

Robin Hood's Bay NHS Dentistry – 27th September 2021

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHS E&I) asked Healthwatch North Yorkshire (HWNY) to run a survey on NHS dental provision in Robin Hood's Bay following the handing back of an NHS contract by a provider in the area.

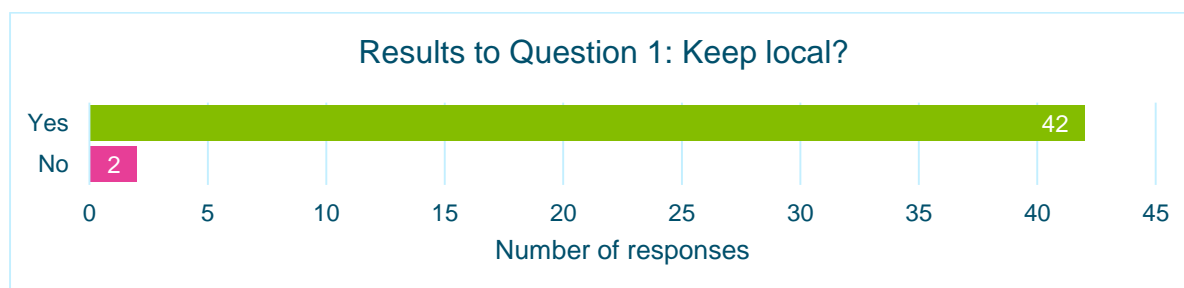
The survey ran simultaneously with an identical one hosted by NHS E&I. The survey by HWNY was aimed at members of the public, whilst the survey run by NHS E&I was targeted to those who had lost NHS dental coverage as a result of the NHS contract being handed back.

Questions were provided by NHS E&I. The survey was hosted on HWNY's website, and ran between Thursday 1st and Friday 9th July promoted through HWNY's mailing lists and social media. The survey received 45 responses.

The survey results demonstrate a strong desire for NHS services to be available in the Robin Hood's Bay area, but also evidence willingness to travel to larger areas nearby, such as Whitby and Scarborough.

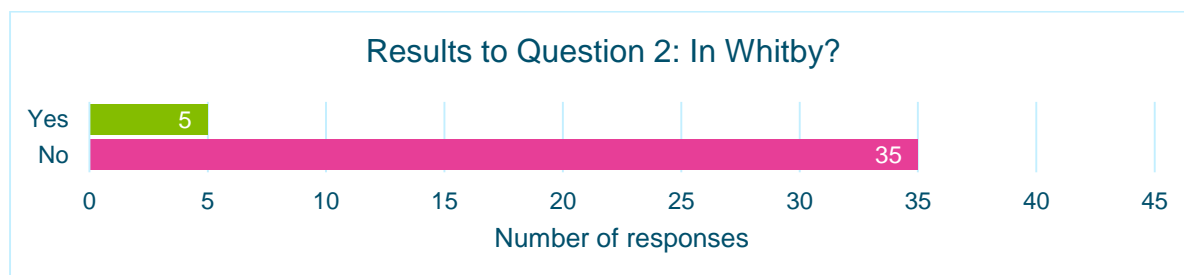
Question 1: Would you be interested in maintaining a service in Robin Hood's Bay that was available between 8.30am and 12:30pm Monday to Friday?

Almost all responders indicated they wanted to keep the service closer, if with reduced hours.



Question 2: Or would you prefer to travel to a practice in Whitby where the service would be available between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday?

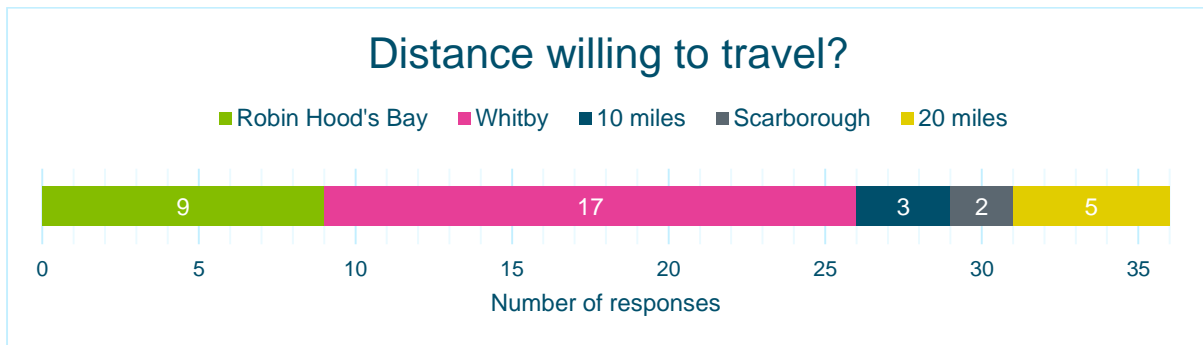
A clear majority said they would not prefer a service in Whitby (with the benefit of longer opening times).



Question 3: If no service was available in Robin Hood's Bay, how far would you be willing to travel to a dental practice?

From the above results it is clear people would prefer a service in Robin Hood's Bay. However, question 3 indicates that when pushed most of the respondents to the survey

would be willing to travel to Whitby, or indeed further afield. Estimating Whitby to be seven miles from Robin Hood's Bay (using Google Maps), and Scarborough approximately 16 miles away, the distribution of responses was as follows:



As indicated by the figure above, a significant portion of the respondents expressed a desire for the service to be local. Reasons for this included a lack of transport, disability, age, and dentists elsewhere “are all full now”.

The majority are willing to travel further to access NHS dentistry – especially as far as Whitby. However, this raises potential barriers for those unable to travel for the reasons mentioned above.

Other points raised from the responses to question 3 include:

- “...prefer the Robin Hoods Bay practice for parking and proximity.”
- “Travelling to Whitby isn't really an option with the restrictions in parking and actually finding a dentist taking NHS patients.”
- “Over 9,000 people live in [Robin Hood's Bay] area. Surely this is sufficient to keep a dentist busy.”

Response from NHS England and NHS Improvement

NHSE&I value all the efforts of those who took the time to be involved in the Robin Hood's Bay and Scarborough surveys and focus groups and have taken the views and wishes into consideration for the future commissioning of services in these areas. Temporary provision has already been established in the Eastfield Ward of Scarborough whilst the wider procurement exercise is underway and the specifications for both areas are currently being finalised, taking on board the feedback received from this work.