

Winchester Visitor Surveys

Changes in travel mode 1992 to 1996

The Winchester Travel Survey¹ gives an interesting glimpse of into the changing pattern of travel demand that has occurred since the early 1990s. Since the early 1990s, we know that overall car travel has grown more slowly than during the preceding few decades. There is much interest in why this slow-down has occurred and whether it is an indication of a “peak” or a “pause” in the growth trend line.

Visitor travel to a single historic town in southern England is not a basis from which to analyse general trends, of course, but the decline in car use found in this narrow segment of the travel market is interesting because it is consistent with the wider change. The National Travel Survey cannot reveal trends in individual towns because of the sample size, and so the Winchester Visitor Survey provides us with an interesting view “from the ground”. Here, at least, the leisure travel market shows a change in the mid 1990s with a decline in car use and an increase in both rail and bus use. The decline in coach tour visitors is interesting, but was not commented on in the survey report.

Main form of transport to Winchester by all visitors

(Sample of 501 in 1996)

Main mode	1992 %	1994 %	1996 %
Car/van	76	74	65
Bus service	4	7	11
Train	5	5	10
Walk	1	5	7
Coach tour	10	8	2
Other	4	1	5
Total	100	100	100

Note: Visitors includes day visitors from home, day visitors on holiday, and staying visitors. The survey involved face to face interviews with adults in the town centre during July, August and September. A filter question was used to exclude residents of Winchester District and those on day visits concerned with their normal work, study or regular shopping.

¹ Winchester Visitor Survey 1996, Final Report, prepared by Southern Tourist Board on behalf of Winchester City Council, March 1997.