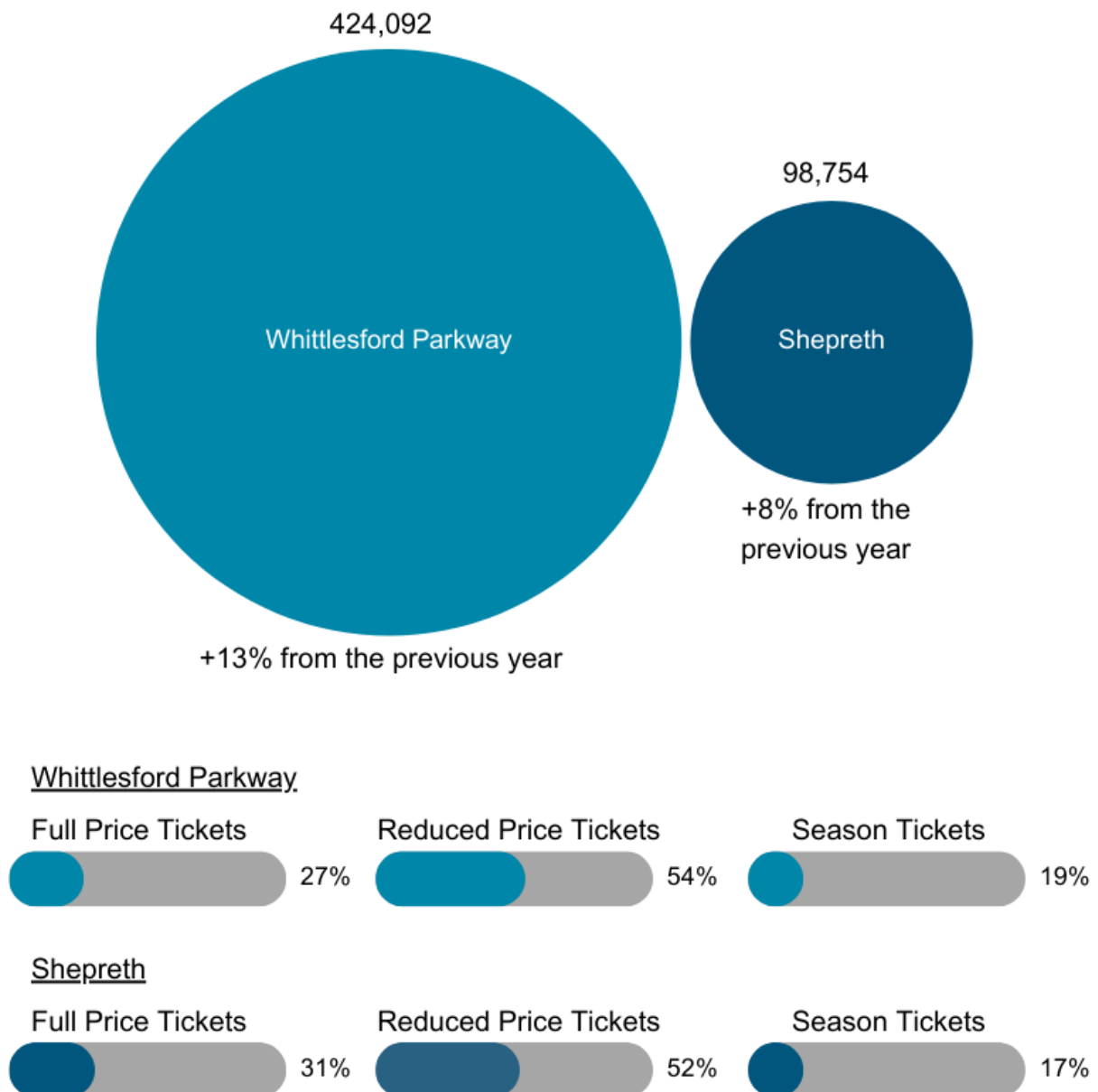


Figure 12 - Age Distributions in Shepreth, Whittlesford, South Cambridgeshire, Cambridgeshire, and England.

¹⁴ PP012 – Age, Census 2021

5.2 Station Usage

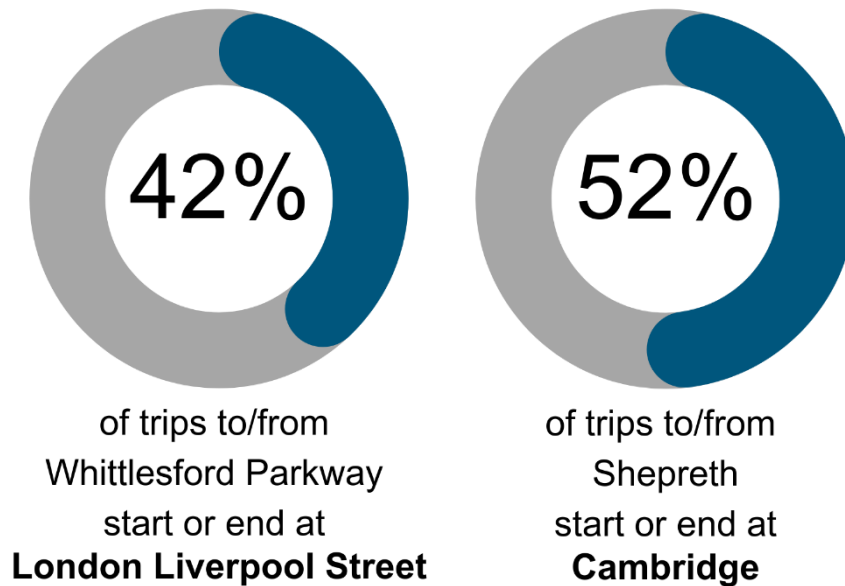
Entry and exit data for Shepreth and Whittlesford Parkway stations¹⁵ are outlined below. The total number of entries and exits (all tickets) are represented by proportional circles, indicating that Whittlesford Parkway is a significantly busier station than Shepreth. The data also shows that usage of Whittlesford Parkway has grown at a higher rate than that of Shepreth.



¹⁵ Table 1410: Passenger entries, exits and interchanges by station (annual), Great Britain, April 2023 to March 2024, [Estimates of station usage | ORR Data Portal](#). Statistics referring to the previous year reference April 2022 to March 2023.

A slightly higher percentage of season ticket holders use Whittlesford Parkway than Shepreth.

The data reveals that the majority of trips are occurring to/from Cambridge at Shepreth, and to/from London Liverpool Street from Whittlesford Parkway.

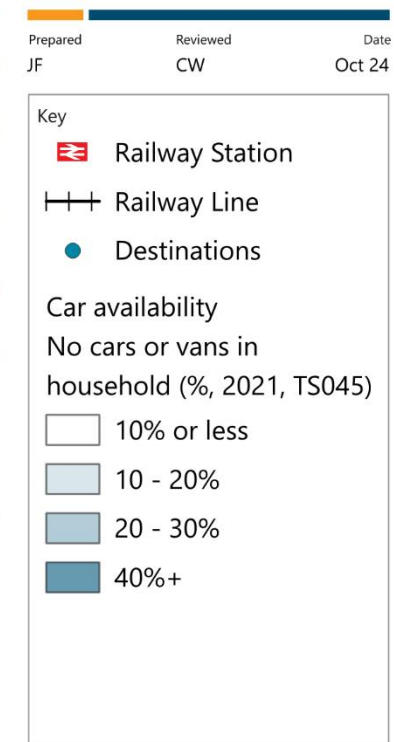
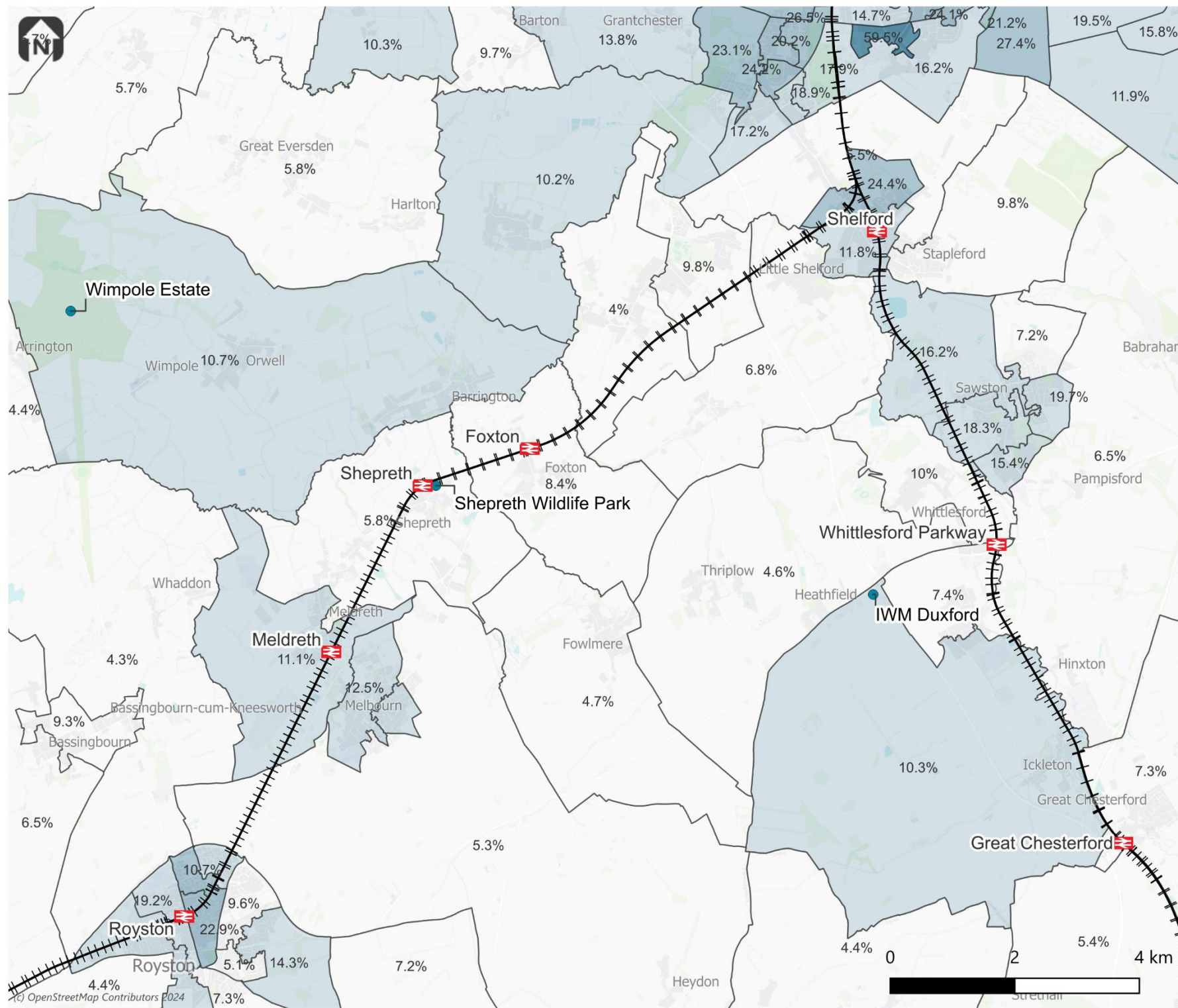


Any potential new service should attempt to meet key train arrivals and departures. The above therefore goes some way to demonstrate the key flows at each station.

5.3 Demographics of the local area

It is important to consider the importance, value and impact, of any potential new bus service on the local community.

The following series of maps highlight: car availability, population density, proportion of people classified as disabled under the Equality Act, and index of multiple deprivation rankings.



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Community Rail Partnership
Eco Tourism Bus Feasibility
Study

Figure Title

Household car availability in
the local area, 2021 Census

Revision

A

Figure number

4-1

Project number

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Date

October 2024

Figure 13 – Household car availability in the local area, 2021 Census

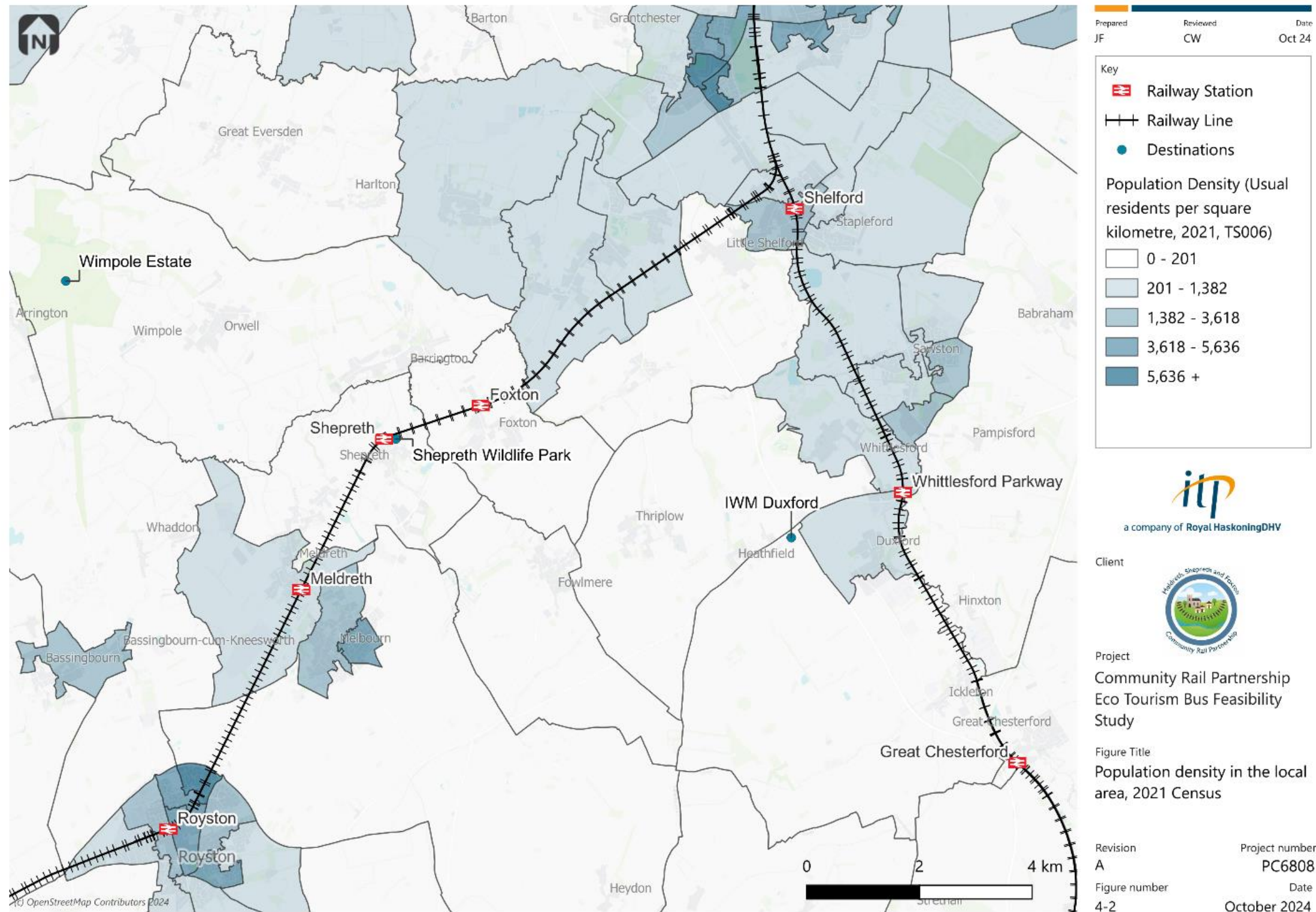


Figure 14 - Population density in the local area, 2021 Census

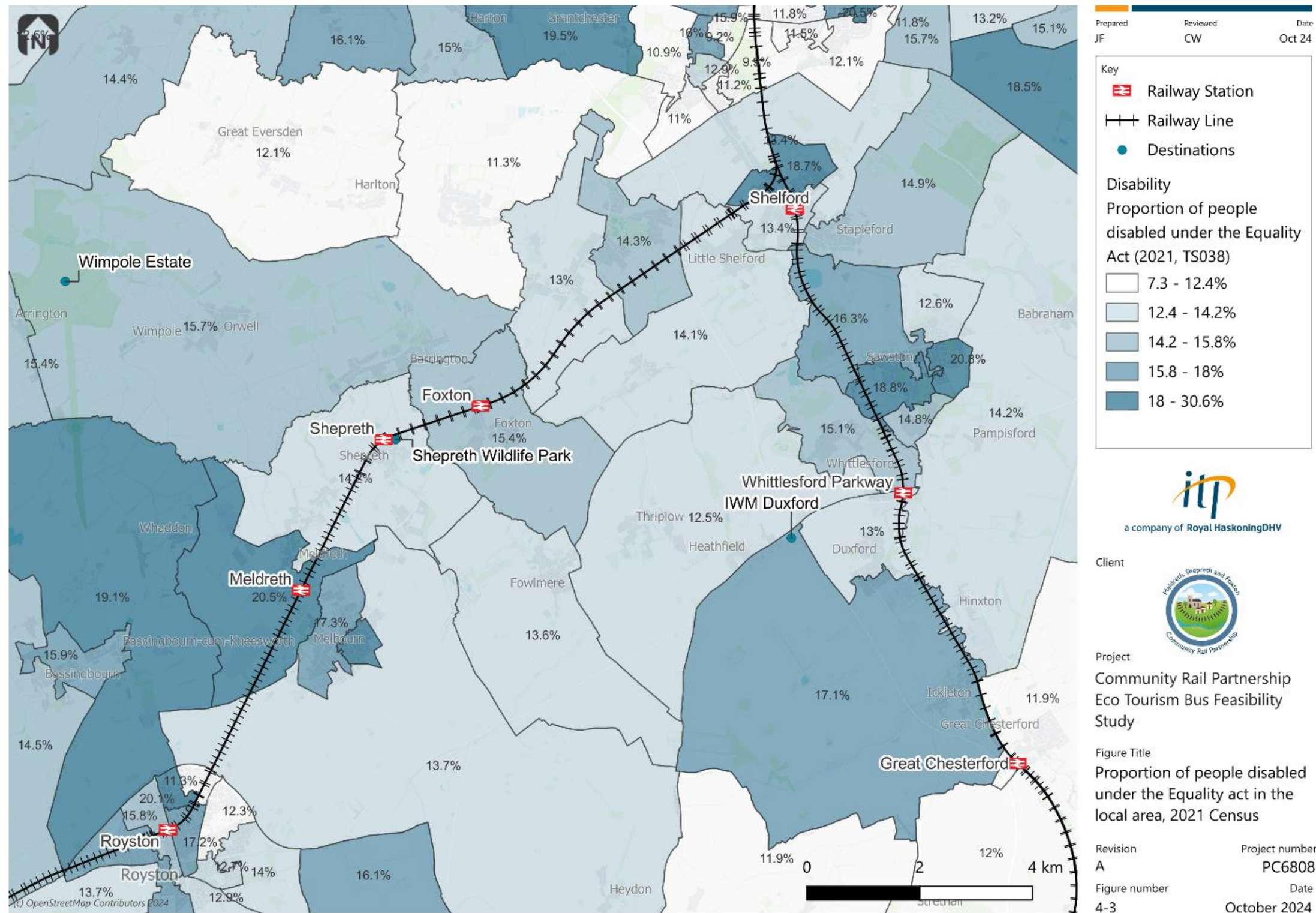
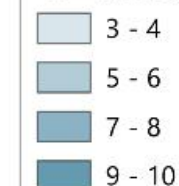


Figure 15 - Proportion of people disabled under the Equality Act in the local area, 2021 Census



- Key
- Railway Station
 - Railway Line
 - Destinations

IMD (Deciles, 2019)
1 = least deprived,
10 = most deprived



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Project

Community Rail Partnership
Eco Tourism Bus Feasibility
Study

Figure Title

Index of Multiple Deprivation
2019 (Deciles)

Revision

A

Figure number

4-4

Project number

PC6808

Date

October 2024

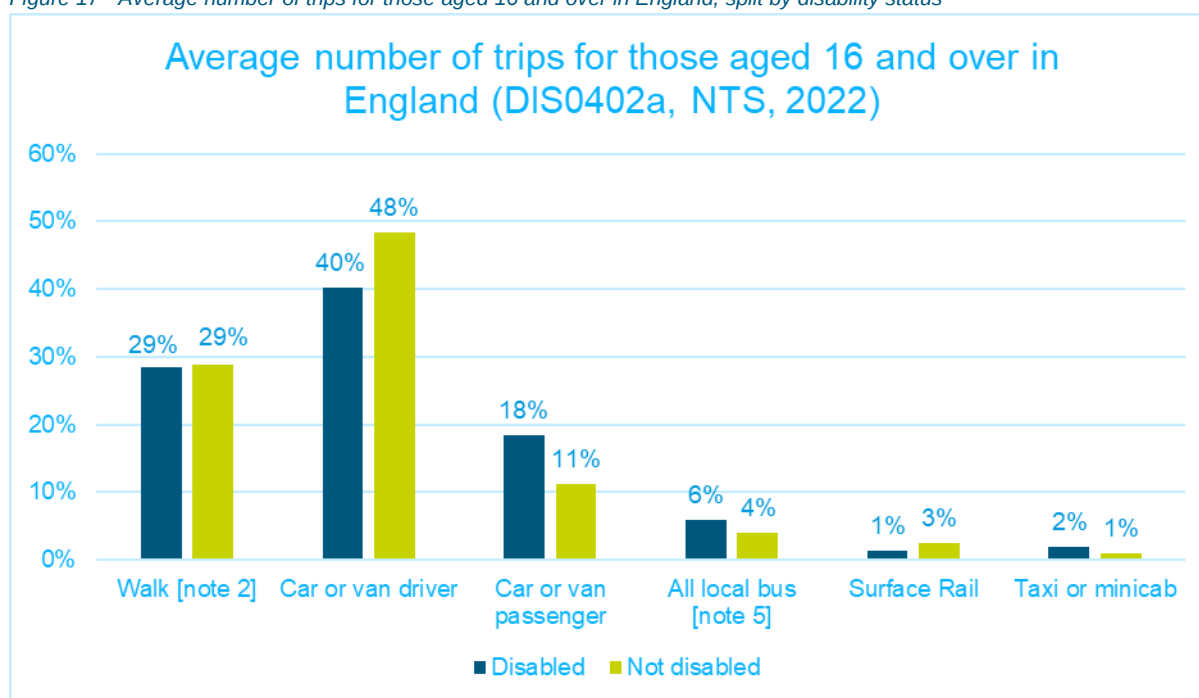
Figure 16 - Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (Deciles)

Levels of car availability are generally high in the immediate surrounding area, with pockets of lower availability in towns such as Royston, Meldreth, Shelford and in South Cambridge. Population density and deprivation are both generally low in the surrounding area.

According to the 2021 Census, the proportion of people identified as disabled under the Equality Act varies across different areas. In England, the overall proportion was 17.3%. Rates in the immediate local area do tend to be lower than the national average, with some pockets of higher rates, for example north of Royston and around Meldreth and Shelford.

In 2022 disabled adults in England made 25% fewer trips than non-disabled adults according to the National Travel Survey (NTS). This difference was broadly in line with previous years. Disabled adults in England made an average of 686 trips per person, compared to 916 for non-disabled adults¹⁶. Disabled adults also travelled less far when compared to non-disabled adults.

Figure 17 - Average number of trips for those aged 16 and over in England, split by disability status¹⁷



Note number 2: The National Travel Survey definition of walking includes the use of non-motorised wheelchairs but excludes motorised wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

Note number 5: All local bus includes buses in London and other local buses.

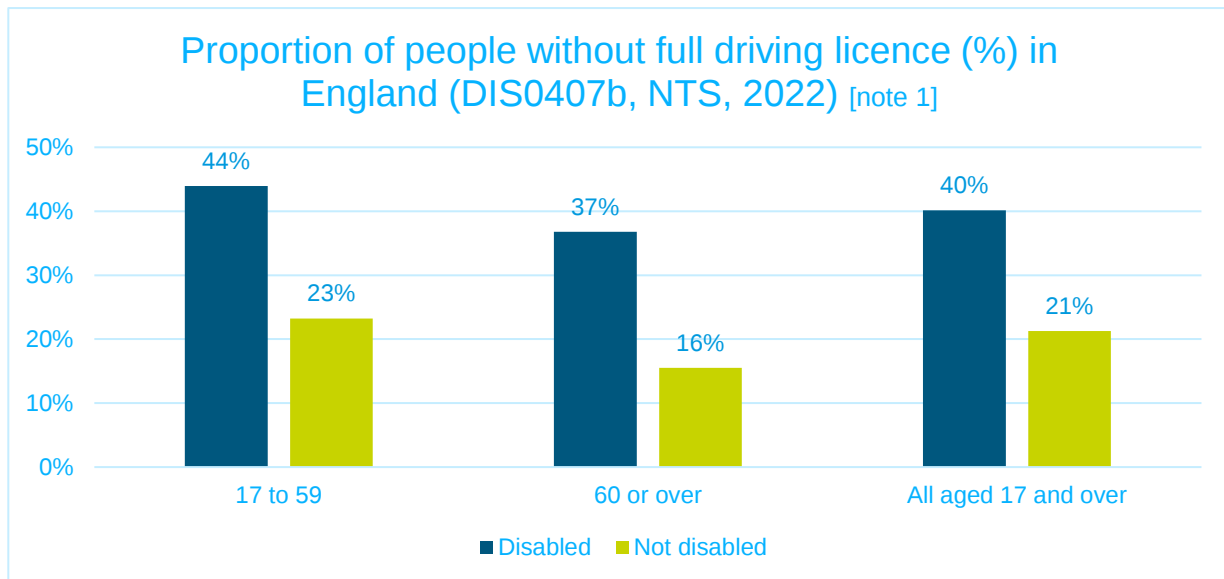
Figure 17 shows that compared with non-disabled adults, disabled adults took a higher proportion of their total trips as car passengers. On average disabled adults took a larger proportion of their trips by bus (6%) compared with non-disabled adults (4%). Despite this, disabled adults took a smaller number of trips using surface rail (1%) compared to non-disabled adults (3%).

Figure 18 highlights that disabled adults are less likely to hold a full car driving license (40% do not hold a full licence) compared with non-disabled adults (21%).

¹⁶ [Disability, accessibility and blue badge statistics, England, 2022 to 2023 - GOV.UK](#)

¹⁷ [dis0402.ods](#)

Figure 18 – Proportion of people without a full driving licence in England by disability status¹⁸



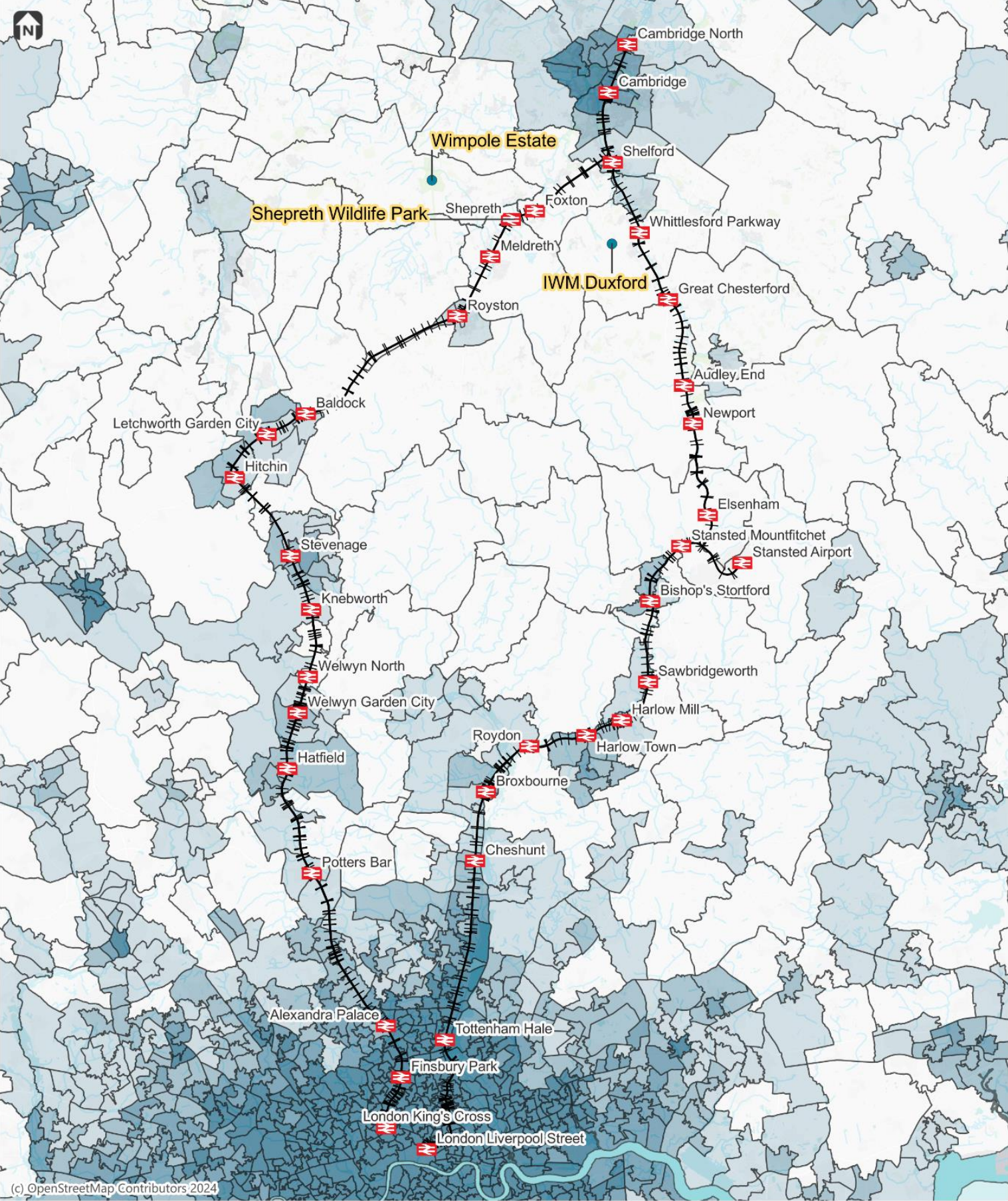
Note number 1: The 'Without full car licence' category includes those with provisional licences, those with other licences such as for motorcycles and mopeds, and those with no licence.

5.4 Considering travel from North London

Car ownership in the north London suburbs is significantly lower than in the immediate study area. Many stations between Shepreth and London Kings Cross, and Whittlesford Parkway and London Liverpool Street are within an hour's journey time of Shepreth and Whittlesford Parkway. Those stations with a direct service are shown below. There is believed to be great potential to attract visitors to the tourism destinations from these areas.

¹⁸ [dis0407.ods](#)

Figure 19 - Household car availability in the local area towards London, 2021 Census



Prepared JF
Reviewed CW
Date Dec 2024



Client



Project
Community Rail Partnership Eco
Tourism Bus Feasibility Study
Figure title
Household car availability in the local
area towards London, 2021 Census
Revision A
Date Dec 2024
Project number PC6808
Figure number Figure 4-5



5.5 Rail Connectivity

Shepreth (STH)¹⁹ is a small station, managed by Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) as part of their Great Northern Route. There are no toilets or baby changing facilities. Unheated waiting shelters are available on the platforms. There is a ticket machine at this station, where people can buy or collect tickets, however there is no staffed ticket office or public Wi-Fi at the station. There are nine bike storage spaces available at the station with CCTV. The station has 13 car parking spaces, open Monday to Sunday.

This station has step-free access to both platforms via separate entrances as access between platforms is via street and level crossing.

See Appendix A5 for local onward travel information.

Whittlesford Parkway (WLF)²⁰ station is managed by Greater Anglia (GA). The station has a staffed ticket office, as well as ticket machines. There are no toilets or baby changing facilities at the station. Waiting rooms are available on each platform, as well as public Wi-Fi. There are 48 bike storage spaces available at the station, which are sheltered but not covered by CCTV. The station also has 348 car parking spaces, open Monday to Sunday.

This station has step-free access to each platform; however, it is not step-free between platforms (stepped footbridge only, or via a long road route). The Cambridge bound platform is accessed from Station Road West and the London-bound platform is accessed from Station Road East. It is approximately 1.7 miles by road between platforms.

See Appendix A6 for local onward travel information.

5.5.1 Rail Connections at Shepreth

Table 17 - Shepreth Rail Connections

Origin	Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun	Time (mins)
Cambridge	Every 30 minutes in the morning and evening peak. Every 60 minutes in the middle of the day.	Every 60 minutes	Every 60 minutes	12
London Kings Cross	Every 30 minutes direct in the morning and evening peak. Every 60 minutes in the middle of the day. Four trains an hour when including a change on route.	Every 60 minutes direct. Two trains an hour when including a change on route.	Every 60 minutes direct. Two trains an hour when including a change on route.	75

¹⁹ [Shepreth Station | National Rail](#)

²⁰ [Whittlesford Parkway Station | National Rail](#)



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5.5.2 Rail Connections at Whittlesford Parkway

Table 18 - Whittlesford Parkway Rail Connections

Origin	Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun	Time (mins)
Cambridge	Every 20-30minutes	Every 20-30minutes	Every 20-30minutes	8
London Liverpool Street	Every 30 minutes	Every 30 minutes	Every 30 minutes	75
Stansted Airport	Every 30-60minutes depending on the time of day.	Every 60 minutes	Every 60 minutes	21

6 Options for improving access

Several options have been considered for improving access to the three tourism destinations. A series of case studies in Appendix A7 provides some context to some of the solutions explored in other locations.

6.1 Building on existing home to school provision

Although potential for utilising contracted school transport vehicles to operate shuttle services in between their morning and afternoon school runs was considered, it was felt that this option did not offer sufficient flexibility during weekdays, and the return journey would be particularly tight to schedule before the afternoon school run. It was also considered unlikely that an appropriate vehicle would be available to provide the type of shuttle service that would be required, given that contracted school buses are often older and larger vehicles than the minibus-type vehicle that would be envisaged for the pilot. Therefore, this option was not developed further.

6.2 Revising existing scheduled bus provision

As highlighted previously, options for revising existing bus services in the area were discussed with bus operators. The services in the area which are operated by Stagecoach East are either commercial and therefore not easily amended to incorporate new sections of route without significant additional costs, or supported by CPCA, who did not believe there to be scope to amend these services at this time.

6.3 TIGER on Demand

The proposal to extend the South Cambridgeshire operating zone of the TIGER on Demand DRT service to cover the area of this study was not deemed possible without adding additional capacity to the single vehicle operating this zone at this time. Costs for adding a second vehicle to the zone, allowing the zone to be expanded would be around £200,000. This would allow visitors from across Cambridgeshire and beyond to book the service to connect with their rail service at either station to access the tourism destinations.

The main advantage of using TIGER on Demand would be the benefits of using CPCA's existing DRT back-office system, and utilising the efficiencies created by expanding the zone, rather than creating a new service. Visitors would have a great deal of flexibility in the timing and duration of their visit, which they could schedule around their train times. The bus could be booked in advance, at the same time as their rail tickets to instil confidence that all travel was arranged ahead of their visit. The option of partnering with local hotels at Whittlesford Parkway to utilise their facilities might offer a comfortable way for people to book the service same day.

There are two main disadvantages of relying on TIGER on Demand to provide access to the sites. Firstly, the lack of provision on a Sunday presents a significant challenge, as generally weekends were identified by the destination sites as some of the busiest times for visitors. The second potential disadvantage is that the concept of DRT might introduce a barrier for people visiting, who may not understand what DRT is, or how it works, and may view booking such a service as an additional difficulty or stress in their visit.



7 Recommended Solution – Dedicated shuttle service

There is scope for a simple shuttle service to be provided as outlined below. Such a service could be run as a pilot to ascertain the demand for such a service in the future.

If accessibility did prove to be a barrier at Whittlesford Parkway station, options for using an alternative station, such as Shelford could be considered, located 4 miles north of Whittlesford Parkway. For the proposals in this study, Whittlesford Parkway was assumed to be most appropriate due to the proximity to IWM Duxford and the other sites.

The proposed service would provide access to all sites from each rail station included in the study. The timing of the shuttles would meet various key arrival and departure times identified in Table 19, Table 20, Table 21 and Table 22. This is identified as the recommended solution due to the flexibility provided and ability to meet various needs.

7.1 Key Connections

When considering connections to the three tourism destinations from the rail routes shown in Table 17 and Table 18, the following tables show direct rail arrivals between 08:30 and 12:30, and departures between 14:30 and 18:30.²¹

Although it would be ideal to meet all connections, the cost of additional vehicles to meet so many connections would be disproportionate to expected demand. Therefore, key connections have been identified to allow visitors to use the service for either a half or full day. There are a range of train arrivals met by the proposed service, between 10am and early afternoon, and a range of departures between 3pm and 5:40pm.

The timetable presented in Figure 22 and Figure 23 identifies the train times that the service connects to. Train times are shown, either in an orange box, representing the fact that this is an arrival, or a blue box, representing a departure. A full timetable is presented in Appendix A1.

²¹ Data was accessed on 23/12/2024 with timetables relevant to the beginning of 2025.



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Arrivals to Shepreth Station²²

Table 19 - Arrivals into Shepreth Station between 08:30 and 12:30

Monday to Friday		Saturday		Sunday	
London Kings Cross	Cambridge	London Kings Cross	Cambridge	London Kings Cross	Cambridge
8:39	8:38	8:39	8:38	9:15	9:07
9:09	9:07	9:39	9:38	10:15	10:07
9:39	9:38	10:39	10:38	11:15	11:07
10:39	10:09	11:39	11:38	12:16	12:07
11:39	10:38				
	11:38				

²² Table A : Kings Lynn, Ely, Cambridge, Peterborough and Stevenage to London, East Croydon, Gatwick Airport, Horsham and Brighton. Timetable valid from Sunday 15 December 2024 until Sunday 11 May 2025.



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Departures from Shepreth Station²³

Table 20 - Departures from Shepreth Station between 14:30 and 18:30

Monday to Friday		Saturday		Sunday	
London Kings Cross	Cambridge	London Kings Cross	Cambridge	London Kings Cross	Cambridge
14:38	14:39	14:38	14:39	15:07	15:15
15:38	15:08	15:38	15:39	16:07	16:15
16:08	15:39	16:38	16:39	17:07	17:15
16:38	16:09	17:38	17:39	18:07	18:15
17:08	16:39				
17:39	17:09				
18:08	17:40				
18:38	18:10				

²³ *Table A : Kings Lynn, Ely, Cambridge, Peterborough and Stevenage to London, East Croydon, Gatwick Airport, Horsham and Brighton. Timetable valid from Sunday 15 December 2024 until Sunday 11 May 2025.*



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Arrivals to Whittlesford Parkway²⁴

Table 21 - Arrivals into Whittlesford Parkway Station between 08:30 and 12:30

Monday to Friday		Saturday		Sunday	
London Liverpool Street	Cambridge	London Kings Cross	Cambridge	London Kings Cross	Cambridge
8:42	8:30	8:39	8:30	9:09	8:34
9:13	8:59	8:58	8:57	9:30	8:39
9:42	9:30	9:39	9:11	10:09	9:00
9:58	9:58	9:58	9:30	10:30	9:34
10:39	10:11	10:39	9:57	11:09	9:39
10:58	10:30	10:58	10:11	11:30	10:00
11:39	10:57	11:39	10:30	12:09	10:34
11:58	11:11	11:58	10:57	12:29	10:39
	11:30		11:11		11:00
	11:58		11:30		11:34
	12:11		11:57		11:39
	12:30		12:11		12:00
			12:30		

²⁴ [Timetables | Greater Anglia](#) Table 12: Cambridge and Stansted Airport to London Liverpool Street, valid from 15 December 2024 to 31 May 2025.



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Departures from Whittlesford Parkway²⁵

Table 22 - Departures from Whittlesford Parkway Station between 14:30 and 18:30

Monday to Friday		Saturday		Sunday	
London Liverpool Street	Cambridge	London Kings Cross	Cambridge	London Kings Cross	Cambridge
14:30	14:39	14:30	14:39	14:39	14:34
15:11	14:58	15:11	14:58	15:00	15:09
15:30	15:09	15:30	15:09	15:39	15:29
16:00	15:39	16:11	15:39	16:00	15:34
16:30	16:03	16:30	15:58	16:39	16:09
16:43	16:12	17:11	16:09	17:00	16:29
17:00	16:39	17:30	16:39	17:39	16:34
17:30	17:09	18:11	16:58	18:00	17:09
18:00	17:14	18:30	17:09		17:29
18:30	17:33		17:39		17:34
	17:56		17:58		18:09
	18:04		18:09		18:29
	18:15				
	18:26				

²⁵ [Timetables | Greater Anglia](#) Table 12: Cambridge and Stansted Airport to London Liverpool Street, valid from 15 December 2024 to 31 May 2025.



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Discussions with the destination sites highlighted the seasonality of the visitor sites, with April to August generally identified as the busiest times of year for the sites. It is therefore proposed that any pilot service should operate during this period. There is potentially scope for the service to operate on weekdays during the school holidays, which were again identified as busy times for the tourism destinations, although a pilot would confirm whether there would be enough demand for a service to become financially sustainable.

Service routing and timetable are presented below in Figure 21, Figure 22 and Figure 23 alongside a graphical representation of the route in Figure 20. This more clearly represents the circular nature of the route, showing Shepreth as central to the route. Appendix A8 presents another version of the timetable without rail connections identified.

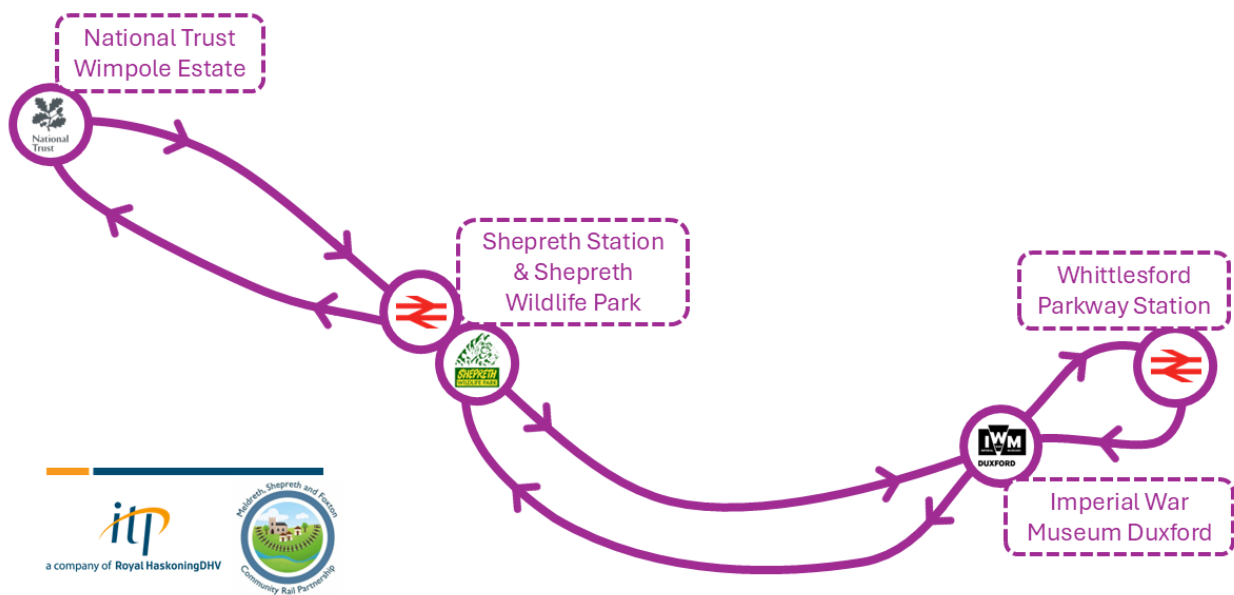
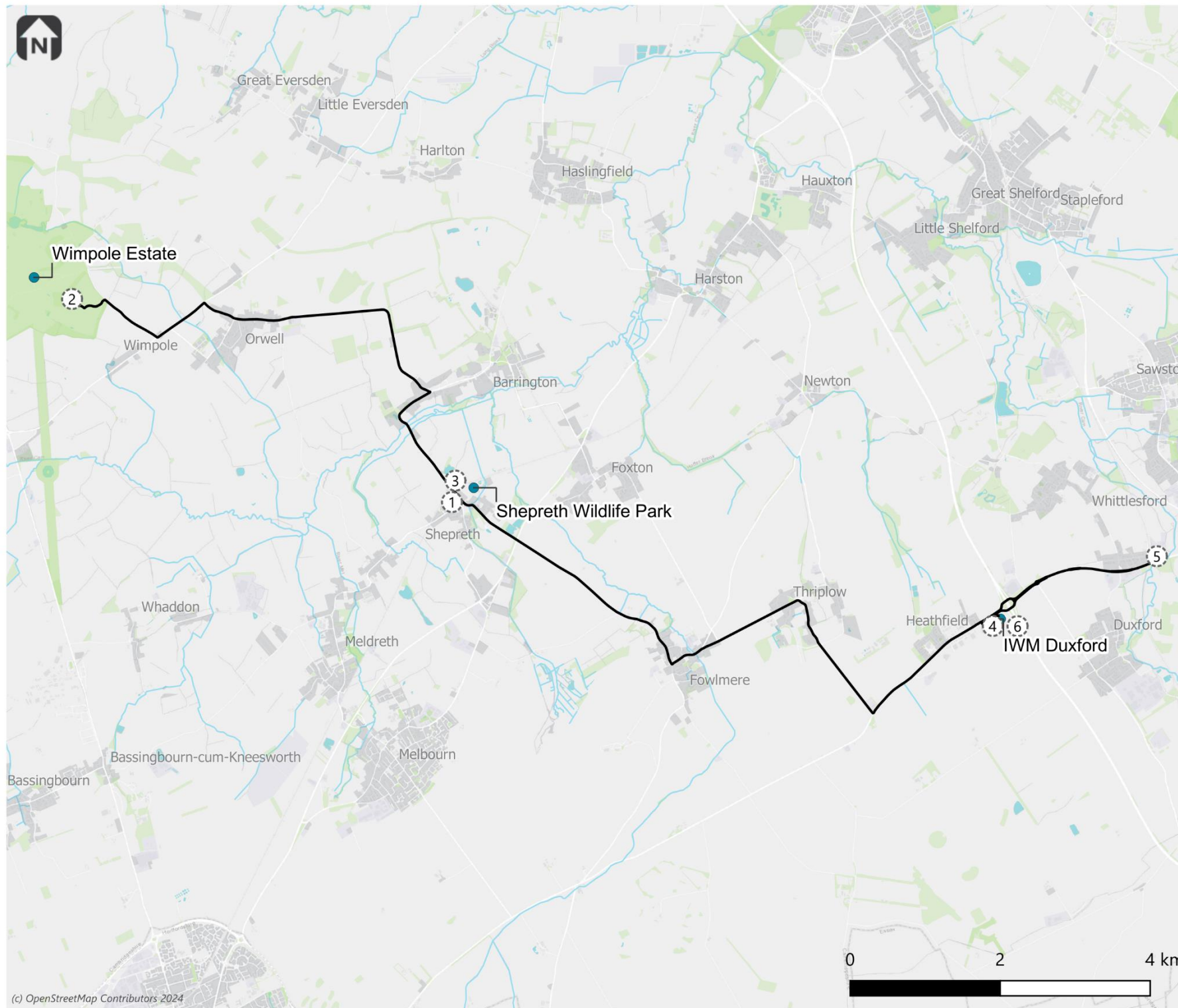


Figure 20 – Proposed service routing



(c) OpenStreetMap Contributors 2024
 Figure 21 - Routing of Proposed Pilot Bus Service

Prepared

JF

Reviewed

CW

Date

Dec 24

Key

Proposed Pilot Service

Proposed Pilot Service Stops

Destinations

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Client

Project

Community Rail Partnership
Eco Tourism Bus Feasibility Study

Figure Title

Routing of Proposed Pilot Bus Service

Revision

A

Project number

PC6808

Figure number

8-1

Date

December 2024



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7.1.1 Service Timetable

Figure 22 - Monday to Saturday Timetable, including train connection times

Timetable report									
Arrivals								Route	
Departures									
Monday-Saturday								Service KM:	150
Days		MTWHFS		MTWHFS		MTWHFS		MTWHFS	
Service No		MSFCRP		MSFCRP		MSFCRP		MSFCRP	
Shepreth Station and Shepreth Wildlife Park (adj)	Dep			10:38 from Cambridge 10:50 10:39 from London		12:38 from Cambridge 12:50 12:39 from London		15:39 to Cambridge 15:25 15:38 to London	16:40
National Trust Wimpole Estate	Arr			11:01		13:01		15:36	16:51
National Trust Wimpole Estate	Dep			11:05		13:05		15:40	16:55
Shepreth Station and Shepreth Wildlife Park (adj)	Arr			11:16		13:16		15:51	17:39 to Cambridge 17:06 17:38 to London
Shepreth Station and Shepreth Wildlife Park (adj)	Dep			11:20		13:38 from Cambridge 13:50 13:39 from London		15:55	
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Arr			11:35		14:05		16:10	
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Dep			11:40		14:40		16:15	
Whittlesford Parkway Station	Arr			11:45		15:09 to Cambridge 14:45 15:11 to London		16:39 to Cambridge 16:20 16:30 to London	
Whittlesford Parkway Station	Dep	09:57 from Cambridge 10:15 09:58 from London		11:30 from Cambridge 11:50 11:39 from London		14:50		16:20	
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Arr	10:20		11:55		14:55		16:25	
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Dep	10:35		11:59		14:59		16:29	
Shepreth Station & Shepreth Wildlife Park (opp)	Arr	10:46		12:10		15:10		16:40	
Journey run time:		00:31		01:20		02:20		01:15	00:26
Total service run time:									06:51

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Figure 23 - Sunday Timetable, including train connection times

Timetable report									
Arrivals									Route
Departures									
Sunday									Service KM: 179
Days		\$		\$		\$		\$	
Service No		MSFCRP		MSFCRP		MSFCRP		MSFCRP	
Shepreth Station and Shepreth Wildlife Park (adj)	Dep	09:30	09:07 from Cambridge 09:15 from London	11:30	11:07 from Cambridge 11:15 from London	13:30		15:30	
National Trust Wimpole Estate	Arr	09:41		11:41		13:41		15:41	
National Trust Wimpole Estate	Dep	09:45		11:45		13:45		15:45	
Shepreth Station and Shepreth Wildlife Park (adj)	Arr	09:56		11:56		13:56		15:56	
Shepreth Station and Shepreth Wildlife Park (adj)	Dep	10:00		12:00		14:00		16:00	16:07 to London 16:15 to Cambridge
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Arr	10:15		12:15		14:15		16:15	
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Dep	10:20		12:20		14:20		16:20	
Whittlesford Parkway Station	Arr	10:25		12:25		14:25	14:34 to Cambridge 14:39 to London	16:25	16:34 to Cambridge 16:39 to London
Whittlesford Parkway Station	Dep	10:25	10:00 from Cambridge 10:09 from London	12:25	12:00 from Cambridge 12:09 from London	14:25		16:25	
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Arr	10:30		12:30		14:30		16:30	
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Dep	10:45		12:45		14:45		16:45	
Shepreth Station & Shepreth Wildlife Park (opp)	Arr	10:56		12:56		14:56		16:56	
Journey run time:		00:31		01:26		01:26		01:26	
Total service run time:								07:26	

7.1.2 Operational Considerations

Although a two-bus operation - a peak vehicle requirement (PVR) of two - would enable an hourly service, and for more rail connections to be met, such a regular service is not deemed as proportional to demand at this stage. A pilot service using a single vehicle would enable a pilot to be undertaken using less resource, to assess potential demand.

Although it is suggested that the service run as a seasonal pilot, there is great scope to include other local passenger journeys. For instance, the proposed service would operate through areas which currently have an infrequent bus service. Connecting settlements such as Fowlmere, Shepreth and Orwell to the tourism destinations and to the rail stations for connections to Cambridge and London presents an opportunity to support connectivity in the local community.

Hail and ride in these areas would be difficult to manage and may present accessibility issues regarding where the bus can safely stop where there is no footway provision. Although there is no time built into the timetable for settlements that the bus passes through (due to low expected latent demand), there would be scope to call at existing bus stops that the service would pass such as on the B1368 where the 26 and 31 A2B Bus services already call, shown in Figure 24.

These stops would not be timing points on the timetable, helping to ensure the bus primarily waited at the key tourism destinations and railway stations.



Figure 24 - Bus stop on the B1368 (High Street), Fowlmere.

7.1.3 Costings

It is estimated that such a service may cost in the region of £60,000 for a diesel vehicle, and £80,000 for an electric vehicle. These costs assume a full year of vehicle costs, with only half a year of fuel and driver time for a pilot.

An electric minibus can typically travel approximately 160 miles per day, and this is expected to be suitable for the route proposed, although this may depend on where the vehicle depot was located, weather conditions and battery health. As minibus vehicles typically use similar chargers to that of electric cars, and although there is no opportunity charging need identified at this stage, should this become a requirement, options such as amending the timetable to allow recharging at National Trust Wimpole Estate could be investigated.

7.1.4 Branding, Marketing and Ticketing

Branding of the service will be crucial to the success of the pilot, and some examples of branding are highlighted in Appendix A7. Vehicle branding can play a role in improving the perceived service quality, although applying livery to the entire vehicle may add additional cost to a pilot service. The use of low-cost temporary solutions may present a good opportunity to brand the vehicle, such as through the use of magnetic signs or decals.

Branding and marketing of the area and the service along the railway lines to London and Cambridge, and at Shepreth and Whittlesford Parkway stations will ensure that the service is promoted to a wide range of



people (existing rail users). Marketing of this nature could focus on the three tourism destinations themselves alongside the ease of access via the bus service.

Engagement with the local community, such as in the settlements of Fowlmere and Shepreth, to inform residents of the new service would be important to ensure that the local community were aware of the bus service, and the opportunities for not only using it for accessing the destination sites, but also of using the service to access rail connections into Cambridge for example.

Marketing of the service to existing visitors of the destination sites, potentially by using signs or posters as people leave the site or car parks for example, advertising the service as an alternative way to access the site could encourage mode shift in these groups, especially if benefits were agreed and promoted for those using the service. This would also serve a secondary purpose, in advertising that the other local tourism destinations were easily accessible nearby.

Wider marketing, via social media for example, would ensure that publicity was broader to encourage people to make the trip to the area by sustainable modes, where they may not have planned to visit or would have otherwise visited by car.

Across all marketing, advertising any benefits to users of the service would be a key message to encourage people to use the service, especially in the context of free parking. The ease, convenience, and perks of using the service would be key to convincing visitors that it would be worth paying for the service.

Ticketing options should be considered in more detail, and would be dependent on the budget for a service via any public authority or tourism destination support.

It is not expected that the demand locally, nor from rail passengers, would result in this service being a commercial proposition.

Based on some simple assumptions, set out below, the service could be expected to cover approximately half of its costs should the vehicle operate at maximum capacity.

Assumptions:

- The vehicle is at maximum seated capacity when departing or arriving each rail connection (see Figure 22 - Monday to Saturday Timetable, including train connection times and Figure 23 - Sunday Timetable, including train connection times).
 - This assumes 10 seats on the electric minibus option, and 16 seats on the diesel minibus option.
- The average price of a single ticket is £1.50. This accounts for the average adult commercial fare being £2 for a single (or £4 for a return), whilst noting that other types of ticket would generate lower revenues (concessionary pass holders, alongside child and family tickets).
 - Family and child tickets would need to be priced competitively to encourage family use of the service, for example two adults and two children would be unlikely to see good value in paying £4 each for a return to the tourism destinations, at a total of £16.
- The service operates for 26 weeks of the year

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	Total service runs (daily)	Train connections met (daily)	High patronage assumption (single trips) 10 (16) seat vehicles	Revenue (based on an average single fare of £1.50)	
				10 seat electric minibus	16 seat diesel minibus
Monday to Saturday	5	9	90 (144)	£135	£216
Sunday	4	7	70 (112)	£105	£168

	Revenue (10 seat electric vehicle)	Revenue (16 seat diesel vehicle)
Weekly	£915	£1,464
Total revenue (26 weeks)	£23,790	£38,064
Estimated contract cost	£80,000	£60,000
Proportion of cost covered by revenue	30%	63%



- Through this high-level analysis, assuming high use of the service, additional funding would be required to support the service. Factors such as additional local demand using the service between the main usage patterns (rail station to destination).

There are a series of assumptions and risks that should be considered when interpreting this high-level analysis:

- The analysis assumes demand is consistent every day and spread across the day evenly.
- The sites have been identified as weather-dependent, which could have a strong influence on patronage of the service.
- Further work to determine fare structures would be required.
- Train cancellations and industrial action would diminish demand for the service, both on days where there was disruption, but also the usage of the service could be affected by the reputation of the railway for delivering punctual services.

This analysis is designed to provide a general sense that the service is unlikely to cover its costs. The figures used are not predictions, or recommendations, but simply provide a best-case scenario.

8 Summary of findings, recommendations and next steps

8.1 Summary of findings

A pilot local bus service connecting IWM Duxford, Shepreth Wildlife Park, and National Trust Wimpole Estate with railway stations at Shepreth and Whittlesford Parkway has potential to make these tourism destinations more attractive propositions for day trips from Cambridge and London. The bus service could encourage new groups of visitors to these sites, including those without access to a car, or young people, for example to take advantage of new volunteering schemes at IWM Duxford.

The challenge of connecting to railway timetables should be noted, and close liaison with CPCA, train operating companies, and operator of the local bus service would be crucial to be able to respond in an efficient manner. The local authority and traffic commissioner both require notice before a registered local bus service can be amended or withdrawn.

The support and enthusiasm for a local bus service from the three tourism destinations identified in this study was evident. Their inputs to the study, and consideration of benefits they could offer users of the service show a clear commitment to sustainability in South Cambridgeshire. The inclusion of all three sites on the 'Good Journey' website, promoting the pilot service and providing links to one another's sites, would be beneficial in generating new visitors able to arrive by rail and bus.

The abundance of free parking at each site is likely, however, to present a significant challenge for any bus service or pilot. Surpassing the value of free car parking with a fare-paying bus service will be difficult, although possible depending on the marketing of the benefits to a wide range of potential users of the service. This would require greater collaboration between the tourism destinations identified, to support each other and the service through publicity.

Support from both Govia Thameslink Railway and Greater Anglia was strong, and both parties discussed the possibility of working collaboratively together to achieve meaningful change. This included the potential for a new fare product to include the bus which could be added to rail tickets.

The waiting environment at both stations would not be conducive to a pleasant interchange, with an absence of toilet, refreshment, and partial absence of sheltered waiting areas. The opportunity for partnership with local hotels at Whittlesford Parkway may present an opportunity for these facilities to be used, and for marketing the area as a weekend destination, ensuring people could use the service to visit more than one destination.

The opportunity brought about by the introduction of the South Cambridgeshire TIGER on Demand zone is one that should be monitored going forward with officers at CPCA, although it was not deemed possible at this time to expand the zone to include more of the study area.

It is anticipated that subsidy of some form would be required to operate both a pilot, and any service in the future. The scale of this subsidy would depend on the revenue taken on the service. A pilot would enable effective monitoring of costs and patronage. Sources of funding could include CPCA, the destination sites themselves, the District Council, and Community Rail Network.

8.2 Recommendations and next steps

The key recommendations emerging from this feasibility study are::



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- To improve the accessibility of the bus service at Whittlesford Parkway, options such as seeking permission to turn a vehicle around in the village vet car park on the western side of the station could be considered.
 - This could operate by request, with the default pick up and drop off location being situated in the car park of the station.
 - If accessibility did prove to be a barrier at the station, options for using an alternative station, such as Shelford could be considered, located 4 miles north of Whittlesford Parkway.
- Conversations with Greater Anglia noted that testing to determine where a bus could stop for boarding and alighting would be beneficial. A local bus operator would be able to advise on such matters. For the purposes of this study, it is assumed that the vehicle would be able to navigate the car park.
- Conversations with Govia Thameslink Railway revealed that a vehicle waiting on Station Road outside Shepreth station would not be feasible due to the proximity to the level crossing. Whilst rail replacement buses do stop outside the station, they do not wait. It is therefore important to locate a suitable location for the vehicle to layover at Shepreth, as per the timetable.
 - The station car park is extremely small (13 spaces), and therefore options for this layover location include the existing bus stop on Meldreth Road, or in the Shepreth Village Hall car park. Alternatively, use of the Shepreth Wildlife Park car park, or sidings could be investigated.
- Exploring ways to make the waiting environment more attractive would add value to the service as neither rail station has toilet or refreshment facilities. It is noted that there is potential for agreements with local hotels at Whittlesford Parkway in particular, whereby users of the service could make use of these facilities at the hotel, who could in turn benefit from the increased trade in drinks and room sales.
 - The option to market the area, and combination of tourism destinations has potential when considering these hotels at Whittlesford Parkway. This offers the option for visitors to make the most of the service over a couple of days or a weekend. Discussions with the destination sites revealed the lack of potential for visitors to visit more than one destination, with Wimpole Estate and IWM Duxford considered full day activities.
 - Exploring ways to market the area with local hotels would open the service up to catering for this demand, promoting South Cambridgeshire as a destination itself, and encouraging people to stay in the area, making use of the service to visit multiple tourism destinations.
- Continued exploration of publicity and marketing with the three tourism destinations will be key to encouraging mode shift within existing visitor groups. The promotion of benefits of the service would help people see the value in the service as opposed to the free car parking at each site.
 - The marketed benefits could include 'jumping the queue' as the bus would drop you off as close as possible to the visitor center at Wimpole Estate and IWM Duxford.
 - Discussions with the tourism destinations included the potential for discounted entry to the Wildlife Park, and perks such as a free drink at Wimpole Estate. These tangible benefits could be marketed to potential and existing visitors to the sites.
- Marketing of the area and easy to use service along the railway lines towards London and Cambridge would be beneficial to promoting the service to existing rail passengers, whilst additional social media marketing could encourage wider mode shift from those not already using the railway.
- Engagement with local communities could help to make them aware of the service, boosting patronage whilst using existing bus stops in settlements along the route. Connecting these settlements to the tourism destinations and to the rail stations presents an opportunity to support connectivity in the local community.



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- As the TIGER on Demand service continues to operate, open dialogue with officers at CPCA may present opportunities to consider the future of the South Cambridgeshire zone. As CPCA now manages the data and back-office systems of the TIGER on Demand service, liaison with officers could deliver efficiencies if zones were to be amended, or service reviewed in the future.
- Continued exploration of support for the service with the three tourism destinations to establish potential for contributions towards the service could create a stronger case for funding from CPCA. A mechanism in the pricing of admission to set some funding aside for the local bus service would make the proposal more attractive for CPCA to support, linking to their strategic targets.



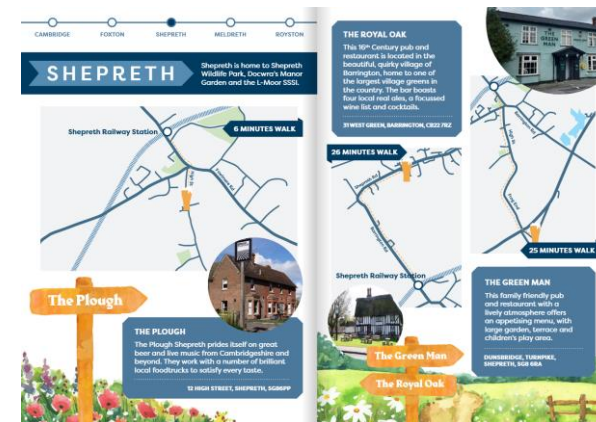
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A1 Existing initiatives of the Community Rail Partnership

Highlighting local activities and green spaces
Explore the Great Outdoors along the Cambridge Line

Rail and Ale Trail leaflet produced with Visit South Cambs



Things to do maps of nature, churches, & pubs in the local area

Local Walk leaflets starting from the stations



A2 Population distribution data, 2021 Census

Age	Shepreth Parish	Whittlesford Parish	South Cambridgeshire District	Cambridgeshire	England
Aged 15 years and under	17%	20%	20%	18%	19%
Aged 16 to 64 years	61%	58%	61%	64%	63%
Aged 65 years and over	22%	22%	20%	19%	18%

A3 Station data (Office of Rail and Road)

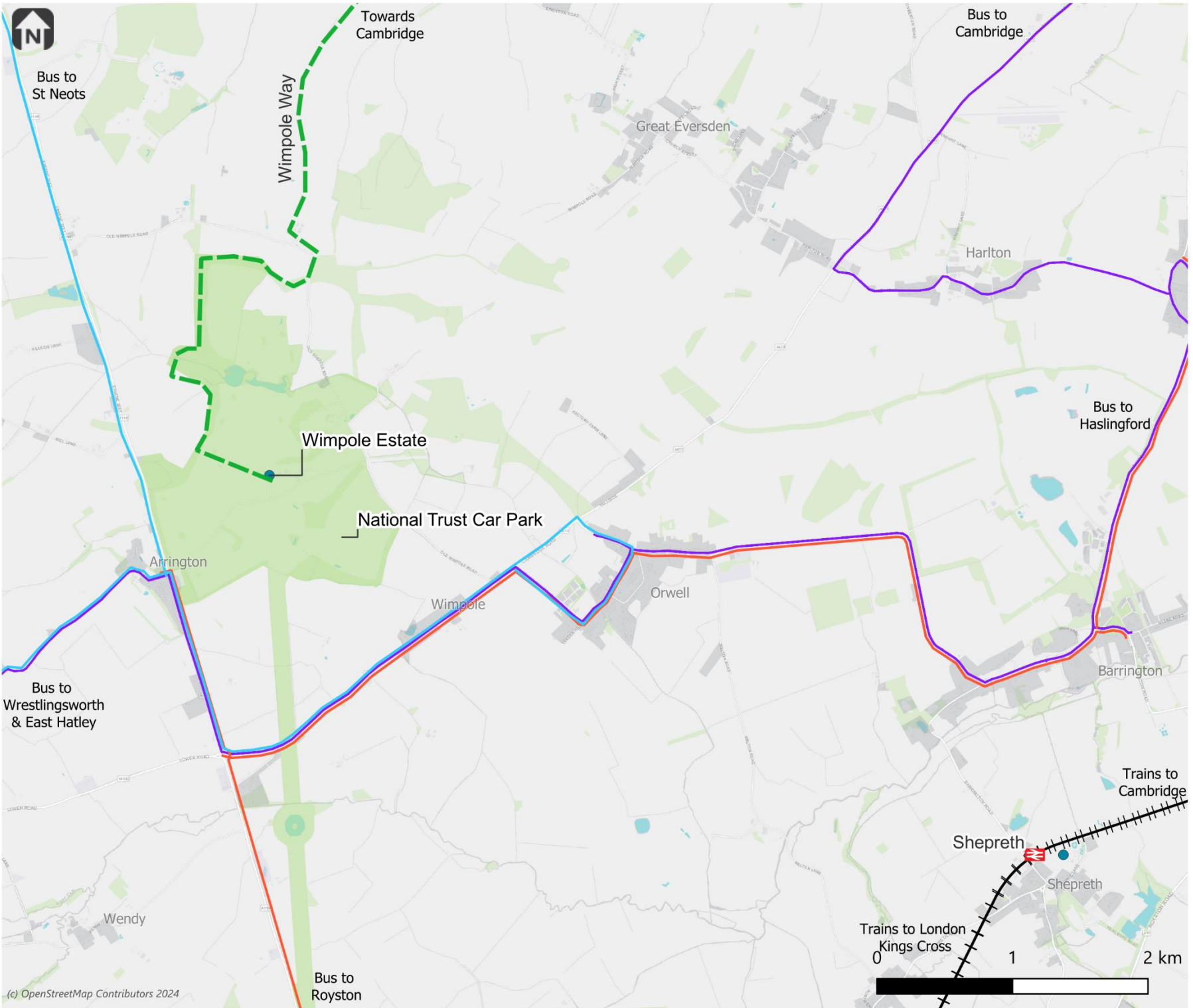
Station name	Entries and exits - Full price tickets	Entries and exits - Reduced price tickets	Entries and exits - Season tickets	Entries and exits - All tickets
Shepreth	28%	56%	16%	91,082
Whittlesford Parkway	25%	54%	21%	376,432



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A4 Map to show the Wimpole Estate with additional local bus routes, the 15 and C2.



(c) OpenStreetMap Contributors 2024

Prepared	Reviewed	Date
SR	JF	Oct 24

Key

- Wimpole Way
- Railway Station
- Railway Line
- Destinations
- Bus Service 75 & X75
- Bus Service 15
- Bus Service C2



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Client



Project

Community rail Partnership
Eco Tourism Bus Feasibility
Study

Figure title

Wimpole Estate, National
Trust Car Park, Wimpole
Way and the 75 bus route

Revision

A

Figure number

A3

Project number

PC6808

Date

October 2024



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A5 Shepreth Onward Travel Information Map

Shepreth Station

Onward Travel Information

Local area map

Station Map

Southbound and Northbound buses will stop directly outside the station exit on Station Road.

Information

(Data correct at May 2016)

THERE ARE NO REGULAR BUS SERVICES SERVING SHEPRETH RAILWAY STATION.

Shepreth Station has no taxi rank or cab office. Advance booking is essential, please consider using the following local operators: (Inclusion of this number doesn't represent any endorsement of the taxi firm)

South Cambs Taxis Ltd
01223 834 858

ButlerMeltax
01763 430 078

Royston Taxis
01763 250 811

Further information about all onward travel

Local Cycle Info scamb.gov.uk For more information about cycle routes	National Cycle Info sustrans.org.uk Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity	Bus Times See timetables and bus times 	NextBuses Find the bus times for your stop. Search for a bus stop by entering a postcode, street & house or a stop name & date	PlusBus plusbus.info A discount price 'one card' that you buy with your ticket. It gives you unlimited free travel around your chosen route, for participating routes.
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National Rail Enquiries

Online nationalrail.co.uk	NRE App Free National Rail Enquiries app for iOS and Android	Social Media facebook.com/nationalraileng @nationalraileng	Alert Me Get up-to-the-minute live messages on the National Rail Enquiries website when you can board train and get home, or when there are delays to your journey. nationalrail.co.uk/alertme	Contact Centre 03457 48 48 50 Call us for more than 1000 telephone numbers, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.	PlusBike nationalrail.co.uk/plusbike For more information
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Britain's train companies working together

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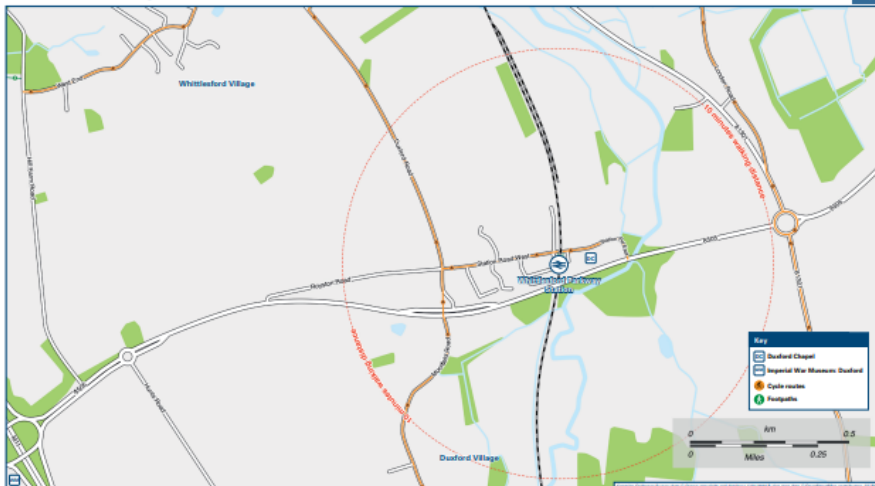
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A6 Whittlesford Parkway Onward Travel Information Map

Whittlesford Parkway Station Onward Travel Information

Local area map



Buses



Main destinations by bus

(Data correct as July 2016)

DESTINATION	BUS ROUTES	BUS STOP
Duxford Village		Approximately 20 minutes walk from this station
Duxford (Imperial War Museum)		Approximately 25 minutes walk from this station
	7A	1
Heathfield (Opp. Garage)	7A	1
Hinton	7A	1
Pampisford	7A	1
Sawston	7A	1
Whittlesford Village		Approximately 25 minutes walk from this station
	7A	1

Notes: Bus route 7A operates a limited service on Mondays to Fridays only. For bus times and further information contact Traveline on 01753 22 33 or A2B Bus and Coach (for bus route 7A) on 01223 517 008.

Taxis

Whittlesford Parkway station has no taxi rank or cab office. Advance booking is essential, please consider using the following local operators: (Inclusion of this number doesn't represent any endorsement of the taxi firm)

Cambs Private Hire
01223 971 611

Cambridge City Taxis
01223 832 832

Sawston Cab Co Ltd
01223 517 008

Further information about all onward travel

Local Cycle Info scambs.gov.uk For more information about cycle routes	National Cycle Info sustrans.org.uk See the UK's leading sustainable transport charity	Bus Times See timetables, distances and bus stops traveline 0871 200 22 33 For more information about bus routes	NextBuses Find the bus times for your stop. Register for a free stop by entering a postcode, street name or a stop name & bus.	PlusBus plusbus.info A different price for your stop that you pay with your buscard. Register for a free stop by entering a postcode, street name or a stop name & bus.
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National Rail Enquiries

Online nationalrail.co.uk	NRE App Free National Rail Enquiries app for iOS and Android	Social Media facebook.com/nationalrailenq @nationalrailenq	Alert Me You can sign up to receive the messages on the National Rail Enquiries website when you see station news and platform information directly to your email phone. nationalrail.co.uk/alertme	Contact Centre 03457 48 49 50 Call us for more than 1000 geographical numbers (03) or 0345 for more than 1000.	PlusBike nationalrail.co.uk/plusbike For more information
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Scan this code with your phone for full station information

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A7 Case Studies

A7.1 Blenheim Palace Free Shuttle

Blenheim Palace has recently launched a free to use shuttle bus service from the local rail station. The route is direct to the Palace, calling at two locations on site.

Visitors arriving at Hanborough rail station can take a free shuttle bus at weekends every 30 minutes. The service operates between 9.10am and 5.40pm on Saturday and Sunday to coincide with GWR train arrival and departure times.²⁶



Figure 25 - Blenheim Palace Shuttle Bus

  Hanborough Station Blenheim Palace free shuttle bus	
Saturdays & Public Holidays	
bus times from 6 th May 2023, rail times valid from 21 st May 2023	
connect by train from	
London Paddington	0752 0852 0950 1052 1252 1350 1452 1552
Reading	0819 0919 1018 1119 1319 1419 1519 1619
Didcot Parkway	0807 0907 1007 1106 1306 1406 1507 1607
Oxford	0845 0945 1045 1145 1345 1448 1545 1645
Hanborough arrival	0854 0954 1054 1154 1354 1458 1554 1654
↓	↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓
Hanborough Railway Station	0910 0940 1010 1040 1110 1140 1210 1340 1410 1440 1510 1540 1610 1640 1710 1740
Blenheim Palace Woodstock Gate	0920 0950 1020 1050 1120 1150 1220 1350 1420 1450 1520 1550 1620 1650 1720 1750
Blenheim Palace Crossroads	0925 0955 1025 1055 1125 1155 1225 1355 1425 1455 1525 1555 1625 1655 1725 1755
Hanborough Railway Station	0935 1005 1035 1105 1135 1205 1235 1405 1435 1505 1535 1605 1635 1705 1735 1805
↓	↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓
connect by train to	
Hanborough departure	1019 1121 1219 1419 1519 1619 1719 1821
Oxford	1028 1130 1230 1428 1528 1628 1728 1830
Didcot Parkway	1050 1151 1250 1451 1551 1650 1750 1850
Reading	1054 1154 1254 1453 1553 1654 1754 1854
London Paddington	1122 1222 1322 1522 1622 1723 1822 1924

Figure 26 - Timetable showing how the service operates to connect to rail services to Oxford and London.²⁷

²⁶ [Blenheim Palace launch free shuttle service with Oxford Bus Company - Oxford Bus Company and Thames Travel](#)

²⁷ [Blenheim Palace BP1 - Long Hanborough Station - Blenheim Palace - Long Hanborough Station | Oxford Bus Company and Thames Travel](#)

A7.2 Promoting sustainable travel at National Trust

At some of its sites, the National Trust offers incentives to those arriving by sustainable travel modes. Visitors can “enjoy a free, regular size hot drink at either Packwood House or Baddesley Clinton when [they] arrive by train from Moor Street Railway Station” by showing a same-day train ticket when they order a drink from the café. The website also provides directions from the closest station to both sites²⁸.



We're delighted to team up with Network Rail to offer a free cuppa for visitors of Packwood House and Baddesley Clinton choosing to switch tyres for train tracks and walking boots!

So, if you're heading to either of the two beautiful properties from Birmingham Moor Street station, simply head to the café and show a copy your same-day train ticket to a member of the team and receive a free regular hot drink on us, by way of a thank you for choosing to travel greener.

The Warwickshire properties are both within a two-mile radius of Lapworth station, on the Chiltern main line, which can be easily reached directly from Birmingham Moor Street station.

To find out more, and for full T&Cs, visit: <http://tiny.cc/qwt6001>



Figure 27 - Social media post for the free hot drink initiative at National Trust sites in Warwickshire²⁹

²⁸ [Visiting National Trust by train | National Trust](#)

²⁹ [National Trust in the Midlands | Facebook](#)

A7.3 Legendary Journeys by Bus, Transport for Cornwall

In the summer of 2024, Transport for Cornwall transformed trips by bus into 'Legendary Journeys'. A fun-filled activity pack invited families to become immersed in Cornish myths, legends and folklore. Activities and an exciting competition encouraged people to take a fresh look at the world whilst on the bus.³⁰

Concepts such as this could be applied to the proposed study, by encouraging families to view the bus journey as part of their day trip or experience, where they can spend time together.



Figure 28 - Legendary Journeys by Bus activity pack

A7.4 Branding and other examples of local bus services

A7.4.1 Great Yarmouth

In the summers of 2023 and 2024³¹, a seasonal 'Our bus' service ran every half hour, every day, between July and September. Sponsored by the Wherry Lines Community Rail Partnership, the service is aimed at people visiting the area either for the day or for their summer holiday. It connects with other bus routes to destinations around Norfolk's Coast.

Single tickets cost £2 for adults, £1.50 for children, and under 5s travelled free³².

A7.4.2 Arne Nature Reserve

Between May and August 2024, a bus service operated on Wednesdays and Sundays connecting Wareham Train Station (with connections to South Western Railway and buses) stopping at Wareham Quay (Wareham South Bridge), Stoborough Green and Ridge to RSPB Arne.

Users of the service also qualified for discounted entry to the Nature Reserve³³.

Single tickets cost £2 per adult, £1 for under 19s, and were free for accompanied children under 7³⁴.

³⁰ [Legendary Journeys by Bus | A Journey to Success - Integrated Transport Planning](#)

³¹ [Popular summer bus service linking station with seaside is saved - Community Rail Network](#)

³² [Summer bus links Norfolk's Great Yarmouth railway station to town](#)

³³ [DCT Service 2RN, 2024 Summer Timetable.xlsx](#)

³⁴ [Arne Nature Reserve 2RN Shuttle Bus - Visit Dorset](#)



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A7.4.3 Slimbridge Shuttle

In the summer of 2023, a 16-seater minibus operated hourly between 8am and 6pm on weekends to connect the communities of Cam, Dursley and Slimbridge with the railway station at Cam & Dursley and the Slimbridge Wetland Centre.

Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership and WWT (Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust) Slimbridge Wetland Centre launched the shuttle service, which ran for just over three months as a pilot.

Fares were capped at £1 for a single journey or £2 for a return. Bus pass holders and WWT volunteers were able to travel free, and there were concessions for under 18s.

The service was operated by Community Connexions, a local community transport operator.

Lessons learnt included challenges with punctuality due to speeds on rural roads, and coordinating with rail timetables. Although publicity included social media, radio and news articles, and hard copies of material at key locations on the route, promotion via the train operating companies was limited and could have generated additional visitor footfall.

The cost per passenger of the service was £14.42, and therefore without substantial subsidy would not ensure financial sustainability. Peak passenger traffic on a single day was noted at 39.³⁵

The area has since been included within the operating area of Gloucestershire's 'Robin'³⁶ Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service. Child tickets cost £2.50, and adult tickets are currently capped at £3 under the National Bus Fare Cap Scheme. The service runs between 7am to 7pm, Monday to Saturday and bank holidays.

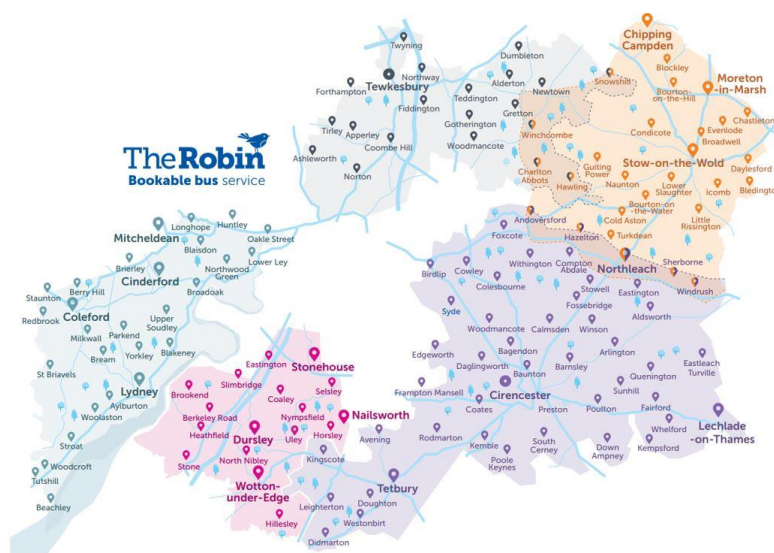


Figure 29 - Robin DRT Operating Area

³⁵ [Slimbridge Shuttle Pilot Initiative](#)

³⁶ [Berkeley Vale | Gloucestershire County Council](#)



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A8 Service Timetable

Timetable report

Route MSFCRP

Monday-Saturday

Service KM: 150

Days		MTWHFS	MTWHFS	MTWHFS	MTWHFS	MTWHFS
Service No		MSFCRP	MSFCRP	MSFCRP	MSFCRP	MSFCRP
Shepreth Station and Shepreth Wildlife Park (adj)	Dep		10:50	12:50	15:25	16:40
National Trust Wimpole Estate	Arr		11:01	13:01	15:36	16:51
National Trust Wimpole Estate	Dep		11:05	13:05	15:40	16:55
Shepreth Station and Shepreth Wildlife Park (adj)	Arr		11:16	13:16	15:51	17:06
Shepreth Station and Shepreth Wildlife Park (adj)	Dep		11:20	13:50	15:55	
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Arr		11:35	14:05	16:10	
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Dep		11:40	14:10	16:15	
Whittlesford Parkway Station	Arr		11:45	14:15	16:20	
Whittlesford Parkway Station	Dep	10:15	11:50	14:50	16:20	
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Arr	10:20	11:55	14:55	16:25	
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Dep	10:35	11:59	14:59	16:29	
Shepreth Station & Shepreth Wildlife Park (opp)	Arr	10:46	12:10	15:10	16:40	



Timetable report

Route MSFCRP

Sunday

Service KM: 179

Days		\$	\$	\$	\$
Service No		MSFCRP	MSFCRP	MSFCRP	MSFCRP
Shepreth Station and Shepreth Wildlife Park (adj)	Dep	09:30	11:30	13:30	15:30
National Trust Wimpole Estate	Arr	09:41	11:41	13:41	15:41
National Trust Wimpole Estate	Dep	09:45	11:45	13:45	15:45
Shepreth Station and Shepreth Wildlife Park (adj)	Arr	09:56	11:56	13:56	15:56
Shepreth Station and Shepreth Wildlife Park (adj)	Dep	10:00	12:00	14:00	16:00
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Arr	10:15	12:15	14:15	16:15
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Dep	10:20	12:20	14:20	16:20
Whittlesford Parkway Station	Arr	10:25	12:25	14:25	16:25
Whittlesford Parkway Station	Dep	10:25	12:25	14:25	16:25
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Arr	10:30	12:30	14:30	16:30
Imperial War Museums Duxford	Dep	10:45	12:45	14:45	16:45
Shepreth Station & Shepreth Wildlife Park (opp)	Arr	10:56	12:56	14:56	16:56