

## iBUILD WP 15: Summary of survey results for Ovingham Bridge closure

**Arthur Affleck**

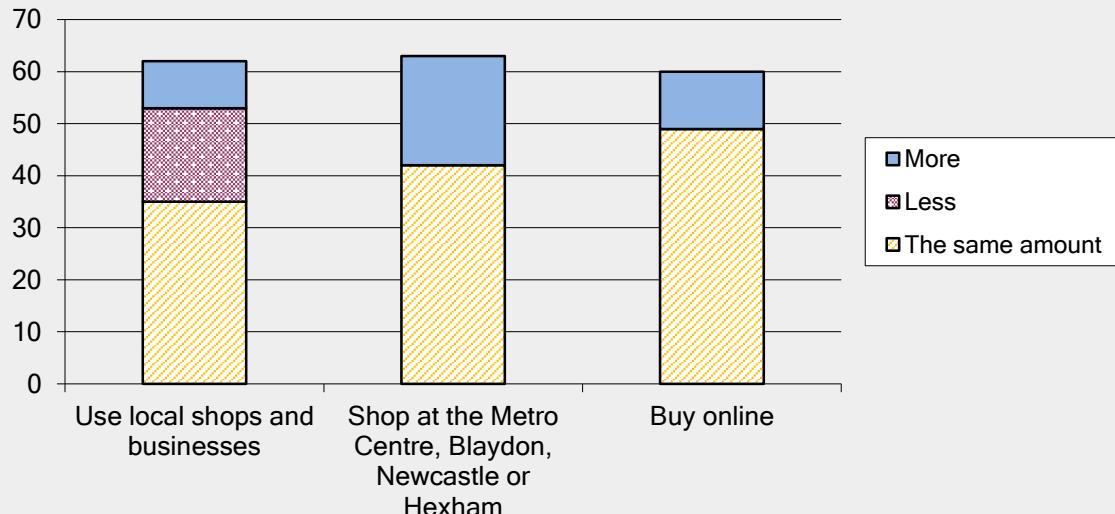
During November 2014 an online survey was opened asking about the impacts of the closure of Ovingham Bridge. There were 65 responses with 35 (53.8%) from Ovingham and 30 (46.2%) from Prudhoe. The results were from a small sample of residents, less than 3% of Ovingham residents and less than 0.3% of Prudhoe residents. Not every question was applicable to all respondents, which also reduced the number of responses. Therefore the figures will not be statistically significant, but will illustrate some impacts of the closure on these residents.

The responses provide evidence to show the bridge closure had an impact on certain activities. In particular around a third of respondents had been affected a lot when travelling to work, buying groceries and visiting friends and relatives.

Has the closure of Ovingham Bridge affected how you:	Not at all	Slightly	A lot
Travel to work	51.0%	16.3%	32.7%
Carry out your business	48.8%	34.1%	17.1%
Do the school run	71.0%	16.1%	12.9%
Buy groceries	28.9%	36.5%	34.6%
Buy fuel	49.0%	22.4%	28.6%
Access health care (GP practice, health centre, dental practice)	51.0%	26.5%	22.5%
Use leisure facilities (public library, swimming pool etc.)	47.8%	30.4%	21.8%
Visit friends and family	23.7%	44.1%	32.2%

When asked were they using the local shops and businesses more, less or the same around 29% (18 respondents) were using the local shops less and around 14% (9 respondents) more. Thirty three percent (21 respondents) were using the Metro Centre, Blaydon, Newcastle and Hexham more and 18% (11 respondents) were buying online more.

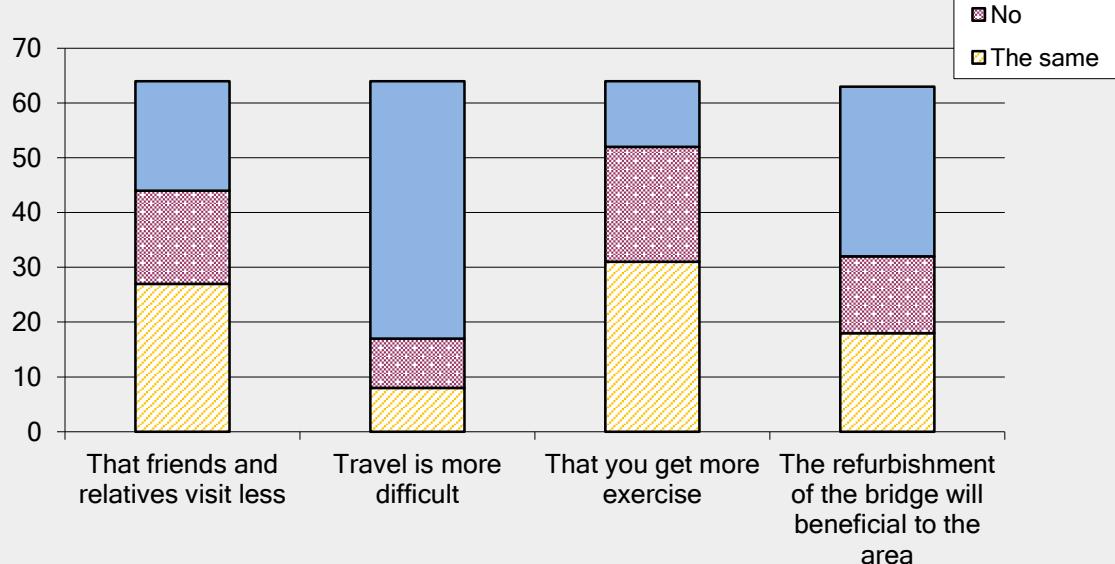
Since the closure of Ovingham Bridge do you:



It was also found that:

- 31.3% (20 respondents) felt friends and relatives visited less.
- 73.4% (47 respondents) felt travel was more difficult.
- 12 respondents (18.8%) felt they got more exercise.
- 31 respondents (49.2%) felt the refurbishment of the bridge would be beneficial to the area.

Since the closure of the Ovingham Bridge do you feel:



The final question asked for positive and negative impacts caused by the closure. The comments were examined, analysed and divided into positive and negative impacts and comments. The main positive impact (17 responses) was Ovingham was quieter and safer without the traffic using the bridge.

The major negative impact was it made travel longer and more difficult (13 responses). Wylam had additional traffic (7 responses) and Bywell and Stocksfield were also being used to a lesser extent. The alternative routes leading to Wylam were considered not suitable and unsafe for the quantity of traffic. Nine respondents commented the closure of the bridge had negative impacts for businesses in Low Prudhoe and shops in the centre of Prudhoe. One set of impacts were associated with the footbridge which was considered to be slippery, dark and cyclists were not dismounting.

This summary includes the results of a small number of responses compared to the population of Prudhoe and Ovingham. The results suggest two main impacts: travel was more difficult and Ovingham was quieter and safer without the traffic from the bridge. The closure of the bridge had no impact on how over 50% of respondents travelled to work.

This summary is part of an ongoing project looking at the value and impact of infrastructure. Further work will be carried out over the next six months and a full report will be available on the i-BUILD website around September 2015.

For further information go to the i-BUILD website: <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/ibuild/> or contact Dr Arthur Affleck at [arthur.affleck@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:arthur.affleck@newcastle.ac.uk)