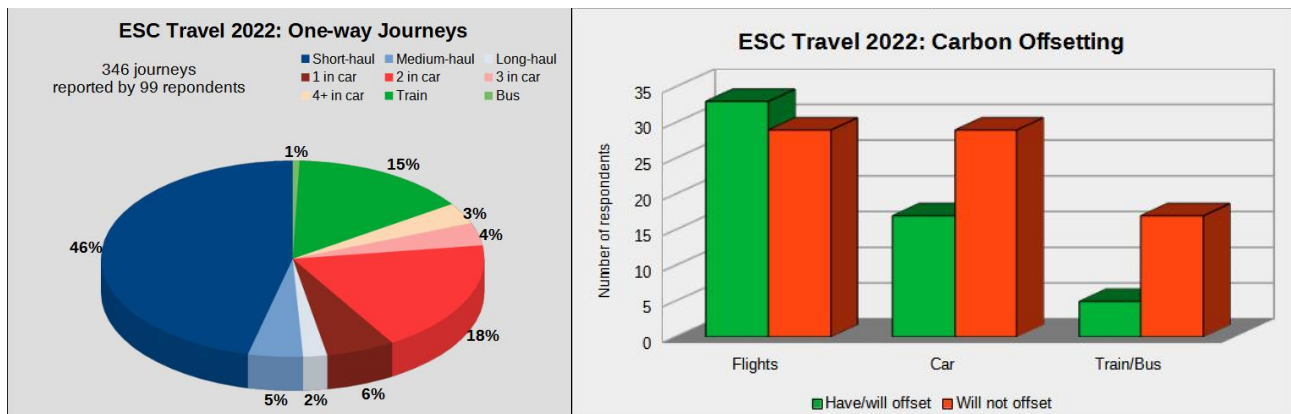




Travel Survey 2022: Results

The survey was carried out between 4 and 26 October 2022. The aim was to estimate the proportion of one-way journeys made using different modes of transport to/from Eagle Ski Club tours and meets during the preceding ski season. The survey also asked members whether they had offset the carbon emissions for those journeys. In order to keep the survey simple, apart from distinguishing long, medium and short-haul flights, and avoiding recording journeys of less than 500km, no attempt was made to record the actual lengths of journeys, nor to estimate the club's total carbon emissions.

99 members responded and between them reported 346 one-way journeys. On the basis that 44 tours actually took place during the season, with an average attendance of six members per tour, and that each person made two one-way journeys to participate (i.e. 528 one-way journeys altogether), we estimate that the survey has captured about 65% of the journeys made. (This estimate does not account for the number of journeys to Scottish meets, nor to those members who live close to the Alps or who combined multiple tours in the same trip).



The charts above show the different modes of transport used, and the number of respondents who offset their carbon emissions for each transport mode. Just over half the journeys were flights, about a third made by car, and about a sixth by train or bus. If the answers are representative of all members, we can estimate that:

- about 20% of journeys were made in a low carbon mode (bus, train, full car)
- about 40% of tourers have or intend to offset their travel carbon.

The club's Carbon Challenge policy is to move towards "net zero" emissions for travel by offsetting *all* journeys, and also to progressively reduce its overall carbon footprint by using less carbon-intensive travel modes, such as trains and multiply-occupied cars. This survey will be repeated each season to indicate the extent to which these goals are being achieved.

Respondents' Comments

Just over half the respondents provided some comments on their answers. A rough categorisation of the comments made divides them as follows:

- 34% – Details of respondent's own travel
- 19 % – Need to adjust destinations and activities
- 15% – Scepticism about the value of offsetting schemes
- 15% – Impracticalities/expense of train travel
- 9% – Using other actions / lifestyle changes as offset for travel
- 2% – Climate change scepticism

N.B. Some comments covered more than one category, and some defied categorisation.

Among the comments made were suggestions that members installing solar panels and heat pumps, planting their own trees, or (in one case) not having children, provided an equally or more effective way than offsetting schemes for tackling climate change. Some thought that carbon offsetting was simply a way of assuaging guilt, and several suggested that the club should restrict its touring programme to closer or more accessible destinations, avoid the use of mechanical uplift, or even that people should only ski from their doorstep. Problems noted with train travel included its impracticality for more distant destinations (especially if starting from Scotland), its expense compared to air travel, and the difficulty of booking far enough in advance. One respondent asserted that CO₂ emissions were irrelevant to global warming.

Questionnaire and Analysis

1. Number of one-way flights (Short (<3 hr) / Medium (3-6hr) / Long (>6hr))
2. Did you offset the carbon emissions for your flights? (Have done / Intend to / Will not)
3. Number of one-way car journeys (1 in car / 2 in car / 3 in car / 4 or more in car)
4. Did you offset the carbon emissions for your car journeys? (Have done / Intend to / Will not)
5. Number of train / bus journeys
6. Did you offset the carbon emissions for your train/bus? (Have done / Intend to / Will not)
7. Please add any other comments or explanations

A few people appeared to enter their total mileage in answer to question 3, rather than the number of journeys. These have been interpreted on the basis of 1 journey for each 1000 miles or part thereof.

Summary of Data

	Number of respondents	Number of Journeys	Journeys/respondent
Short-haul flight	54	160	3.0
Medium-haul flight	8	16	2.0
Long-haul flight	3	7	2.3
Car with 1 person	13	20	1.5
Car with 2 people	29	64	2.2
Car with 3 people	7	13	1.9
Car with 4+ people	7	12	1.7
Train	24	52	2.2
Bus	1	2	2.0

(N.B. the sum of the number of respondents for each travel mode (146) is greater than the total number of respondents (99) as some people used more than one travel mode.)

The questions on offsetting were on a per-respondent basis, rather than a per-journey basis (on the assumption that if someone is going to offset their travel for one journey in a particular mode, they would offset their travel for all journeys in that mode). Not everyone who reported using a particular travel mode answered the question as to whether or not they would offset, and this is shown in the final two columns. In a few cases, people who had not used a particular travel mode nonetheless said that they would not be offsetting for the travel they hadn't done, and these responses have been excluded.

	Have/will offset	Will not offset	Proportion offsetting	Respondents reporting travel	Travellers answering offset question
Flights	33	29	53%	65	95%
Car	17	29	37%	56	82%
Bus/Train	5	17	23%	25	88%

Recommendations for Future Surveys

In the survey design, in order to make it easier for people to complete, none of the questions was compulsory, and the only check on responses was that numerical ones were valid numbers. In future, in order to make it easier to perform the analysis of the results, it may be better to be a bit more prescriptive:

- numerical plausibility checks might help to avoid answers like “3000” for number of car journeys (presumably this was intended as a mileage)
- people might be required to specify 0 for travel modes they did not use (to avoid confusion with those who simply didn't answer the question – there could be a “prefer not to say” option)
- those who did not use a particular travel mode should not be asked whether or not they offset the carbon emissions for it.

I think SurveyMonkey offers features that will allow this without making the questionnaire too onerous to complete, though it may need to be on multiple pages.

It would, of course, be possible to have a much more complicated questionnaire, asking for more detail of journeys (mileages, subsidiary forms of transport used, etc.) and information about exactly which journeys were offset. However, this would be much more onerous to complete, and might lead to a lower return rate. The purpose of this survey is simply to identify whether, year on year, we are using more carbon-friendly travel modes, and increasing the proportion of carbon emissions we offset. It is not intended to be an accurate audit of the club's carbon footprint.

John Barnard
 (Climate Care Subcommittee)
 November 2022