





Herefordshire Bus Services Consultation

Survey Analysis

May 2014

Contents

<u>Page</u>

Exe	cutive Summary	4
1	cutive Summary INTRODUCTION	5
2	DEMOGRAPHICS	6
3	TRAVEL PATTERNS	12
4	IMPACT OF SERVICE CUTS	17
5	POLICY AND PRIORITIES	27
6	COMMENTS	31
7	SUMMARY	33
Арр	endix A	35

Executive Summary

- 1.1 This consultation arises through the need to save £1 million over the next two financial years from the transport budget. A survey was undertaken between 6th March and 21st April 2014 and was available via hard copy and online. A total of 1,753 surveys were received.
- 1.2 There was a high response from people aged over 65 compared to Herefordshire as a whole, so there is some bias towards the opinions of older people. The age profile reflects the high number of retired people and the number of concessionary pass holders responding to the survey. Comparing to Herefordshire residents, there was a higher proportion of survey respondents with a disability or long-term illness and a lower proportion of people who have access to a car.
- 1.3 Most people who responded (93%) used buses in Herefordshire and used services receiving subsidy from the council (90%). Seventy two percent of respondents travelled more than once a week and 47% of journeys were for shopping purposes. A relatively high percentage (22%) of journeys was for medical appointments. Most people (69%) were able to access their bus stop within 10 minutes.
- 1.4 When asked what alternative mode of transport they would use if their bus was no longer available, 37% said they would travel by car, either driving or via a lift; 33% said they have no other alternative. Those with no alternative are older, more have a disability or illness affecting them getting out and about, travel more frequently and say the withdrawal of bus services would have a high impact on them.
- 1.5 When asked how much of an impact withdrawing the bus service would have on respondents, 71% said it would have a high impact. The profile of these people is representative of the total respondents, but more people do not have access to a car. Most people considered elderly people to be particularly affected by potential changes to bus services.
- 1.6 Most respondents (82%) agreed with the priorities set by the council which supports the results of the 2011 consultation on the review of subsidised services. Of those who didn't agree, evening services were viewed to be more important. Sunday services were most commonly considered to be the services to be withdrawn, accounting for 61% of answers.
- 1.7 There were a wide range of comments received covering many topics. By far the most common topic was that of access to essential services with 30% of people raising this as an issue. Other common comments related to services in rural areas, a plea to retain services, and fares.

Introduction 1

- 1.8 Bus services are very important for many people in Herefordshire, providing transport for people of all ages, abilities and financial standing. They provide access to work, education, healthcare, shopping and leisure as well as enabling people to visit friends and gain access to the outside world, reducing social exclusion and improving quality of life.
- 1.9 In a county like Herefordshire, with lots of rural areas and a relatively small population, there are not enough people to enable bus operators to operate all services commercially. Of the 3.1 million bus journeys made each year in Herefordshire, around 39% are supported by a subsidy from the council. The total cost of this subsidy is around £1.6 million.
- 1.10 As part of its austerity measures, central government is reducing funding to local authorities, resulting in significant financial pressure to public services. To address the significant cuts in its budget, Herefordshire Council is reviewing all its activities, and part of this is to undertake a detailed review of transport services with a view to save £1 million over the next two financial years.
- 1.11 To achieve this, the council is working closely with operators to explore how savings can be achieved through efficiencies, journey planning, integration and frequency reduction. However, it is unlikely that all the savings will be made through these methods and therefore consideration needs to be given to the withdrawal of subsidy to some services.
- 1.12 To aid this process and guide the decisions made in shaping the transport network, a consultation was undertaken.
- A survey was available to residents across the county between 6th March and 21st April 2014. This 1.13 was available on-line via the Council's website and in paper format, with copies distributed via libraries, Council offices, parish councils, bus operators and other organisations. Responses could be submitted on-line, via email or using a freepost address.
- 1.14 A total of 1,753 survey responses were received, of which 689 (39%) were completed online. The findings of the survey are detailed in the following report.

Report Name

2 Demographics

2.15 The first set of questions analysed related to the demographics of the people undertaking the survey. The results are set out below and are compared to the 2011 census data for Herefordshire.

Gender

Are you male of female?

Gender	Number	%
Male	549	31%
Female	1091	62%
No answer	113	6%
Total	1753	



2.16 There were a higher proportion of female respondents (62%) to male respondents (31%). Census data from 2011 shows in Herefordshire, there is a more even split of gender with 51% of residents being female and 49% male.

Age

What is your age?

Age	Number	%
0-15 years	13	1%
16-24 years	73	4%
25-44 years	132	8%
45-64 years	417	24%
65-74 years	561	32%
75+ years	481	27%
No answer	76	4%
Total	1753	



2.17 Of all respondents, 59% were over the age of 65. Comparing this to the Census data, only 21% were over the age of 65. With regards to younger people, only 5% of survey respondents were under 25 years old, compared to 27% of Herefordshire residents. Respondents to the survey were therefore generally older when compared to Herefordshire residents as a whole.

Work status

Which of the following best describes your work status?

Work Status	Number	%
Full time employment	215	12%
Part time employment	214	12%
Unemployed and available for work	29	2%
Retired	1108	63%
Full time education	50	3%
Not working due to disability/illness	50	3%
No answer	87	5%
Total	1753	



2.18 Most respondents (63%) were retired which supports the age profile. Although all the categories do not correspond to those in the 2011 Census, the number of unemployed is representative of Herefordshire as a whole, with 2% of respondents being unemployed compared to 3% of Herefordshire residents.

Car availability

Do you have access to a car?

Answer	Number	%
Yes	784	45%
No	854	49%
No answer	115	7%
Total	1753	



2.19 The availability and access to a car is fairly evenly split between respondents having access and not having access. Across Herefordshire, 84% of residents own a car/van. The lower percentage of people with access to a car observed in this survey is expected as bus users, constituting most of the respondents, are less likely to have access to a car than non-bus users.

Disability/illness

Do you have a disability or long term illness?

Answer	Number	%
No	1029	59%
Yes, but this does not limit my ability to get out and about	415	24%
Yes, and this does limit my ability to get out and about	199	11%
No answer	110	6%
Total	1753	



2.20 Most people who responded (59%) did not have a disability or long-term illness and if they did, it did not limit their ability to get out and about. This compares to 66% of all Herefordshire residents. Eleven percent of respondents did, however, have a disability or illness affecting their ability to get out and about.

Concessionary Fares Scheme

Do you make use of the concessionary bus pass scheme?

Answer	Number	%
No	490	28%
Yes, I have an older persons bus pass	1138	65%
Yes, I have a disabled persons bus pass	46	3%
No answer	79	5%
Total	1753	



2.21 A high percentage of those who responded (65%) have, and use, a concessionary fares bus pass. This is reflective of the age profile of the respondents.

Job No	Report No	Issue no	Report Name	Page
MID3332	001	001	Herefordshire Bus Consultation Survey Analysis	9

Ethnicity

How would you describe yourself?

Ethnicity	Number	%
White British (English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish	1575	90%
Other White	16	1%
European	24	1%
Other	9	1%
No answer	129	7%
Total	1753	



2.22 The large majority of respondents were White British (90%) which is reflective of the demographics of Herefordshire (94%).

Page	Job No	Report No	Issue no	Report Name
10	MID3536	001	001	Broad Heath Primary School

Would you be interested in finding out more about becoming a volunteer for one of the seven community transport schemes that operate across Herefordshire?

Answer	Number	%
Yes	34	2%
No	1454	83%
No answer	265	15%
Total	1753	



2.23 Thirty four people said they would be interested in becoming a volunteer. The details of these people will be provided separately.

3 Travel Patterns

3.24 The survey questioned people on how they travel, how often they travel and where they travel. The results of these questions are set out below.

Bus use

Do you use buses in Herefordshire?

Answer	Total	%
Yes	1639	93%
No	67	4%
No answer	47	3%
Total	1753	



3.25 Most people who responded are Herefordshire bus users (93%). This is expected given the nature of the questionnaire.

If yes, does this include one of the supported services?

Answer	Total	%
Yes	1475	90%
No	58	4%
No answer	106	6%
Total	1639	



3.26 Most people said the services they use include one of the supported services (90%). Again, this is not surprising given the nature of the questionnaire.

Which bus service(s) do you use mainly (services number(s))?

3.27 The respondents mentioned a total of 3054 services which they travelled on between them, some travelled on one service, others travelled on many. There were 125 different services mentioned, a list of these and the number of respondents travelling on these, can be found in Appendix A. The services on which most respondents travelled were the 461/462 (341 respondents), 33 (182 respondents), 76/76A (151 respondents) and 492 (150 respondents). However, these only accounted for 27% of the services travelled on, which gives an indication of the broad use of services.

Frequency of travel

How often do you use the service(s)

Frequency	Number	%
Three or more times per week	672	38%
Once or twice per week	592	34%
Once or twice per month	251	14%
Once or twice per year	34	2%
No answer	204	12%
Total	1753	

Survey Analysis



3.28 A high proportion of the people completing the survey were regular bus users, with 72% travelling at least once a week.

Journey purpose

What is the main purpose of your journey by bus? (tick up to two answers)

Purpose	Number	%
School/ College	73	2%
Work	238	8%
Food shopping	866	29%
Non- food shopping	536	18%
Medical appointments	662	22%
Leisure or recreation	240	8%
Visiting friends or relatives	164	5%
No answer	213	7%
Total	2992	

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3.29 Respondents were able to state several reasons for travel. Most journey purposes were for shopping (47%) followed by medical appointments (22%). The low percentages for education and work are reflective of the age profile of respondents.

Travel to bus stop

How long does it take you to get from home to the bus stop to catch your main bus service?

Time	Number	%
0-5 minutes	813	46%
6-10 minutes	396	23%
11-15 minutes	159	9%
16-20 minutes	60	3%
21-24 minutes	34	2%
>25 minutes	52	3%
No answer	239	14%
Total	1753	

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Report No Issue no



3.30 Over two thirds (69%) of respondents were able to access their bus stop within 10 minutes. An analysis was undertaken to establish whether frequency of travel is related to distance from home to bus stop. For those who are able to access their bus stop within 10 minutes and for those able to access their stop between 11 and 20 minutes, 82% of respondents travel frequently (more than once a week). Those for whom it takes more than 20 minutes to access their bus stop, travel a little less frequently (69% travelling more than once a week).

Impact of Service Cuts 4

4.31 The impact of service cuts was explored and analysis of the people who would be affected the most was undertaken.

Travel alternatives

If your main bus service was no longer available, what alternative(s) would you use?

Alternatives	Number	%
Walking	191	10%
Cycling	55	3%
Car (as driver)	461	24%
Lift	262	13%
Taxi	186	10%
Train	72	4%
Motorcycle	4	0%
Community transport	69	4%
No alternative	650	33%
Total	1950	



- 4.32 A third of the answers given were that no alternative modes of travel would be available to the respondent should the main bus service be no longer available. The most common form of alternative transport was the car, with 37% resorting to this mode, be it as a driver or a passenger.
- 4.33 Only 4% said they would use community transport. In the 2011 consultation, when asked if they would use community transport if buses were withdrawn, 31% of respondents answered "yes". It is a little surprising therefore that fewer people would use community transport now. This could be

Job No	Report No	Issue no	Report Name	Page
MID3332	001	001	Herefordshire Bus Consultation Survey Analysis	17

an availability issue, a perception issue or perhaps people just don't know about the community transport schemes. Ultimately, we do not know the answer.

Of those people who answered "no alternative", the following analysis was made: If your main bus service was no longer available, what would be the impact on you?

Impact	Number	%
High impact	553	94%
Low impact	13	2%
Some impact	1	0%
No impact	14	2%
No answer	6	1%
	587	



What is the main purpose of your journey?

Purpose	Number	%
School/ College	41	4%
Work	115	11%
Food shopping	313	31%
Non- food shopping	160	16%
Medical appointments	236	23%
Leisure or recreation	66	7%
Visiting friends or relatives	66	7%
No answer	10	1%
Total	1007	



How often do you use the service(s)?

Frequency	Number	%
Three or more times per week	308	54%
Once or twice per week	194	34%
Once or twice per month	55	10%
Once or twice per year	4	1%
No answer	6	1%
Total	567	



Age	Number	%
0-15 years	8	1%
16-24 years	38	7%
25-44 years	62	11%
45-64 years	122	22%
65-74 years	154	27%
75+ years	159	28%
No answer	24	4%
Total	567	



Do you have a disability or long term illness?

Answer	Number	%
No	305	54%
Yes, but this does not limit my ability to get out and about	96	17%
Yes, and this does limit my ability to get out and about	146	26%
No answer	20	4%
Total	567	100%

Job No

MID3536



- 4.34 The majority of people who responded saying they would have no alternative modes of transport if their bus service was no longer available unsurprisingly stated that it would have a high impact on them.
- 4.35 The journey purpose profile of these people was similar to that of the total respondents, showing there are no particular types of travel affected.
- 4.36 Those affected by having no alternative means of travel, travel more frequently, 88% travelling at least once a week compared to 72% of all respondents. This is expected as people who have alternatives are likely to use these alternatives occasionally if not often.
- 4.37 The age profile is also different, with a higher proportion of people aged 75 or over having no alternative ways of travelling. Similarly, there are a higher proportion of people who have a disability or long-term illness which affects them getting out and about (26% compared to 11% of all respondents).
- 4.38 Summarising, the people who stated they would have no alternative means of travel should their bus service be no longer available, said this would have a high impact on them. These people tend to travel more frequently, are older and have a disability/illness affecting their ability to travel more than the total respondents to the questionnaire.

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Impact of service cuts

If your main bus service was no longer available, what would be the impact on you?

Impact	Number	%
High impact	1238	71%
Low impact	95	5%
Some impact	210	12%
No impact	1	0%
No answer	209	12%
Total	1753	



Of those people who answered "high impact", the following analysis was made: Do you have access to a car?

Answer	Number	%
Yes	484	39%
No	754	61%
Total	1238	



What is your age?

Age	Number	%
0 - 15	12	1%
16 - 24	59	5%
25 - 44	103	8%
45 - 64	268	22%
65 - 74	388	31%
75+	374	30%
No answer	34	3%
Total	1238	



Answer	Number	%
No	696	56%
Yes, but this does not limit my ability to get out and about	316	26%
Yes, and this does limit my ability to get out and about	176	14%
No answer	50	4%
Total	1238	



- 4.39 The analysis shows that the age profile and the profile of those with a disability/long-term illness if fairly representative of the total people responding to the questionnaire. Access to a car, however, is different; 61% of those saying the impact of service reduction would have a high impact have no access to a car, compared to 49% of respondents as a whole.
- 4.40 An analysis was also undertaken on the services which the people for who a service reduction would have a high impact, travelled on. As with the general analysis of all respondents, there was a wide range of services mentioned, 96 in total. The services most travelled on by these people were the 461/462 (159 respondents), 33 (79 respondents), 492 (49 respondents), 32 (43 respondents) and 76/76a (37 respondents). This is the same as for all respondents, indicating that people highly affected by potential service reductions do not travel on a service in particular.

Fairness

Do you think changes to bus services will affect any group of people due to certain characteristics?

Answer	Number	%
Yes	1105	63%
No	324	18%
No answer	324	18%
Total	1753	



Of those that said "yes", the following categories of people we mentioned as being affected.

Category	Number	%
All	20	3%
Disabled	234	31%
Elderly	613	80%
Non-drivers	31	4%
Parents	22	3%
Poor	61	8%
Pregnant	10	1%
Rural	44	6%
Workers	11	1%
Young	172	22%
Other	8	1%
Total	765	

Report No

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4.41 Many people stated several categories of people. Of the answers given 63% considered that changes to bus services would affect certain groups of people in particular. Most answers (80%) related to the elderly being most affected. 31% related to disabled people and 22% related to young people being particularly affected.

5 Policy and Priorities

5.42 The current policy suggests that priority should be given to core services during the main daytime period. These cost about £0.8 million a year. In 2011, a countywide consultation was undertaken on the review of subsidised bus services. The results of this consultation are compared to the findings from 2011.

Policy

Do you agree that these services operated during the main daytime period should be treated as a priority?

Answer	Number	%
Yes	1315	75%
No	298	17%
No answer	140	8%
Total	1753	



5.43 In 2011, 83% of respondents stated that their priority for services was Monday to Friday daytime. In this consultation, 75% of respondents supported this priority. Although this is slightly lower, if we take out the people that did not answer, the percentage supporting the priorities increases to 82%. The priorities of people across the county have therefore not changed since the consultation in 2011.

The consultation in 2011 concluded that the highest priority should be given to the following types of service (in descending order):

Monday to Friday (daytime); Monday to Friday (early morning); Saturday daytime; Market day services into Hereford or Herefordshire market towns.

Evenings and Sundays (which cost the council £0.2 million a year) were seen as a lower priority.

Job No	Report No	Issue no	Report Name	Page
MID33	32 001	001	Herefordshire Bus Consultation Survey Analysis	27

Do you agree with the above priorities?

Answer	Number	%
Yes	1231	70%
No	344	20%
No answer	178	10%
Total	1753	100%



If no, please say what you think should be the priority for support.

Priority	Number	%
Evening	127	37%
Sunday	67	19%
Early morning	30	9%
Rural or market day	53	15%
Saturday	24	7%
All	12	3%
Other	9	3%
No answer	103	30%
Total	344	

Job No

MID3536



5.44 Seventy percent of respondents agreed with the council's current policies in terms of priorities for funding bus services (78% if those that did not answer are removed from the calculation). Of those who didn't agree with the priorities, evening services were seen to be of most priority (37% of respondents), with Sunday services being of second most important. 30% of people did not state an alternative priority to those given by the council.

Faced with making significant savings, which types of services do you consider should be reduced or withdrawn?

Service Type	Number	%
Monday- Friday daytime	41	3%
Monday- Friday evening	399	29%
Saturday daytime	64	5%
Saturday evening	562	41%
Sunday	829	61%
Market day services	364	27%
Town/city services	327	24%
Rural/village services	58	4%
Total	1365	

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- 5.45 Respondents were able to give more than one answer to this question. 61% of the answers given said that given a choice, Sunday services would be reduced or withdrawn if significant savings were to be made. Monday to Friday and Saturday day time services and rural/village services were seen to be of higher priority.
- 5.46 Again, this supports the views set out in the 2011 consultation where the lowest priority services were Saturday evenings, Friday evenings, Sundays and Monday to Thursday evenings, in order of least priority. The highest priorities were Monday to Friday daytime, Monday to Friday early mornings, Saturday daytime and market day services, in order of highest priority.

6 Comments

Please provide any other comments about bus services in Herefordshire.

Comment Category	Number	%	Notes
Accessibility	148	30%	Access to essential services.
Vehicles	10	2%	Type, size and quality of buses.
Capacity	5	1%	Overcrowding.
Compliment	29	6%	General praise for services.
Connections	15	3%	Connecting with other services to serve other places.
Drivers	5	1%	Good/bad comments of drivers.
Evening services	10	2%	Availability for work and leisure.
Frequency	27	5%	Increase or decrease the frequency of services.
Fares	40	8%	Cost or payment towards concessions.
Reduce	27	5%	Suggestions on which services/journeys could be reduced.
Reliability	17	3%	Comments on unreliable services/journeys.
Retain	43	9%	Pleads to keep services/journeys.
Route	20	4%	Suggestions/requests to change routes.
Rural	47	9%	General comments relating to transport in rural areas.
Sunday services	14	3%	General comments relating to transport on Sundays.
Timings	22	4%	Suggestions to change the times of journeys.
Other	21	4%	e.g. marketing, environment, Saturday services, CT, health, tourism.
Total	500		



- 6.47 There were 500 comments made in total, covering a range of subjects. The most common comment (30%) related to accessibility, in terms of access to services rather than physical access. People raised concerns over their ability to access shops, work, education and healthcare should changes to services be made. Access to key services, work and education were also the predominant themes arising from the 2011 consultation in relation to why services were seen as a priority.
- 6.48 Other common comments related to rural services (9%), in particular that priority should be given to ensuring people living in rural areas have access to a bus service, and a plea for the service to be retained (9%).
- 6.49 The subject of fares was also relatively common (8%), where people made a range of comments including that fares were too high and that they (concessionary pass holders) would prefer to pay something towards their journey rather than have the service withdrawn.
- 6.50 Some people provided suggestions on changing frequency, reducing some journeys or changing the route to help with cuts to funding or to provide a better service.

Report No

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7 Summary

7.51 The analysis of the survey can be summarised by the following points.

Demographics

- There were a higher proportion of female (62%) respondents to male respondents compared • to Herefordshire (51%).
- The age profile is much higher than Herefordshire with 59% being over 65 years old compared to 21% in Herefordshire; 63% were retired and 68% made use of the concessionary travel scheme.
- 49% of respondents did not have access to a car compared to 84% car ownership across Herefordshire.
- 11% of respondents had a disability or illness that affects their ability to get out and about.
- The ethnicity of respondents was reflective of Herefordshire, with 90% being White British. •

Travel patterns

- 93% of respondents use buses in Herefordshire and 90% of these use one of the services financially supported by the council.
- A variety of services were used, the most common were 461/462, 33, 76/76A and 492. .
- Most people (72%) travelled more than once a week.
- The most common journey purpose was food shopping (29%) followed by medical appointments (22%) and non-food shopping (18%).
- 69% of respondents were able to access their bus stop within 10 minutes. Only 5% took more than 20 minutes to access their stop.

Impact of service cuts

- If their main bus service was no longer available, 37% would travel by car, 10% would travel by taxi and 10% would walk. 33% said they would have no other alternative.
- Those with no alternative are older and travel more frequently, more have a disability or illness affecting them getting out and about, and say the withdrawal of bus services would have a high impact on them.
- 71% of respondents said it would have a high impact on them if their main bus service was no longer available. Of these, 61% do not have access to a car.
- 63% of respondents said the bus services would affect certain groups of people in particular. By far the most common group of people affected was said to be the elderly, with 80% of answers. 31% of answers said disabled people would be particularly affected and 22% said young people would.

Policy and Priorities

- 82% of those who answered agreed with the council's priorities on transport provision.
- Of those who disagreed, 37% suggested evening services, 19% suggested Sunday services • and 15% suggested market day or rural services should be of higher priority.

Job No	Report No	Issue no	Report Name	Page
MID3332	001	001	Herefordshire Bus Consultation Survey Analysis	33

 When faced with making significant savings, 61% of answers were to withdraw or reduce Sunday services and 41% Saturday evening services. Monday to Friday daytime services (3%), rural/village services (4%) and Saturday daytime services (5%) were considered to be least priority for withdrawal.

Comments

There were a wide range of comments received covering many topics. By far the most common topic was that of access to essential services with 30% of people raising this as an issue. Other common comments related to services in rural areas, a plea to retain services, and fares.

Appendix A Bus services used

Service	Number	%	Service	Number	%
461	93	10%	437	6	1%
33	79	9%	440	6	1%
462	66	7%	441	6	1%
492	49	5%	460	6	1%
32	43	5%	400	5	1%
76/76a	37	4%	436	5	1%
420	32	3%	454	5	1%
412	30	3%	482	5	1%
426	30	3%	495	5	1%
675	29	3%	507	5	1%
71/71a/71b	28	3%	509	5	1%
36	27	3%	673	5	1%
449	27	3%	X4	5	1%
40	26	3%	79/79a	4	0%
34	25	3%	459	4	0%
476	22	2%	469	4	0%
417	21	2%	477	4	0%
446	20	2%	489	4	0%
44	19	2%	491	4	0%
493	19	2%	496	4	0%
501	16	2%	504	4	0%
35	15	2%	666	4	0%
75/75a/75b	15	2%	45	3	0%
672	14	2%	77/77a	3	0%
39/39A	13	1%	88/88a	3	0%
448	13	1%	402	3	0%
497	13	1%	403	3	0%
74/74a	11	1%	406	3	0%
600	11	1%	411	3	0%
388	10	1%	447	3	0%
405	10	1%	54	2	0%
442	10	1%	456	2	0%
72/72a	9	1%	463	2	0%
453	9	1%	479	2	0%
674	8	1%	905	2	0%
31	7	1%	913	2	0%
78/78b	7	1%	2	1	0%
401	7	1%	24	1	0%
498	7	1%	55	1	0%

	1	
Service	Number	%
292	1	0%
395	1	0%
419	1	0%
455	1	0%
457	1	0%
458	1	0%
471	1	0%
472	1	0%
478	1	0%
488	1	0%
494	1	0%
500	1	0%
502	1	0%
547	1	0%
642	1	0%
644	1	0%
802	1	0%
903	1	0%
Total	927	100%