

**Monitoring the quality of experience in community
forests in South West England
- Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle**

Final report

January 2008



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- Leigh Woods and Blaise
Castle**

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Forestry Commission

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A. Background and introduction

Background

This report contains the results of surveys undertaken by TNS Travel & Tourism in neighbourhoods within a mile of the Leigh Woods (a Forestry Commission (FC) site) and Blaise Castle (under the management of Bristol City Council) areas in South West England during November and December 2007. Maps of the locations of these areas and the survey catchment areas are appended.

The objectives of this study were to find out about the recreational activities undertaken by members of these communities, levels of recreational use and awareness of local open spaces, motivations for and barriers to using the community woodland sites for recreation and to identify improvements which could be made. In previous years, two Forestry Commission sites have been surveyed, however, in 2007, a site managed by the Forestry Commission was surveyed alongside a non-FC site in the same area in order to compare any variations in usage between the two.

Method

The survey involved 293 respondents being interviewed at home with the sample divided between the two locations as follows:

- Leigh Woods – 136 interviews.
- Blaise Castle – 157 interviews.

To assist in the design of the survey sample, a geodemographic analysis of these areas was undertaken using the ACORN classification¹, thereby providing a detailed profile of the residents of these catchment areas. Section C in this report summarises the outcome of this analysis.

¹ ACORN (A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods) categorises all UK postcodes into various types based upon the results of the 2001 Census and other information such as lifestyle surveys.

Using the results of the geodemographic analysis, interviewers were allocated specific locations to undertake interviews and sampling quotas were set on the basis of age, sex and working status. As such, the resulting survey sample can be considered to be representative of the population surrounding each of the sites. Only one person per household (adults aged over 16 years) could be interviewed.

Report

This report provides the results of the survey of residents undertaken in the Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle areas in November and December 2007 and the detailed geodemographic analysis mentioned above.

The tables in this report show percentages for all respondents and amongst those resident in each of the two survey areas. Also shown for comparison are the responses of users and non-users of the following local outdoor recreation sites:

Leigh Woods area	Blaise Castle area
Leigh Woods	Blaise Castle
Paradise Bottom	Oldbury Court
Fifty Acre Wood (Timberland trail)	Snuff Mills
Ashton Hill	The Downs
Tanpit	Kingsweston Woods
Overscourt	Ashton Court
	Oke Park Wood
	Badocks Wood

Throughout the report, users of any of the above sites are referred to as ‘outdoor users’ while those who have not visited any of the sites are referred to as ‘non-users’. These definitions have been included as they provide a useful distinction between individuals who use local outdoor recreation resources (including those managed by the Forestry Commission) and those who do not visit these locations.

In addition to the above comparisons, other variations within the total sample have been described in the text – for example variations by age or sex. It is important to bear in mind when interpreting the results, that the sample sizes for some of the groups surveyed are low. Only statistically significant findings have been highlighted in the text. A copy of the questionnaire used has been appended.

B. Main results

Community profile

Age, sex and lifecycle

To gather detailed information on the people living in the vicinity of the woodlands, respondents were asked to provide some information about their sex, age and family situation.

As the table below illustrates, the split of males and females in the population across all of the user groups shown was fairly even, with no significant variations between the groups.

Table B-1 – Age, sex and lifecycle (%)

Base: All respondents (293)

	Leigh Woods Area	Blaise Castle Area	Outdoor users	Non-users	ALL RESPONDENTS
Sex					
Male	54	50	51	54	52
Female	46	50	49	46	48
Age					
16 – 24	15	8	9	18	11
25 – 34	14	18	17	12	16
35 – 44	17	13	16	12	15
45 – 54	15	15	16	12	15
55 – 64	23	18	21	19	20
65+	16	28	21	28	23
Lifecycle					
Young Independents	26	14	18	26	20
Older Independents	16	13	13	19	15
Families	21	26	28	10	24
Empty Nesters	37	46	41	44	42
Base (Total respondents)	136	157	225	68*	293

* Small sample size

In terms of age, slightly over two-fifths of all respondents were aged 55 or over (43%), three in ten were between the ages of 35 and 54 (30%) and just over a quarter were 34 or younger (27%). Over half of respondents in both the Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle areas

were aged 45 or over, however, the age profile in the Blaise Castle area was slightly older, with a higher proportion of respondents in this area over the age of 65 (28% v 16% at Leigh Woods). A higher proportion of non-users (18%) than outdoor users (9%) were aged 16-24.

In terms of lifecycle, respondents in the Leigh Woods area were more likely than those in the Blaise Castle area to be in the Young Independent lifecycle (26% and 14% respectively), while a higher proportion of outdoor users were in the Family lifecycle than amongst non-users (28% v 10%).

Owning a dog

17% of those in the Leigh Woods area owned a dog, as did a quarter of those in the Blaise Castle area (25%). A quarter of outdoor users stated that they owned a dog (25%) compared to a small proportion of non-users (7%).

The proportion of dog owners was also higher amongst those who had undertaken any type of active outdoor pursuits in the last twelve months than amongst those who had not (23% and 6% respectively).

Access to a car or other vehicle

Around four-fifths of respondents in both the Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle area had access to a vehicle (82% and 81% respectively).

A higher proportion of respondents in the Family lifecycle had access to car than amongst those in the Young Independent lifecycle (87% and 72% respectively). Nine in ten respondents in the AB socio-economic groupings had access to car compared to 67% amongst those in the DE social grades. Outdoor users were more likely than non-users to have access to a car (85% v 68%), while those who had undertaken an active and/or passive outdoor pursuit in the last year were more likely than those who had not to have access to a car (83% and 87% respectively v 67% no active and 70% no passive).

Please take care when analysing the results of this survey due to the small sample sizes of some of these groups.

Socio-economic group and employment

In terms of social economic group, as the table below illustrates, almost nine in ten residents of the Leigh Woods catchment area were in the ABC1 social grades (89%) (higher, intermediate, supervisory and junior managerial, administrative or professional) compared to half of those resident in the Blaise Castle catchment area (48%) and 43% of the UK population. The Leigh Woods profile differed the most from that of the UK population as a whole with residents twice as likely to be in the ABC1 socio-economic groupings (89% compared to 43%).

Table B-2 – Socio-economic group (%)

Base: All respondents (293)

	Leigh Woods Area	Blaise Castle Area	All respondents	UK Population
AB – ‘upper middle grade’ – higher/ intermediate managerial, administrative or professional	49	16	31	17
C1 – ‘lower middle grade’ – supervisory or clerical, junior managerial, administrative or professional	40	32	36	26
C2 – ‘skilled working grade’ – skilled manual workers	5	19	13	25
DE – ‘working grade’ and unemployed – semi and unskilled manual workers, state pensioners, unemployed	7	32	20	32
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	136	157	293	<i>n/a</i>

Reflecting the above findings, 45% of respondents in the Leigh Woods area were in full-time employment, with 24% stating that they were retired and none unemployed as shown in Table B-3 (below). However, in the Blaise Castle area one in ten respondents were unemployed (10%) and a smaller proportion were in full-time education (4% v 11% Leigh Woods). Slightly over two-fifths of outdoor users were in full employment (43%) compared to around three in ten of those classified as non-users (29%).

Table B-3 – Working status (%)

Base: All respondents (293)

	Leigh Woods area	Blaise Castle area	Outdoor users	Non-users	All respondents
Full time (30+ hrs per week)	45	35	43	29	40
Part time (<30 hrs per week)	15	15	16	10	15
Unemployed	-	10	5	6	5
Retired	24	30	24	37	27
Housewife/ husband	5	6	7	-	5
In full time education	11	4	4	16	7
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	136	157	225	68*	293

*Small sample size

Ethnicity

All respondents were asked to state their ethnicity. As is shown in the table below, the majority of respondents in the Leigh Woods area and Blaise Castle area were white (94% each respectively). Small proportions of respondents in both areas described themselves as black or of Asian ethnic origin.

Table B-4 – Ethnicity (%)

Base: All respondents (293)

	Leigh Woods area	Blaise Castle area	Outdoor users	Non-users	All respondents
White	94	94	95	90	94
English	85	82	86	76	84
Scottish	-	1	*	-	*
Welsh	4	5	4	7	4
Irish	1	1	*	3	1
Other British	4	3	4	3	3
Other white	1	1	1	-	1
Asian	2	1	1	4	2
Indian	1	1	*	1	1
Pakistani	-	-	-	-	-
Other Asian	1	1	*	1	1
Black	1	1	*	1	1
African	-	-	-	-	-
Other Black	1	1	*	1	1
Base (Total respondents)	136	157	225	68**	293

* Less than 0.5%

- No responses

** Small sample size

Percentages may equal >100% due to rounding

Disabilities

5% of respondents within 1 mile of Leigh Woods and 10% of those in the Blaise Castle catchment indicated that they had a disability or long term illness. Across the two sites, those over the age of 55 (13%), Empty Nesters (13%) and DEs (15%) were more likely than those aged 16-24, Young Independents and ABs (3% each) to state that they had a disability or long term illness.

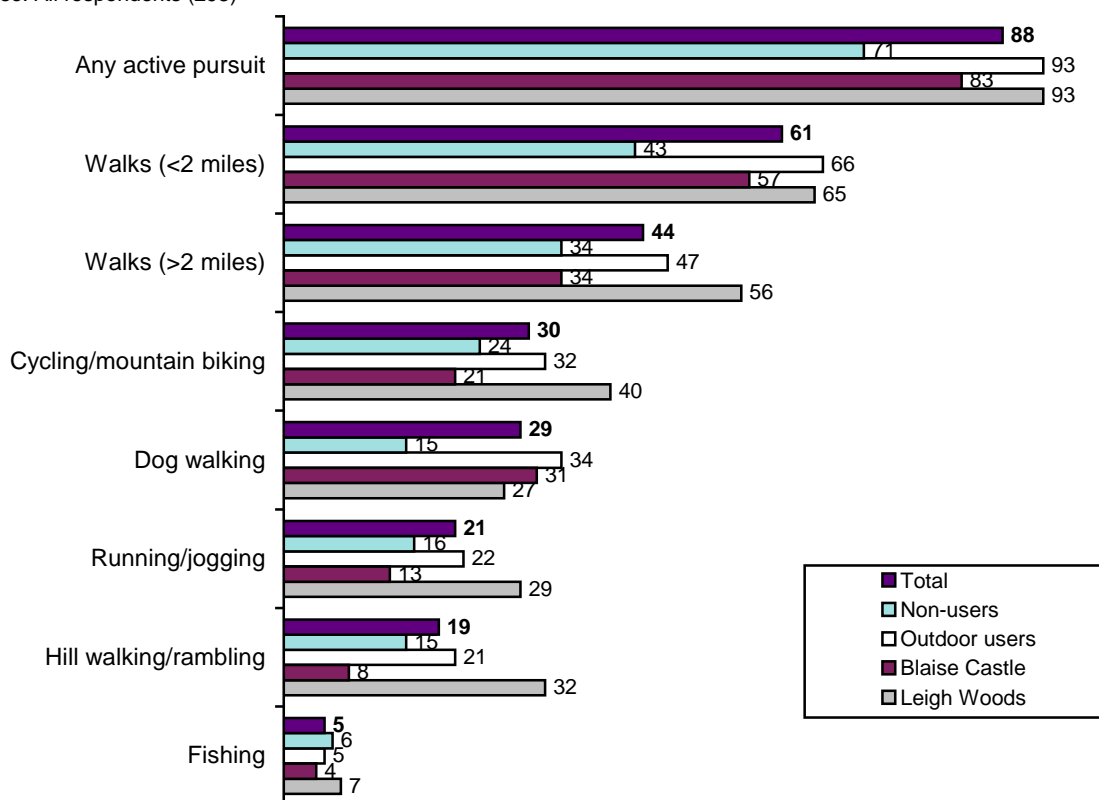
Participation in outdoor activities

One of the aims of this survey was to find out more about the lifestyles of the residents living close to Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle. As such, all respondents were asked a series of questions about their participation in outdoor recreation and other indoor and outdoor leisure activities. The results of this question are illustrated in Tables B-5 and described below.

Active outdoor pursuits

Figure B-1 Participation in active outdoor pursuits

Base: All respondents (293)



The vast majority of those living in the Leigh Woods catchment area had undertaken an active outdoor pursuit in the past twelve months (93%), a higher proportion than amongst those in the Blaise Castle area (83%). The specific activities more likely to be undertaken by residents of the Leigh Woods area than those residing within a mile of Blaise Castle included walks of more than 2 miles (56% and 34% respectively), cycling or mountain

biking (40% v 21%), hill walking or rambling (32% v 8%) and running or jogging (29% v 13%).

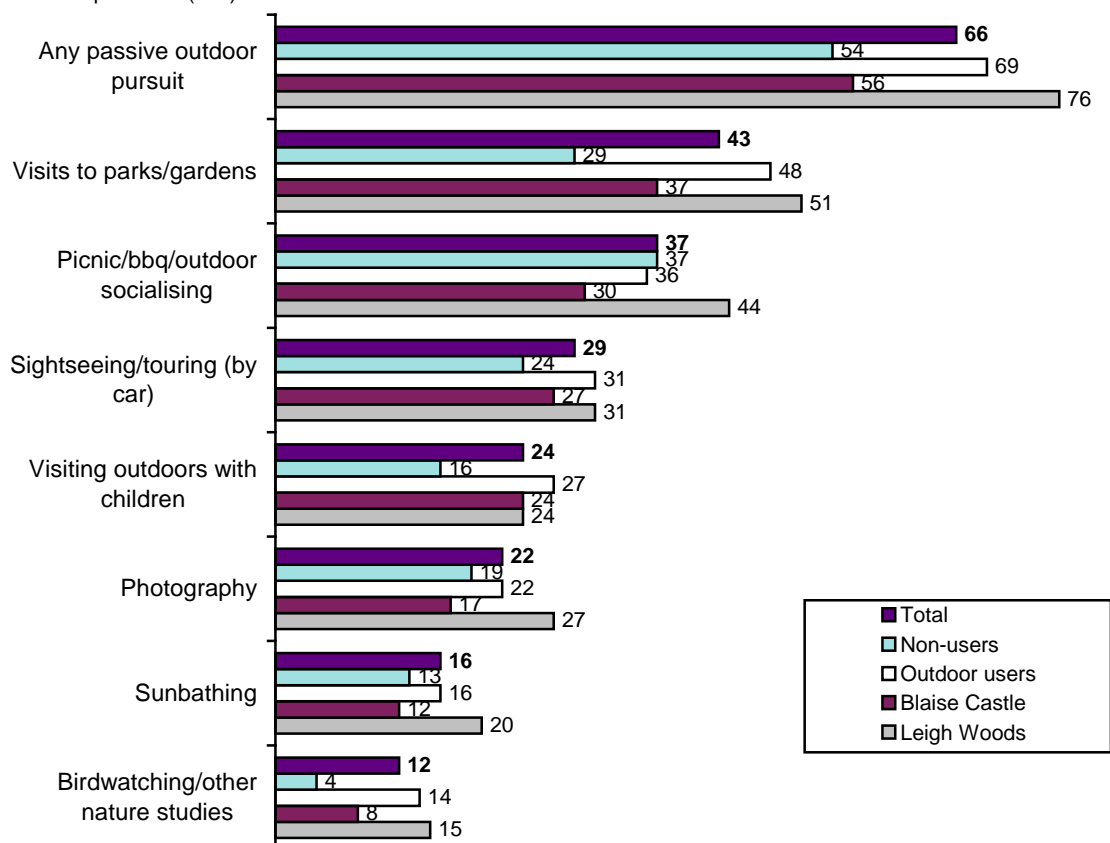
Across the two areas, respondents more likely than the average to have undertaken this type of activity included those aged 35-44 (98%), those in the AB socio-economic grouping (96%) and those who owned a dog (97%).

The specific activity undertaken by the highest proportion of respondents was walking for less than 2 miles, undertaken by 61% of the total sample, with 65% of respondents in the Leigh Woods and 57% in the Blaise Castle area undertaking this activity. As would be expected, respondents who had visited one or more of their local outdoor recreation sites (the 'outdoor users') were more likely than the non-users to have taken part in any of the active outdoor pursuits (93% and 71% respectively).

Passive outdoor pursuits

Figure B-2 Participation in passive outdoor pursuits

Base: All respondents (293)



Respondents in the Leigh Woods area were also more likely than those resident in the Blaise Castle area to have undertaken a passive pursuit in the outdoors in the twelve month prior to being interviewed (76% and 56% respectively). The specific activities more likely to be undertaken by those in the Leigh Woods area included visits to parks or gardens (51% v 37% in Blaise Castle area), picnics, barbeques and other outdoor socialising (44% v 30%) and photography (29% v 17%).

Across the two areas, respondents in the ABC1 socio-economic grouping were more likely than those classified as C2DEs to have done so (72% and 52%) as were those with access to a car or other vehicle (70%) compared to those with no vehicle access (45%).

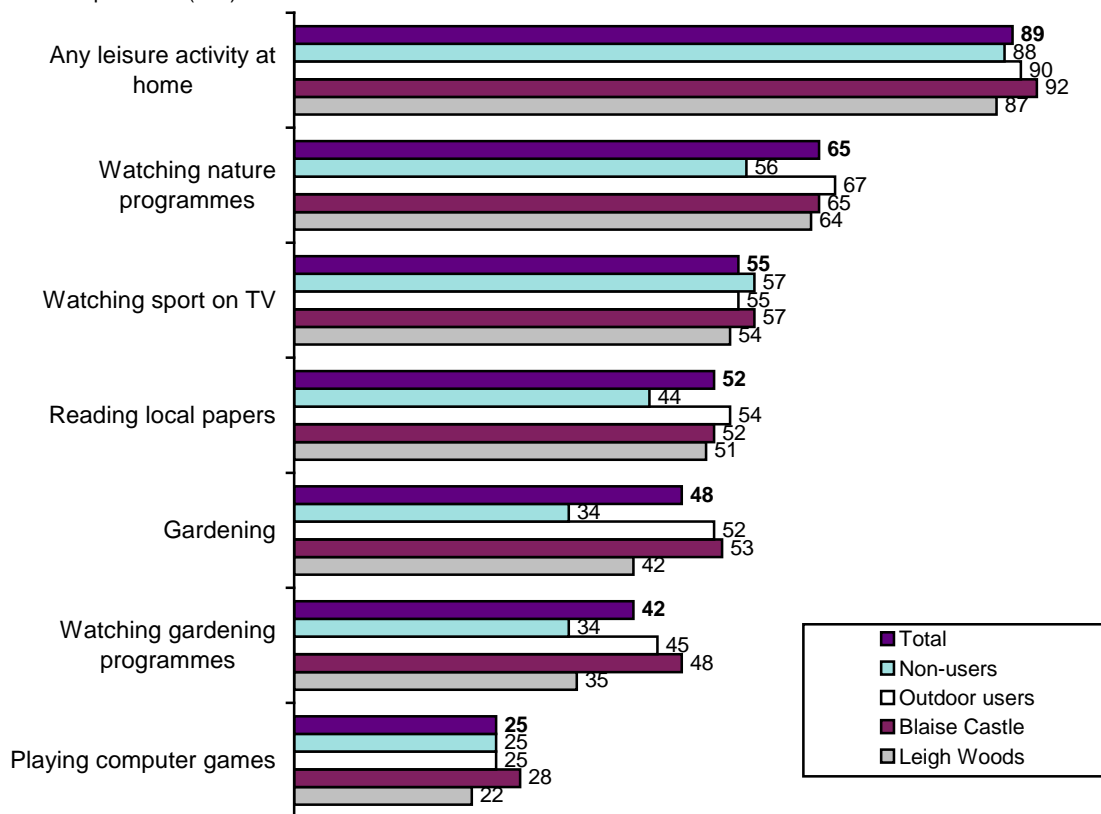
Slightly over two-fifths of all respondents stated that they had visited a park or garden in the previous twelve months (43%). This activity was more likely to be undertaken by female respondents than males (51% and 36% respectively) and by ABC1s (51%) than by C2DEs

(29%). Picnics, barbeques and other outdoor socialising was an activity undertaken by 37% of all respondents and was more likely to be undertaken by women than by men (46% and 27%) respectively. Empty Nesters were the lifecycle group least likely to take part in this activity, with 22% having done so in the past year compared to 49% of Older Independents, 46% of Young Independents and 46% of those in the Family lifecycle.

Leisure activities at home

Figure B-3 Participation in leisure activities at home

Base: All respondents (293)

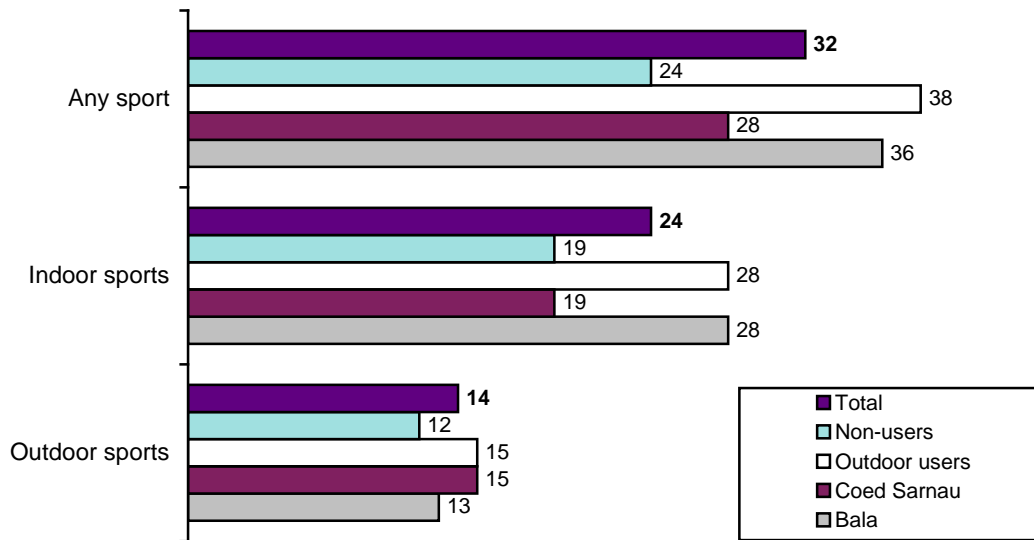


87% of Leigh Woods residents and 92% of those local to Blaise Castle had undertaken any of the in-home leisure activities listed within the past twelve months. Respondents local to Blaise Castle were more likely than those in the vicinity of Leigh Woods to have watched a programme about gardening on the television (48% v 35%).

Sport

Figure B-4 Participation in sport

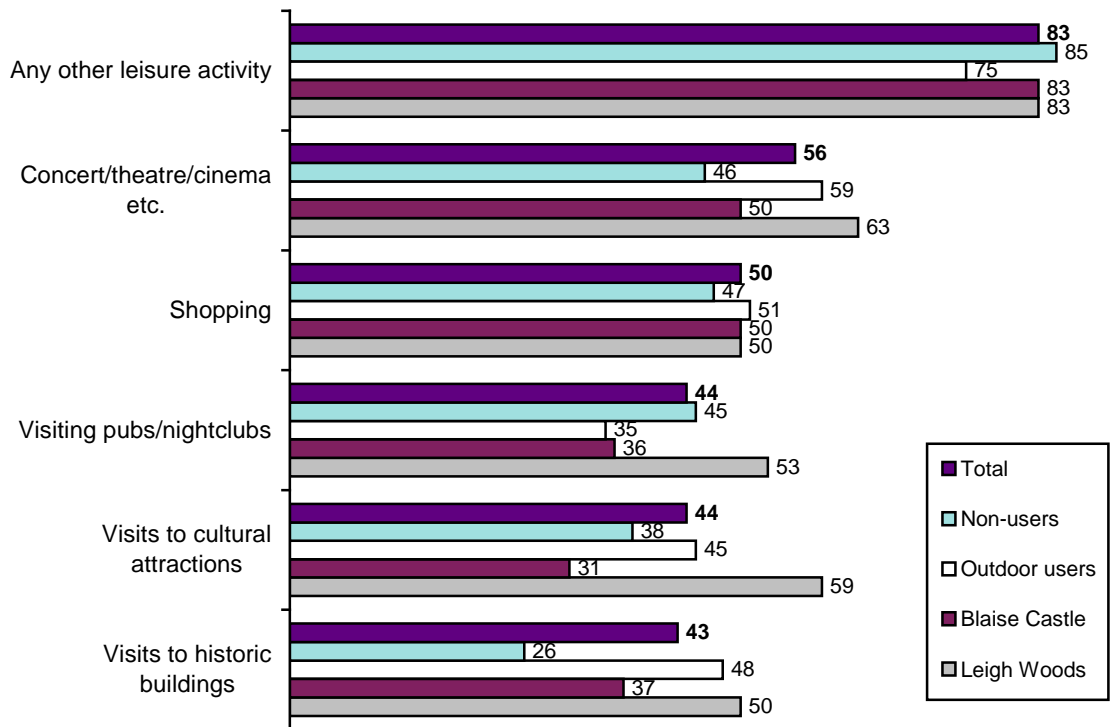
Base: All respondents (293)



Slightly over half of respondents living in the Leigh Woods area had undertaken sport in the previous twelve months (55%) compared to three in ten of those resident in the Blaise Castle area (30%). Young Independents were the lifecycle group most likely to have undertaken this type of activity (66%), with those in the AB social grade also more likely than the average to have participated (57%). Those who did not own a dog were more likely than those who did to have taken part in sporting activity within the last 12 months (45% and 29% respectively).

*Other leisure activities***Figure B-5 Participation in other leisure activities**

Base: All respondents (293)



Equal proportions of respondents local to the Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle areas had undertaken another type of leisure activity in the past 12 months. Residents of the Leigh Woods area, however, were more likely than respondents local to Blaise Castle to have attended the cinema, theatre or a concert (63% v 50%), visited a cultural attraction (59% v 31%), visited a pub or nightclub (53% v 36%) and/or to have visited a historic site (50% v 37%).

Table B-6 – Leisure activities undertaken during last 12 months (%)

Base: All respondents (293)

	Leigh Woods area	Blaise Castle area	Outdoor users	Non-users	All respondents
Active outdoor pursuits	93	83	93	71	88
Walks of 2 miles or less	65	57	66	43	61
Walks >2 miles	56	34	47	34	44
Cycling/mountain biking	40	21	32	24	30
Dog walking	27	31	34	15	29
Running/jogging	29	13	22	16	21
Hill walking/rambling	32	8	21	15	19
Fishing	7	4	5	6	5
Passive outdoor pursuits	76	56	69	54	66
Visits to parks/gardens	51	37	48	29	43
Picnics/barbeques/outdoor socialising	44	30	36	37	37
Sightseeing/touring (by car)	31	27	31	24	29
Visiting outdoors with children	24	24	27	16	24
Photography	27	17	22	19	22
Sunbathing	20	12	16	13	16
Bird watching/nature studies	15	8	14	4	12
Leisure activities at home	87	92	90	88	89
Watching nature programmes	64	65	67	56	65
Watching sport on television	54	57	55	57	55
Reading local papers	51	52	54	44	52
Gardening	42	53	52	34	48
Watching gardening programmes	35	48	45	32	42
Playing computer games	22	28	25	25	25
Sport	55	30	42	40	42
Indoor sports	38	14	30	26	26
Outdoor sports	39	22	24	31	29
Other leisure activities	83	83	75	85	83
Concert/theatre/cinema etc	63	50	59	46	56
Shopping	50	50	51	47	50
Visit pubs/enjoy nightlife	53	36	35	45	44
Visits to cultural attractions	59	31	45	38	44
Visits to historical buildings/heritage/churches/cathedrals	50	37	48	26	43
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	136	157	225	68	293

Location of outdoor activities

Respondents who had stated they had taken part in either active or passive outdoor leisure activities during the previous year were also asked to state the places where they had undertaken these activities.

Table B-6 – Places undertaken leisure activities during last 12 months (%)

Base: All respondents undertaking outdoor activities (270)

	Leigh Woods area	Blaise Castle area	All respondents
In a wood or forest	59	72	66
The countryside	70	51	61
Town/city	57	45	51
The seaside	37	38	38
By a stretch of inland water	35	27	31
At home	27	29	28
Base (Total respondents)	132	138	270

Multiple responses could be provided so percentages total >100%.

Approximately two-thirds of all respondents interviewed across the two sites had undertaken an active or passive outdoor pursuit in a wood or forest in the previous twelve months (66%), with residents of the Blaise Castle area significantly more likely than those in the Leigh Woods area to select this type of location (72% v 59%). Respondents between the ages of 45 and 54 (85%) and those in the Older Independents lifecycle stage (83%) were more likely than the average to have mentioned this location. Those who own a dog (77%) and those with access to a vehicle (70%) were more likely than non-dog owners and those with no vehicle access to have undertaken an activity in this type of location (62% and 46% respectively).

Respondents living within 1 mile of Leigh Woods were more likely than those in the Blaise Castle area to have undertaken an outdoor activity in a countryside location (70% v 51%).

Approximately half of all respondents undertook an outdoor activity at a town or city location in the twelve months prior to being interviewed (51%), with this response being given by 57% of those local to Leigh Woods and 45% of those resident in the Blaise Castle area.

Smaller proportions undertook outdoor pursuits at the seaside (38%), by a stretch of inland water (31%) or at home (28%).

Awareness and use of community woodland

At the beginning of the interview, respondents in each area were shown a list of outdoor recreation sites within their local area, including the community woodland sites, and asked which of these they were aware of and which they have visited in the last 12 months. The tables below illustrate the proportions of local residents who were aware of each of the sites and the proportions who had visited each.

Leigh Woods

Table B-7 – Awareness and usage of local sites – Leigh Woods (%)

Base: All respondents in Leigh Woods catchment (136)

	Aware of	Visited
Leigh Woods	90	62
Paradise Bottom	25	18
Fifty Acre Wood (Timberland Trail)	18	7
Ashton Hill	30	7
Tanpit	6	1
Overscourt	7	1
None of these sites	10	37
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	136	136

The vast majority of respondents in the Leigh Woods area were aware of one or more of the sites listed in the above table (90%) and slightly less than a third (63%) had visited one or more of them in the previous twelve months. Encouragingly, all of those aware of at least one of the sites shown in Table B-7 were aware of Leigh Woods (90%), with Ashton Hill (30%) and Paradise Bottom (28%) the next best known sites.

In terms of visits to the same list of sites, smaller proportions across all of the locations had visited them within in the past year. Around six in ten residents of the Leigh Woods area had visited this site (62%), a higher proportion than visited any of the other sites listed. The second most visited site amongst those local to Leigh Woods was Paradise Bottom (18%).

Blaise Castle

Table B-8 – Awareness and usage of local sites – Blaise Castle (%)

Base: All respondents in Blaise Castle catchment (156)

	Aware of	Visited
Blaise Castle	100	79
The Downs	96	67
Ashton Court	96	43
Kingsweston Woods	76	34
Snuff Mills	75	12
Badocks Wood	44	9
Oldbury Court	57	8
Oke Park Wood	14	2
None of these sites	-	11
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	156	156

Overall, all of respondents in the Blaise Castle area were aware of at least one of the sites listed and 89% had visited one or more during the previous year. All of these respondents were aware of Blaise Castle, with awareness also high for the Downs (96%), Ashton Court (96%), Kingsweston Woods (76%) and Snuff Mills (75%).

As was the case in the Leigh Woods area, smaller proportions had been to any of the locations in the past year. Blaise Castle was also the most visited site, with 79% of respondents in this area having been to this site in the past 12 months. The Downs (67%), Ashton Court (43%) and Kingsweston Woods (34%) were the next most frequently visited sites.

Other places visited

In both the Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle areas, those respondents who had taken part in outdoor activities during the previous year were asked to specify the names of the local places they had visited most often to take part in these activities. This question was asked without any prompting (i.e. no list of places was provided for respondents to choose from).

The most frequently provided answers in each area were as follows:

- *Leigh Woods* – Ashton Court (23%), Leigh Woods (39%) and the Downs (41%). 13% of residents of this area had visited Blaise Castle and a small proportion simply stated ‘the local area’ (5%);

- *Blaise Castle* – Blaise Castle (74%), the Downs (26%) and Kingsweston (14%). 4% of respondents stated 'the local area', while just 2% mentioned Leigh Woods.

Reasons for *not* visiting

Forests and woodland generally

To measure the potential barriers which prevent people from visiting forests and woodlands, respondents who had not visited Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle were asked if there was anything which prevented them from visiting forests and woodlands at all or as much as they would have liked to during the last 12 months. Please note that due to the high proportion of respondents who had visited, sample sizes are small and results should be treated with caution.

Table B-9 – Reasons for not visiting forests and woodland generally (at all or as much as would like to) (Number of respondents)

Base: All respondents who have not visited Leigh Woods/Blaise Castle (85*)

	Leigh Woods Area	Blaise Castle Area	Outdoor users	Non-users	All respondents
Too busy working/ studying	11	4	4	11	15
Poor health/ unable to go	4	6	1	9	10
No transport	5	1	-	6	6
Disabled/ blind/ poor eyesight	1	4	1	4	5
Does not feel safe	3	1	-	4	4
Don't know where to go	1	1	-	2	2
Weather	3	-	-	3	3
Too old	2	-	1	1	2
Not interested	-	2	-	2	2
Work nights/ shift work	1	-	-	1	1
Too far away	1	-	-	1	1
No particular reasons	18	14	-	23	32
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	52*	33*	17*	68*	85*

*small sample size

- = no responses

As the table above illustrates, one of the most frequently provided reason for not visiting forests related to being too busy working or studying. This was the reason given by 15 of the 85 respondents answering this question. An equal proportion of respondents mentioned health problems and disability of the respondent or a member of their household as a barrier to visiting forests and woods.

Lack of transport (6 respondents), not feeling safe and not knowing where to go (4 respondents each) were the next most frequently mentioned reasons for not having visited forests and woodlands in general.

Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle

When asked, more specifically, for their reasons for not visiting either Leigh Woods or Blaise Castle (whichever was closest to their home), reasons provided for not visiting at all or as often as liked were as illustrated below.

Table B-10 – Reasons for not visiting Leigh Woods or Blaise Castle (at all or as much as would like to) (Number of respondents)

Base: All respondents who have not visited Leigh Woods/Blaise Castle (85*)

	Leigh Woods Area	Blaise Castle Area
Not aware of site	2	-
Too busy working/ studying	9	3
Poor health/ unable to go	4	6
No transport	3	1
Weather	1	-
Does not feel safe	1	1
Disabled/ blind/ poor eyesight	-	4
Too old	2	-
Not interested	2	2
No particular reasons	21	15
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	52*	33*

*small sample size

- = no responses

Amongst respondents in the Leigh Woods area, the most frequently mentioned reason for not visiting the site was that they were too busy working or studying (9 respondents). Although the sample size for this question is small, this corresponds with the working status profile of this area, where respondents were more likely to be employed or in full-time education than residents of the Blaise Castle area. In total, 4 respondents in the Leigh Woods area mentioned mentioning general poor health.

Three in ten respondents answering this question in the Blaise Castle area gave a health related reason as a barrier to them visiting this site (10 respondents). General ill health was the most commonly provided reason (6 respondents), followed by a disability (4 respondents).

2 respondents overall stated that they did not feel safe to visit the local sites but did not provide a reason as to why this is the case.

When asked to provide more details on why they had not visited some of the reasons provided included the following:

Blaise Castle:

"I don't go up there now with the hooligans. They smashed up the museum part about 6 months ago - it's not nice up there now."

"Looking for somewhere new. Been there since age 25. My children explore there during summer."

Leigh Woods:

"Heard of it but not sure where it is."

"Right up in the hills, very twisty roads."

Encouraging visits

Respondents were shown a list of possibilities and asked which, if any, might encourage them to visit Leigh Woods or Blaise Castle more often. Overall, the most frequently mentioned actions that had the potential to encourage respondents to visit more, or at all, were ‘more paths with waymarked routes’ (18%) and ‘improved security at the sites’ (17%). Respondents local to Blaise Castle were more likely than those local to Leigh Woods to mention improved security (22% v 13%) and more ranger led walks (18% v 10%) as aspects that could encourage them to visit more.

Table B-11 – Which of the following might encourage you to visit Leigh Woods/Blaise Castle?

Base: All respondents (293)

	Leigh Woods Area	Blaise Castle Area	Outdoor users	Non-users	All respondents
More paths with waymarked routes	17	18	19	13	18
Improved security at the sites	13	22	19	12	17
More information about the sites	15	13	13	19	14
More ranger led/ guided walks around the sites	10	18	15	10	14
More things for children	1	1	*	1	1
Nothing	43	46	44	44	44
Don't know	5	1	3	3	3
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	136	157	225	68**	293

* Less than 0.5% - no responses

** small sample size

There were some variations in the profile of respondents selecting each of the different options, as follows:

- *More paths with waymarked routes (18% overall)* – A higher proportion of those in the Family lifecycle mentioned this than amongst those in the Empty Nester lifecycle (25% and 13% respectively). Correspondingly, 35-54 year olds were more likely to mention this than those over the age of 55 (16% and 13%);
- *Improved security at the sites (17% overall)* – this option was more likely to be selected by respondents aged 35 -54 (33%) and was more likely to be mentioned by those who had visited Blaise Castle than those who had visited Leigh Woods (23% and 11% respectively);

Just under half of visitors at both Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle indicated that nothing would encourage them to visit more often (43% and 46% respectively). This proportion did not vary significantly between other respondent groups.

Providing information

The 14% of respondents who indicated that more information would encourage them to visit were next asked how they thought the information should be provided, with a question asking them to select the methods that would be most effective. These results should be treated with caution due to the small sample sizes involved (42 respondents overall).

As the table below illustrates, the most frequently mentioned preferred information sources were leaflets (52%), a website (48%) and the local press (45%).

Table B-12 – Which would be the best way to provide information about Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle?

Base: All who stated more information might encourage them to visit (42)

	Leigh Woods Area	Blaise Castle Area	Outdoor users	Non-users	All respondents
Leaflets	48	57	59	38	52
Website	52	43	52	38	48
Local press	48	43	41	54	45
Posters on local notice boards	29	38	34	31	33
Local radio	24	24	24	23	24
E-mail	24	24	28	15	24
Post	19	24	17	31	21
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	21	21	29	13	42

Benefits of Community Woodlands

To gain more insight into the perceptions of community woodland areas such as Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle, all respondents were asked what, in their opinion, are the main benefits of creating woodlands and community forests. Respondents were asked to select from the following list of possible benefits.

Table B-13 – Benefits of the creation of woodlands and community forests (%)

Base: All respondents (293)

	Leigh Woods Area	Blaise Castle Area	Outdoor users	Non-users	All respondents
Good for wildlife	85	80	84	75	82
Creates a natural environment for future generations to enjoy	82	74	77	79	77
Creates places for other people to take part in outdoor recreation	76	78	77	78	77
Improves the landscape and look of the area	68	72	71	66	70
Creates areas for my personal use	57	63	66	43	60
Improves the reputation of the area	50	65	60	51	58
Somewhere for birdwatching and other nature studies	54	57	58	47	56
Attracts tourists to the area	32	47	40	40	40
None/ can't see any benefits	1	2	1	1	1
Don't know	1	2	1	1	1
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	136	157	225	68*	293

*Small sample size

The most frequently selected benefits were that woodland areas are good for wildlife (82%), that they create a natural environment for future generations to enjoy (77%), that they create places for other people to take part in outdoor recreation (77%) and that they improve the landscape and look of the area (70%). Encouragingly, only 2% stated that they could not see any benefits of such areas or that they did not know what the benefits were.

For a number of the benefits listed above, the proportions of respondents from the two areas choosing each benefit were fairly similar. However, those living in the Blaise Castle area were more likely to mention improving the reputation of the area (65%) and attracting tourists (47%) as benefits of such sites compared to those local to Leigh Woods (50% and 32% respectively).

Across the two sites, respondents in the AB, C1 and C2 socio economic groupings were more likely than those in the DE social group to mention that woods are good for wildlife as a benefit of these sites (86%, 85% and 86% respectively v 68%).

Comparing the responses obtained to this question to the responses obtained when the same question was asked in the Thames Chase (Greater London), South Yorkshire and Newlands Community Forest (Manchester), the North West of England areas, South Wales and Mid and North Wales, respondents in South West England were more likely to agree with the benefits listed Table B-13, particularly 'creates places for other people to take part in outdoor recreation', 'creates a natural environment for future generations to enjoy', 'somewhere for bird watching and other nature studies' and 'improves the reputation of the area'. Combined, Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle had the highest proportion of the sample who had visited of all the areas surveyed to date. Further comparisons with the results of these other surveys are appended.

Management of FC forests

All respondents were asked to indicate who they thought managed their local community woodland (i.e. Leigh Wood and Blaise Castle). Across the two locations as a whole, around two-fifths of respondents (42%) stated that they did not know. Equal proportions thought that the land was managed by the local council as thought they were managed by the Forestry Commission (22%), while 11% thought they were managed by the National Trust.

Encouragingly, 41% of those resident in the Leigh Woods area knew that the site was managed by the Forestry Commission, which compares to 6% who thought this was the case at Blaise Castle. Just over a third of residents of the Blaise Castle area correctly attributed management of this site to the local council (35%), compared to 7% who thought Leigh Woods was under local council management. Awareness of the organisations responsible for managing the sites is likely to be influenced by the relatively high proportion of respondents who had visited these sites.

Visits to Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle

62% of respondents in the Leigh Woods area had visited the wood during the previous year (86 respondents) and 89% of those in the Blaise Castle area had visited this site (124 respondents). These respondents were asked questions about their most recent visit to the woods. The results for Leigh Woods should be treated with a degree of caution due to the small sample size involved.

Frequency of visits

Local residents who had visited Leigh Woods tended to do so fairly infrequently, with just over two-thirds going there six times a year or less (68%) and an average of 20 visits taken per visitor, per year. Those visiting Blaise Castle generally did so more frequently, with just over a third of users of this site (35%) visiting one to three times per month. The average number of visits taken per visitor, per year at this site was 42.

Table B-14 – Frequency of visits to forest (%)

Base: Respondents who have been to Leigh Woods/Blaise Castle (208)

	Visits to Leigh Woods	Visits to Blaise Castle	Total
Every day	-	2	1
4 to 6 times per week	1	2	2
1 to 3 times a week	10	19	15
1 to 3 times a month	21	35	30
4 to 6 times a year	27	20	23
1 to 3 times a year	37	19	26
Less often	4	2	3
Average visits per year:	20	42	33
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	84	124	208

- No responses

In comparison to other sites included in this programme of research, users of Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle visited less frequently than those who visited sites in most of the other areas surveyed, with an average of 46 visits made to the Thames Chase Community Forest sites in Greater London, an average of 80 visits to the South Yorkshire Community Forests sites and an average of 76 visits per year to the surveyed sites in South Wales.

Activities undertaken

In terms of the activities undertaken during their most recent visits to either Leigh Woods or Blaise Castle, as the table below illustrates, the most frequently undertaken activities overall were short walks of under 2 miles (64%), walks of over 2 miles (46%) and dog walking (34%).

There appear to be some variations in the activities undertaken at each site. A higher proportion of respondents undertook walks of more than 2 miles in length, took part in cycling and/or took part in bird watching or other nature studies at Leigh Woods, while visitors to Blaise Castle were more likely to have taken part in a picnic, barbeque or other outdoor socialising while on site.

Table B-15 – Activities undertaken on most recent visit (%)
Base: Respondents who have been to Leigh Woods/Blaise Castle (208)

	Visits to Leigh Woods	Visits to Blaise Castle	All respondents
Active outdoor pursuits	100	96	98
Walks of under 2 miles	56	69	64
Walks of over 2 miles	56	40	46
Dog walking	32	35	34
Cycling or MTB	29	15	20
Running or jogging	15	9	12
Horse riding	2	2	2
Use children's play area	-	4	2
Passive outdoor pursuits	26	25	25
Picnics, BBQ, etc.	7	18	13
Birdwatching or other nature studies	14	3	8
Photography	6	10	8
Sunbathing	1	3	2
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	84*	124	208

- No responses

*Small sample size

Comparing the activities undertaken at the FC locations in South West of England with the averages at other locations included in this programme of research (Thames Chase Community Forest in Greater London, South Yorkshire Community Forest, and forests in Wales), visitors to the two locations in the South West of England were more likely to take walks of more than 2 miles in length and/or to have taken part in cycling or mountain biking.

Activities undertaken by children

21% of those who visited Leigh Woods had children under the age of 16 in the household (28 respondents), as did 36% of those who visited Blaise Castle (41 respondents). These respondents were asked to indicate whether their children had undertaken any activities in their local community woodland during the previous year. Due to the small sample sizes involved, these results should be treated with caution.

Overall, 15 respondents stated that their children had not visited their local woodland at all during the last twelve months. Amongst those whose children had visited the sites, the largest proportions visited while accompanied by an adult.

Table B-16 – Activities by children in during last 12 months (Number of respondents)

Base: Respondents with children aged under 16 in household – Leigh Woods (28*)/Blaise Castle (41*)

	Visits to Leigh Woods	Visits to Blaise Castle	All respondents
Playing in woodland accompanied by an adult	16	29	45
Playing in woodland accompanied by older children	3	12	15
Playing in woodland unaccompanied by adults and older children	1	7	8
A school visit to the wood	2	18	20
Not visited	9	6	15
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	28*	41*	69*

* small sample size

Respondents whose children had not visited the local woodland were asked to explain why this was the case. The most frequently provided reasons related to the children not being interested, concerns regarding their safety, parents being too busy to take them and that they are too young.

Length of visits

As the table overleaf illustrates, on average, visits to Blaise Castle were slightly longer in duration than those to Leigh Woods, with an average length of visit at Blaise Castle of 1 hour and 22 minutes compared to an average of 1 hour and 14 minutes at Leigh Woods.

Table B-17 – Length of visit (%)

Base: Respondents who have been to Leigh Woods/Blaise Castle before (208)

	Visits to Leigh Woods	Visits to Blaise Castle	All respondents
Up to 15 minutes	2	-	2
15 – 30 minutes	10	10	10
30 minutes – 1 hour	36	31	33
1 hour – 2 hours	38	41	40
2 hours – 3 hours	12	12	12
3 hours – 5 hours	1	2	2
More than 5 hours	-	1	*
<i>Average</i>	<i>1 hr 14 mins</i>	<i>1 hr 22 mins</i>	<i>1 hr 18 mins</i>
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	<i>84**</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>208</i>

- No responses *less than 0.5%

** Small sample size

Comparing the duration of visits to these forests with other locations included in this programme of research (Thames Chase Community Forest in Greater London, South Yorkshire Community Forest and Community Forests in South Wales), visits to Community Forests in the North West of England were higher than the overall average (1hr 11 mins) but shorter than those to forests in South Wales (average 1 hr and 24 mins).

Importance of different aspects of visit

To identify the drivers of quality, it was useful to ask those respondents who had visited Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle to rate how important different aspects were in their decision to visit the sites. Users could rate each of a list of aspects as 'extremely important' (5), 'very important' (4), 'fairly important' (3), 'fairly unimportant' (2) or 'not at all important' (1). Scores were then applied to responses, allowing averages to be obtained across the whole sample - the higher the average score, the more important the aspect is across the sample as a whole.

In Tables B-18 and B-19 on the following pages, an overall 'average' of all of the mean scores has been included in the rankings. Any aspect above this level can be considered as being most important to the site across all users while the other aspects may be of less importance overall or only important to certain groups of users. Two columns of figures are shown. The first is the levels of importance of each aspect in decisions to visit the two sites surveyed amongst people who have been to these sites. The second column illustrates levels of importance amongst the users of other woods and forests i.e. those who haven't visited these two sites.

Leigh Woods

Table B-18 shows the importance of these elements amongst visitors to Leigh Woods, with a second column showing the importance of these aspects in visits to other woodlands amongst residents of this area who have not visited this site but have visited a wood or forest during the last twelve months. Please note that the small sample number of respondents visiting other local sites which means these results should be treated with caution.

Table B-18 – Importance of different aspects in decisions to visit woodland (mean score)

Base: All respondents who have been to Leigh Woods before (84); all who visited woods other than Leigh Woods (15)**

	Importance in decision to visit Leigh Woods	Importance in decision to visit other woods
<i>Being able to enjoy scenery and views</i>	4.21	4.33
<i>Convenient/close to where I live</i>	3.99	3.20
<i>Solitude, peace and quiet</i>	3.98	4.00
<i>Being able to enjoy the wildlife</i>	3.92	3.73
<i>Being able to get fit and healthy</i>	3.81	4.07
<i>Choice of paths for walking</i>	3.68	3.53
<i>Being able to spend time with family and friends</i>	3.64	4.13
<i>Feeling safe in the wood</i>	3.63	4.43
OVERALL AVERAGE	3.28	3.70
Value for money of your whole trip or day out	3.00	3.79
Information about the site's history and conservation	2.89	3.53
Leaflets and maps to help you find your way around	2.76	3.20
Picnic tables/seats	2.42	3.40
Provision of all-ability trails for prams, pushchairs, wheelchairs etc.	2.22	3.33
Availability of staff at the site	1.75	3.00
Enough car parking	N/A	3.67
Feeling happy to leave your car in the car park	N/A	4.07
Choice of trails for cycling	N/A	3.64
Clear signposting on footpaths	N/A	4.00
Choice of trails for other activities	N/A	3.23

N/A = not available at this site

**Small sample size

The most important aspects when deciding to visit Leigh Woods Community Woodland were it being 'being able to enjoy the scenery and views', 'convenient/close to where I live' and 'solitude, peace and quiet'. Less important aspects overall included 'picnic tables/seats', 'provision of all-ability trails for prams, pushchairs, wheelchairs etc.' and 'availability of staff at the site'.

Comparing the factors most important to visitors to Leigh Woods with the factors important to people who never visit this wood but go to other woods and forests suggests that non-users of Leigh Woods were more likely to rate picnic tables/seats, value for money, information about the history and heritage of the site and spending time with friends and family as important but rated the convenience, wildlife and choice of paths for walking. Feeling happy to leave a car in the car park and clear signposting on footpaths were

important to those who had visited sites other than Leigh Woods. This facility is not available at Leigh Woods itself and therefore, has not been rated by visitors to this site.

Blaise Castle

Please note that the small sample number of respondents visiting other local sites which means these results should be treated with caution.

Table B-19 – Importance of different aspects in decisions to visit other woods (mean score)

Base: All respondents who have visited Blaise Castle before (124); all who have visited woods other than Blaise Castle (11)

	Importance in decisions to visit Blaise Castle	Importance in decisions to visit other woods
<i>Convenient/close to where I live</i>	4.15	3.36
<i>Being able to enjoy scenery and views</i>	4.00	3.91
<i>Being able to spend time with family and friends</i>	3.81	3.82
<i>Being able to enjoy the wildlife</i>	3.73	3.73
<i>Solitude, peace and quiet</i>	3.62	3.55
<i>Feeling safe in the wood</i>	3.57	3.64
<i>Being able to get fit and healthy</i>	3.54	3.46
<i>Choice of paths for walking</i>	3.39	3.27
<i>Value for money of your whole trip or day out</i>	3.39	3.64
OVERALL AVERAGE	3.23	3.28
Information about the site's history and conservation	2.92	3.36
Provision of all-ability trails for prams, pushchairs, wheelchairs etc.	2.85	3.18
Picnic tables/seats	2.67	2.82
Availability of staff at the site	2.34	2.64
Leaflets and maps to help you find your way around	2.25	2.73
Choice of trails for other activities	2.18	2.36
Enough car parking	N/A	3.55
Feeling happy to leave your car in the car park	N/A	3.64
Clear signposting on footpaths	N/A	3.36
Choice of trails for cycling	N/A	2.36

N/A = not available at this site

The most important aspects in decisions to visit Blaise Castle were it being 'convenient/close to where I live', 'being able to enjoy the scenery and views' and 'being able to spend time with family and friends'. Less important aspects overall included 'leaflets and maps to help you find your way around', 'the availability of staff at the site' and the 'choice of trails for other activities'.

Comparing the factors most important to visitors to Blaise Castle with the factors important to people who never visit this site but have been to other woods and forests suggests that non-users were more likely to rate leaflets and maps, information about the site and the provision of all-ability trails as important but rated convenience from home and choice of paths for walking as less important. Again, car parking provision and feeling happy to leave their car was important for non visitors to Blaise Castle but these aspects were not rated by visitor to this site.

People who had visited Leigh Woods or Blaise Castle in the last year were also asked to specify in their own words what else, if anything, had influenced their decision to visit. One in ten visitors to Blaise Castle mentioned the peace and tranquillity of the site (10%), while 14% of visitors to Leigh Woods were motivated by the weather on their most recent visit to the site.

Favourite aspects of woods

When the visitors were asked what they liked most about Leigh Woods, the most frequently provided responses related to the lovely scenery/views (26%), that it is close to home and/or convenient (25%) and the peace and tranquillity (24%). It is important to bear in mind the fairly small sample size for this question (84).

Some of the specific answers provided for this site included the following:

“Rural aspects. Leaf colours. Seeing families out enjoying themselves and the countryside.”

“Just the seasonal changes and the peace of the woods.”

“The size, terrain and the variety there - ups and downs. Outlook gorge and extend walk into farm lane.”

When the visitors were asked what they liked most about Blaise Castle, the most frequently provided responses related to it being close to home/convenient (23%), the open spaces (20%) and the peace/tranquillity (18%).

Some of the specific answers provided for this site included the following:

“I like the smell and the feel of it. It gives you the sense of being in the middle of nowhere if you want or you can talk to people.”

“It's such a nice place you get a feeling of freedom.”

“Closeness of it. Natural heritage and beauty of place. Relaxing and peaceful.”

When comparing the two sites, visitors to Leigh Woods were more likely than those visiting Blaise Castle to mention the scenery and views as an aspect they particularly liked about

the site (26% and 14% respectively), while visitors to Blaise Castle were more likely to appreciate the open spaces (20% v 6% at Leigh Woods).

Satisfaction with different aspects of visit

Respondents who had visited either of the sites were provided with a list of different elements and asked to rate how satisfied they had been with each during their most recent visit. Respondents could rate each of the elements on a five point scale which included 'excellent' (5), 'very good' (4), 'good' (3), 'fair' (2) and 'poor' (1). Also, if visitors had no experience of a specific element they were asked to indicate that they did not know. Scores were then applied to responses, allowing averages to be obtained across the whole sample - the higher the average score, the more satisfied visitors were with this aspect.

Table B-20– Satisfaction with different aspects at forest (mean score)

Base: All respondents who have been to Leigh Woods (84)

	Satisfaction score Leigh Woods	Number rating this aspect
Convenience/close to where I live	4.37	83
Value for money of your whole trip or day out	4.09	55
Being able to enjoy scenery and views	4.05	82
Being able to spend time with family and friends	4.04	73
Being able to get fit and healthy	4.04	79
Solitude, peace and quiet	3.94	82
Feeling safe in the wood	3.89	81
Being able to enjoy the wildlife	3.78	80
Choice of paths for walking	3.77	78
OVERALL AVERAGE	3.53	
Provision of all-ability trails for prams, pushchairs, wheelchairs etc.	3.19	42
Information about the site's history and conservation	2.82	54
Leaflets and maps to help you find your way around	2.82	38
Picnic tables/seats	2.65	48
Availability of staff at the site (e.g. rangers)	2.00	11

Those who had visited Leigh Woods were most satisfied with the convenience of the site's location, the value for money of the visit, being able to enjoy the scenery and view, being able to spend time with family and friends and being able to get fit and healthy. Elements ranked lowest on average included the availability of staff on-site, picnic tables and seats, leaflets and maps and information about the site's history and conservation. It is worth bearing in mind that not all visitors rated every aspect and those with the lowest ratings are those experienced by the small proportions of visitors.

Table B-21– Satisfaction with different aspects at forest (mean score)

Base: All respondents who have been to Blaise Castle (124)

	Satisfaction score Blaise Castle	Number rating this aspect
Convenience/close to where I live	4.48	124
Value for money of your whole trip or day out	4.27	119
Being able to enjoy scenery and views	3.98	123
Being able to spend time with family and friends	3.96	117
Being able to get fit and healthy	3.86	119
Solitude, peace and quiet	3.85	123
Being able to enjoy the wildlife	3.70	119
Choice of paths for walking	3.65	121
Feeling safe in the wood	3.64	121
OVERALL AVERAGE	3.59	
Choice of trails for other activities (e.g. horse riding)	3.39	64
Provision of all-ability trails for prams, pushchairs, wheelchairs etc.	3.28	88
Information about the site's history and conservation	3.19	96
Leaflets and maps to help you find your way around	2.97	58
Picnic tables/seats	2.85	97
Availability of staff at the site (e.g. rangers)	2.76	75

Those who had visited Blaise Castle were most satisfied with the convenience of the site's location, the value for money, being able to enjoy the scenery and views, being able to spend time with family and friends and being able to get fit and healthy. Elements ranked lowest on average included picnic tables/seats, leaflets and maps and information about the site, the availability of staff on-site and information about the site's history and conservation. It is worth bearing in mind that not all visitors rated every aspect and those with the lowest ratings are those experienced by the small proportions of visitors.

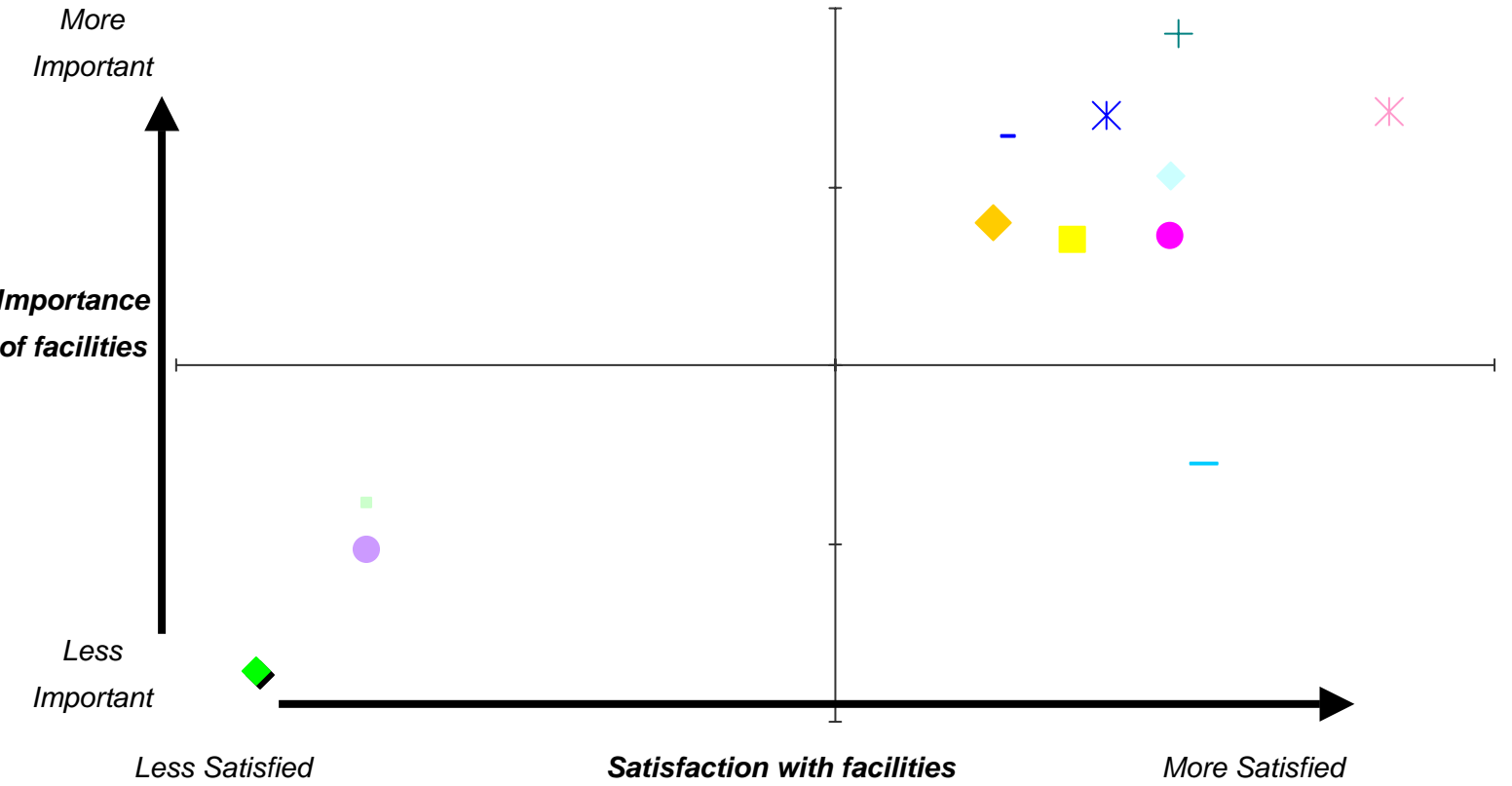
Comparing the scores obtained in this survey with those obtained in other locations included in this programme of research (Thames Chase Community Forest in Greater London, South Yorkshire Community Forest, South Community Forests, forests in North West England and forests in Wales), visitors to the two locations in the South West of England were more likely to provide higher than average ratings for all of the aspects listed, particularly the provision of all ability trails, the choice of trails for other activities (Blaise Castle only), information about the site's history and conservation and picnic tables/seats.

Reasons for dissatisfaction

Respondents who rated any of the aspects listed in Table B-20 and 21 as either 'fair' or 'poor' were asked to state why they were not totally satisfied. Some of the key responses provided are detailed below with the number of respondents giving each reason in brackets.

- *Leaflets and maps* – none available (10), not enough (Blaise Castle, 5).
- *Choice of paths for walking* – quality of paths (3), not enough (Blaise Castle, 2).
- *Solitude, peace and quiet* – busy/crowded (3), too much noise in general (1).
- *Being able to enjoy wildlife* – didn't see any (5), nothing there (Blaise Castle, 1).
- *Choice of trails for other activities (Blaise Castle only)* – none/not seen any (1), poor maintenance (1).
- *Availability of staff on-site* – did not see anybody (20), only seen staff at Museum (Blaise Castle, 4), there are none (Blaise Castle, 2), staff not friendly/approachable (Blaise Castle, 1).
- *Information about site's history and conservation* – not enough leaflets/information available (11), none available (10).
- *Feeling safe in the wood* – just feel insecure/not safe anymore (6), gangs hanging about (4), bit isolated (Leigh Woods, 2), no lights (Leigh Woods, 1).

Analysis of importance of elements of visit v satisfaction with same elements
 Base: Respondents who have been to Leigh Woods (84)



- ◆ Choice of paths for walking
- ◆ Picnic tables/ seats
- × Provision of all ability trails
- × Solitude, peace and quiet
- + Being able to enjoy scenery and views
- + Being able to enjoy wildlife
- Value for money of the whole trip
- Being able to get fit and healthy
- × Convenience/ close to home
- × Availability of staff
- Being able to spend time with family and friends
- Orientation leaflets and maps
- Information about the site

Identification of issues

Tables B-20 and B-21 illustrated a ranking of the overall levels of importance and levels of satisfaction users have with different aspects of the 'visitor experience' at Leigh Woods, the FC site surveyed in 2007. It is useful to combine these two measures to identify the elements which are most relevant to improving quality. Again, it is important to bear in mind, when comparing these scores, that the sample of respondents who had visited these sites was small so this ranking should therefore be treated as providing an indication of the importance of different aspects and what visitors are most and least satisfied with.

The chart on the previous page presents each of the elements that were rated in terms of both importance and satisfaction. The centre point is where the 'average' importance crosses the 'average' satisfaction score. Encouragingly, amongst visitors, the elements ranked most important were those visitors were more satisfied with, while lower levels of satisfaction corresponded with low levels of importance.

Each element is plotted in the 4 quadrants as follows:

- Top right – *More Satisfied – More Important* – Convenience/close to home, scenery and views, being able to get fit and healthy, being able to spend time with family and friends, solitude, peace and quiet, feeling safe in the wood, being able to enjoy the wildlife and choice of paths for walking. These are the site's key strengths which should be maintained.
- Bottom right – *More Satisfied – Less Important* – Visitors are generally satisfied with the value for money of their whole trip although this element is rated as less important on average.
- Top left – *Less Satisfied - More Important* – Again, none of the elements ranked fell into this quadrant.
- Bottom left – *Less Satisfied – Less Important* – Information about the site, orientation maps and leaflets and picnic tables/seats. Overall, visitors were less satisfied than average with these aspects but they are also seen as less important by most visitors. These elements might therefore be considered as lower priorities for investment.

It is important to note that the scores presented in this chart are averages across *all visitors* during the period in which the survey took place. It should be remembered that the scores

for satisfaction and importance varied between different types of locations and visitors so their priorities will also differ.

Other visitors

Leigh Woods

When asked about other users encountered during their recent visits to Leigh Woods, most visitors stated that they had seen other walkers (93%), while around seven in ten had seen cyclists (71%) and 62% encountered children. 12% of visitors encountered horse riders, while a small proportion stated that they had seen vehicles driving in the wood (6%).

Respondents who had encountered each of the different user groups were asked to indicate how this had impacted on their overall enjoyment. Mean scores were applied to results from +2 if a user group ‘increased enjoyment a lot’ to -2 if they ‘decreased enjoyment a lot’. Again, it is important to take the very small sample sizes into account when interpreting these figures.

Table B-22 – Other visitors encountered (%) and impact on enjoyment (row %)

Base: All respondents who have been to Leigh Woods before (84)

	Total	Increased enjoyment a lot +2	Increased enjoyment a little +1	Made no difference 0	Decreased a little -1	Decreased a lot -2	Score
Walkers	93	-	4	94	3	-	0.01
Children	62	-	12	87	2	-	0.10
Cyclists	71	2	2	80	13	3	-0.15
Horse riders	12	-	20	80	-	-	0.20
Vehicles driving in wood	6	-	-	80	-	20	-0.40

- No responses

Percentages may equal >100% due to rounding

As the table illustrates, encounters with children, walkers, horse riders and cyclists were generally quite positive. However, visitors who encountered cyclists and the small number who encountered vehicles driving on the site were more negative about these experiences.

Vehicles driving in the wood disrupted the enjoyment of 1 at this site, with ‘driving too fast’ given as the reason for the disruption caused by this aspect.

Blaise Castle

When asked about other users encountered during their recent visits to Blaise Castle, most visitors stated that they had seen other walkers (94%), while 92% encountered children and 70% saw cyclists during their visit. Approximately a third of visitors encountered horse riders, while small proportions stated that they had seen vehicles driving in the wood and/or motor bikers or moto cross users (2% and 7% respectively).

Table B-23 – Other visitors encountered (%) and impact on enjoyment (row %)

Base: All respondents who have been to Blaise Castle before (124)

	Total	Increased enjoyment a lot +2	Increased enjoyment a little +1	Made no difference 0	Decreased a little -1	Decreased a lot -2	Score
Walkers	94	3	11	85	-	-	0.18
Children	92	6	11	79	4	1	-0.18
Cyclists	70	-	6	85	8	1	-0.05
Horse riders	36	2	16	82	-	-	0.20
Motorbikers/moto cross	7	-	-	56	22	22	-0.67
Vehicle driving in wood	2	-	-	100	-	-	0.00

- No responses

As the table illustrates, while encounters with other walkers, children and horse riders usually had no impacts or were positive, encounters with cyclists and motorbikers were more likely to have a negative impact. Only three respondents encountered vehicles driving in the wood and this had no impact on their enjoyment of their visit.

Motorbikes or motocross disrupted the enjoyment of 9 respondents. The reasons for dissatisfaction included the noise created, that they were unsafe and scared other users, dogs and wildlife, rudeness and lack of consideration for other users and making a mess.

Disturbances to visit

Leigh Woods

Respondents in the Leigh Woods area were also presented with a list of potential negative disruptions and asked what impact, if any, each had on their visit. As the table below illustrates, the majority of respondents indicated that each of the potential impacts either 'didn't reduce their enjoyment' or that they did not know (suggesting the impact had not been encountered).

However, the disruptions most likely to have a more negative effect were litter or fly tipping (25%) and dogs/dog dirt (24%). Of these, litter and fly tipping had the greatest impact, decreasing enjoyment 'a lot' during recent visits for around one in ten visitors (11%).

Table B-24 – Impact of potential issues on enjoyment (row %)

Base: All respondents who have been to Leigh Woods before (84)

	Didn't reduce enjoyment 0	Decreased a little 1	Decreased a lot 2	Don't know	Score
Litter or fly tipping	65	14	11	10	0.39
Dogs and dog dirt	71	19	5	5	0.30
Forest operations such as felling	82	8	1	8	0.12
Muddy tracks	89	7	2	1	0.12
Noise from other users or motorised sports	85	6	1	8	0.09
Vandalised, missing or damaged signposts	82	6	1	11	0.09

Respondents were asked to indicate what else, if anything had decreased their enjoyment. Encouragingly, the vast majority of users could not think of anything or did not state any other issues (96%). Aspects mentioned by those who could included poor weather (1 respondent) and paths in need of maintenance (1 respondent).

Blaise Castle

Respondents in the Blaise Castle area were also presented with a list of potential negative disruptions and asked what impact, if any, each had on their visit. As Table B-22 (below) illustrates, the majority of respondents at this site indicated that the potential impacts 'didn't reduce their enjoyment'.

However, the disruptions most likely to have a more negative effect were dogs and dog dirt (27%) and vandalised, missing or damaged signposts (27%). Of these, the noise from other dogs and dog dirt had the greatest impact, decreasing enjoyment 'a lot' one in ten visitors (10%).

Table B-25 –Impact of potential issues on enjoyment (row %)
 Base: All respondents who have been to Blaise Castle before (124)

	Didn't reduce enjoyment 0	Decreased a little 1	Decreased a lot 2	Don't know	Score
Dogs and dog dirt	70	17	10	3	0.37
Vandalised, missing or damaged signposts	70	21	6	2	0.35
Litter or fly tipping	81	8	8	2	0.25
Muddy tracks	86	13	-	1	0.13
Noise from other users or motorised sports	86	4	3	6	0.12
Forest operations such as felling	97	-	-	3	0.00

- No responses

Respondents were asked to indicate what else, if anything had decreased their enjoyment. Encouragingly, a high proportion of respondents could not think of anything or did not state any other issues (86%). However, the issues that were mentioned included gangs/drunks/drug addicts hanging around (4 respondents), vandalism (3 respondents), lack of dog bins, lack of seats and paths needing maintenance (2 respondents each, too much litter and poor weather (1 respondent each).

Improvements

Users of Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle Woods were also asked what, if anything, they would like to see changed or improved to make future visits more enjoyable. Those who had visited Leigh Woods were more likely than users of Blaise to state that there was nothing that needed to be improved or that they did not know (49% and 24% respectively).

Small proportions of users of Leigh Woods suggested that more activities could be provided, more information or maps are needed, that some tidying could be done and/or that the parking could be improved. 12% of users at Blaise Castle would like to see improvements to the parking, with the same proportion mentioning picnic tables or seats. Other improvements mentioned at this site related to the development of facilities and improving safety.

Table B-26 – Suggested improvements (%)

Base: All respondents who have been to Leigh Woods (84)/ Blaise Castle (124) before

	Leigh Woods Users	Blaise Castle Users
More/better parking	1	12
More/better eating facilities	-	2
Less litter	1	2
More information/maps	2	3
More musical events	-	2
Develop/clean ponds	-	2
Provide some water features	-	2
Improve/better paths	3	2
Stop fly tipping	1	-
Make safer	-	2
Provide more activities	2	-
More/better picnic tables/seats	4	12
More/better signs	4	4
Provide/improve dog bins	2	2
More/better toilet facilities	2	2
More maps	2	2
Nothing/don't know	67	51
<i>Base (Total respondents)</i>	84	124

Some of the specific suggestions provided are reproduced below:

Leigh Woods

“Maybe have more places for kids to play.”

“Keep cycling to designated path.”

“The only thing that concerns me is safe parking.”

“Dogs must be on leads signs and enforced; better information signs.”

Blaise Castle

“When I've been walking for an hour I like to sit down and enjoy the scenery. Like more picnic and seating arrangements reinstated.”

“We need more car parking. There is still not enough. Kings Weston Road is choc-a-block with cars in holidays. If there is an event there is not enough parking and the road is not that wide.”

“The only thing is I'd like to see is the ponds kept better - they are attractive but they could be kept cleaner.”

C. Postcode analysis

Introduction

To ensure that the sample interviewed for the purposes of this survey was representative of local residents, an analysis of demographic characteristics was undertaken using CACI's consumer classification system ACORN.

ACORN is a geodemographic analysis system which matches postcodes to the results of the Census and other national sources, thereby providing a detailed demographic profile of residents in a predefined area. Using this profiling system all UK postcodes are categorised into one of the following 13 broad neighbourhood groups:

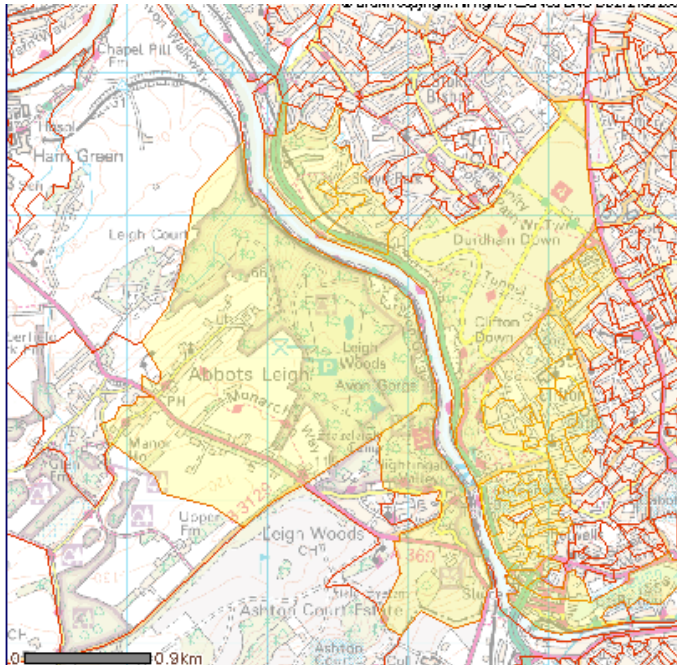
Group 1	Affluent Greys
Group 2	Aspiring singles
Group 3	Blue collar roots
Group 4	Burdened singles
Group 5	Flourishing families
Group 6	High-rise hardship
Group 7	Post-industrial families
Group 8	Prudent pensioners
Group 9	Secure families
Group 10	Settled suburbia
Group 11	Starting out
Group 12	Struggling families
Group 13	Wealthy executives

These 13 groups are then divided further into 56 specific classifications, which are listed in the appendix and described in detail in the ACORN user guide which is provided separately.

The focus of this study was households within a 1 mile catchment area from the edge of each of the two woods, Leigh Woods and Blaise Castle. The following sections provide the key results of the analyses of the population profile in each of these catchment areas.

Leigh Woods

Leigh Woods – 1 mile catchment area



There are some 4,126 households within 1 mile of Leigh Woods. The ACORN classifications in greatest abundance in this catchment zone are ‘suburban, privately renting professionals’ and ‘affluent, urban professionals, flats’ which together make up 62% of the area’s population. By comparison, these categories represent just 2% of the UK population as a whole.

Key characteristics of households defined as ‘suburban, privately renting professionals’ are the following:

- Mainly in their twenties and thirties, living close to a city without living in the centre.
- Predominantly white population, very small proportions of Asian and black residents.
- Purpose built flats, mostly rented although some are owned.
- Well educated and progressing in careers in professional and managerial occupations.
- Comfortable using the Internet for all aspects of their life.

- Where possible, use public transport or cycle or walk to work. Majority own a car – often buy newer and more expensive models.
- Long-haul destinations, weekend breaks and snow holidays popular. Leisure activities include sport and exercise, eating out and clothes shopping.
- Interested in current affairs and tend to read broadsheet newspapers.

The key characteristics of households defined as ‘affluent, urban professionals, flats’ are:

- Young singles or couples. Very few children, mainly under 5.
- Predominantly white population, although around one in ten is of non-white ethnic origin (6% Asian, 5% Black).
- Large houses that have been converted into flats. Although many own their own home, high proportion of privately rented accommodation.
- Very highly qualified (often at a postgraduate/professional level) working in professional and senior management occupations. Long working hours.
- Often take skiing holidays in winter and a long-haul destination at another time in the year.
- Leisure activities include the theatre, arts events and eating out. Enjoy good food and wine at home also.
- Read broadsheet newspapers and show an interest in current affairs.

The other categories in highest abundance within the catchment area population include:

‘Prosperous young professionals, flats’ – this group represents 9% of households in the catchment area, compared to 0.9% in the UK population. Key traits include highest levels of people aged 25-29. Two-fifths live alone, while other share larger properties and this group typically rent rather than buy. Highly paid and work in professional and managerial roles. They are twice as likely to use the Internet for shopping and online grocery ordering. Interests include art, music, the theatre, cinema and eating out. Follow current affairs most closely, buying a newspaper to read on their way to work.

'Older professionals in suburban houses & apartments' – this group represents 7% of households in the catchment area compared to 1% in the UK as a whole. The main characteristics of this group include a mixture of couples, families and singles with fewer children and more retired residents than UK average. Mixture of large houses (4+ bedrooms) and purpose built or converted flats. More houses are owned outright than rented. Two car households are common, one of which is often an expensive company car. Read broadsheet newspapers and leisure interests include fine arts and antiques, theatre and eating out.

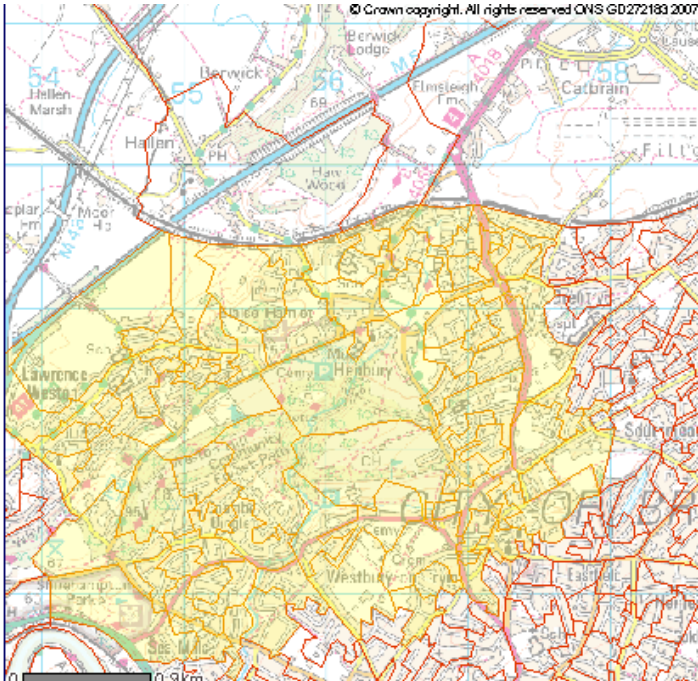
More details of the characteristics of each of the ACORN classifications are contained in the appendices. The table below provides a full profile of the area within a 1 mile radius of Leigh Woods.

Table C-1 – Residents of Leigh Woods catchment by ACORN classification

ACORN Description	Households within 1 mile of wood		UK %
	N	%	
Suburban, privately renting professionals	1,353	32.8%	0.9%
Affluent, urban professionals, flats	1,203	29.2%	1.1%
Prosperous young professionals, flats	387	9.4%	0.9%
Older professionals in suburban houses & apartments	280	6.8%	1.4%
Well-off professionals, larger houses & converted flats	234	5.7%	0.9%
Young educated workers, flats	217	5.3%	0.6%
Villages with wealthy commuters	196	4.8%	2.7%
Mainly communal population	94	2.3%	0.3%
Wealthy, mature professionals, large houses	94	2.3%	1.7%
Old people, detached homes	42	1.0%	1.9%
White collar singles/sharers, terraces	26	0.6%	1.4%
TOTAL	4,126		

Blaise Castle

Blaise castle – 1 mile catchment area



There are some 10,701 households within the 1 mile of Blaise Castle. The ACORN classifications in greatest abundance in this catchment zone are '*Low income, older people, smaller semis*' and '*skilled workers, semis and terraces*' which represent 19% of the area's population compared to 6% of the UK population as a whole. Key characteristics of 'low income, older people, smaller semis' include:

- Older population, many with significant health problems.
- Retired residents unlikely to have means beyond state pension. Those working tend to be in routine shop, factory and manual occupations.
- Small housing (1-2 bedrooms), much of which is rented from the council or a housing association.
- Few residents own a car. Spending tends to be limited to funeral plans, betting, bingo and going to the pub, with other leisure activities limited.

The key characteristics of households defined as '*skilled workers, semis and terraces*' are:

- Similar age profile to UK as a whole, with a mixture of singles, couples, families and retired people.
- Predominantly white population.
- Terraced and semi detached housing (2-3 bedrooms) with most residents buying their home on a mortgage.
- Car ownership in line with UK average. Tend to be lower value models, often bought second-hand.
- Employment in blue-collar manufacturing and manual occupations and shop work.
- Read tabloid press, with leisure activities including camping, angling, bingo and visiting the pub.

The other categories in highest abundance within the catchment area population include:

'Older professionals in suburban houses & apartments' – some 7% of households within 1 mile of Blaise Castle were in this category compared to 1% of the UK population. The main characteristics of this group include a mixture of couples, families and singles with fewer children and more retired residents than UK average. Mixture of large houses (4+ bedrooms) and purpose built or converted flats. More houses are owned outright than rented. Two car households are common, one of which is often an expensive company car. Read broadsheet newspapers and leisure interests include fine arts and antiques, theatre and eating out.

'Villages with wealthy commuters' – this group represents 6% of households in the catchment area, compared to 3% in the UK population. Key traits include older residents (45+), with few having children at home and a greater proportion of retired people than the national average. Many work in senior management positions and a number work from home. Large houses (4+ bedrooms) many of which are owned outright. Two or more cars per household are common. Leisure interests include bird watching, the arts, antiques, classical music and the opera. National Trust membership is popular, as is reading a broadsheet newspaper.

'Older people, flats' – this group represents 6% of households in the catchment area, compared to 2% in the UK population. Key traits include fewer children than the national average and more people over the age of 65. A third of households are pensioners, with single pensioner households common. Higher proportion of flats, many of which are privately rented, although holiday homes are common. Educational qualifications tend to be slightly above the national average and those working tend to be in managerial and professional occupations. Reasonable levels of car ownership, with households tending to have one car. Leisure interests include art and antiques, self-improvement and education, reading and walking. Membership of the National Trust is common.

More details of the characteristics of each of the ACORN classifications are contained in the appendices. The table overleaf provides a full profile of the area with a 1 mile radius of Blaise Castle.

Table C-2 – Residents of Blaise Castle catchment by ACORN classification

ACORN Description	Households within 1 mile of wood		UK %
	N	%	
Low income, older people, smaller semis	1,207	11.3%	3.0%
Skilled workers, semis and terraces	792	8.2%	3.3%
Older professionals in suburban houses & apartments	280	7.4%	1.4%
Villages with wealthy commuters	667	6.2%	2.7%
Older people, flats	656	6.1%	1.9%
Low income, routine jobs, terraces and flats	479	4.5%	1.4%
Single elderly people, council flats	415	3.9%	1.8%
Older families, prosperous suburbs	396	3.7%	2.1%
Singles and single parents, council flats	382	3.6%	0.9%
Old people, detached homes	385	3.6%	1.9%
Older people, rented terraces	338	3.2%	1.8%
Mature families in suburban semis	317	3.0%	3.3%
Middle income, home owning estates	307	2.9%	2.9%
Wealthy mature professionals, large houses	220	2.1%	1.7%
Single parents and pensioners, council terraces	139	1.3%	1.9%
Skilled older families, terraces	130	1.2%	2.8%
Well-off managers, detached houses	124	1.2%	3.7%
Old people, many high-rise flats	105	1.0%	0.8%
Suburban, privately renting professionals	64	0.6%	0.9%
Working families with mortgages	38	0.4%	2.6%
Lower income, older people, semis	43	0.4%	2.1%
White collar singles/sharers, terraces	38	0.4%	1.4%
Young working families	20	0.2%	2.1%
Well-off managers, larger houses	8	0.1%	2.6 %
TOTAL	10,701		

D. Appendices

Results from other community surveys

	Thames Chase	South Yorkshire	South Wales	North West England	South West England	North & Mid Wales	AVERAGE
Year	2004	2005	2006	2006	2007	2007	
BASE - total	323	313	503	319	293	310	
BASE - visitors	46	62	154	37	208	38	
BENEFITS OF SITE (all respondents)							
Good for wildlife	76	72	75	74	82	75	76
Improves the landscape and look of the area	63	63	69	51	70	43	60
Creates places for other people to take part in outdoor recreation	64	58	62	57	77	47	61
Creates a natural environment for future generations to enjoy	70	56	68	60	77	56	65
Improves the reputation of the area	48	48	52	45	58	35	48
Somewhere for birdwatching and other nature studies	53	39	44	36	56	45	46
Attracts tourists to the area	n/a	38	43	26	40	45	38
Creates areas for my personal use	49	36	43	44	60	24	43
FREQUENCY OF VISITS							
Average visits per year	46	80	76	88	33	4	55

	Thames Chase	South Yorkshire	South Wales	North West England	South West England	North & Mid Wales	AVERAGE
ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING VISIT							
Active outdoor pursuits	n/a	98	99	92	98	97	97
Walks of under 2 miles	n/a	55	58	70	46	50	56
Dog walking	n/a	47	51	49	34	26	41
Walks of over 2 miles	n/a	37	42	35	46	37	39
Cycling or MTB	n/a	18	12	22	20	8	16
Running or jogging	n/a	8	6	11	12	5	8
Passive outdoor pursuits	n/a	13	25	24	25	32	24
Picnics, BBQ, etc.	n/a	8	12	3	8	13	9
Birdwatching or other nature studies	n/a	3	9	19	13	18	12
LENGTH OF VISIT							
Average (mins)	36	71	84	73	79	85	71

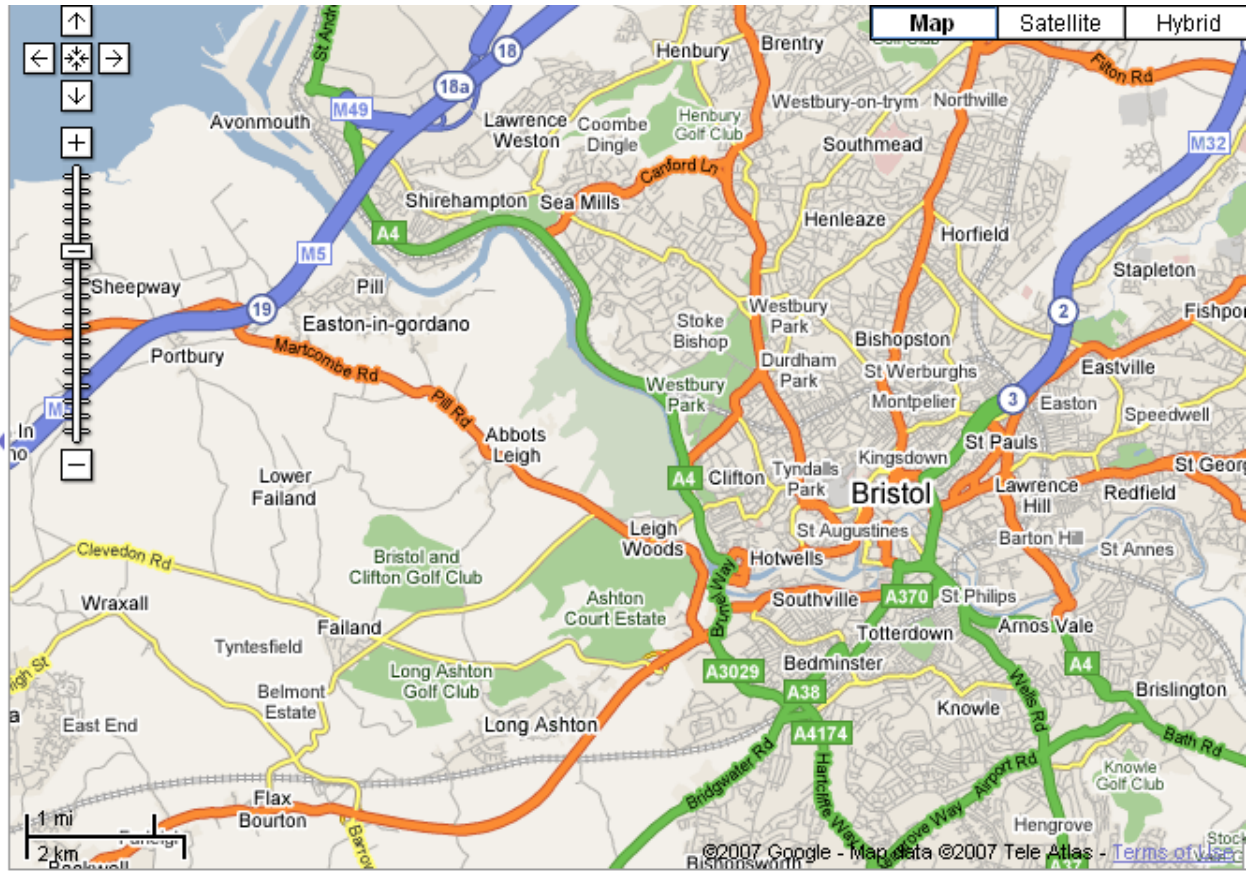
	Thames Chase	South Yorkshire	South Wales	North West England	South West England	North & Mid Wales	AVERAGE
SATISFACTION SCORES							
Provision of all ability trails	n/a	n/a	1.78	2.9	3.3	3.0	2.7
Availability of staff at the site (e.g. rangers)	2.24	2.35	n/a	1.9	2.7	1.8	2.2
Being able to enjoy scenery and views	3.59	3.58	4.03	3.62	4.0	3.8	3.8
Being able to enjoy the wildlife	3.61	3.4	3.67	3.39	3.7	3.8	3.6
Being able to get fit and healthy	3.67	3.53	3.87	3.37	3.9	3.7	3.7
Being able to spend time with family and friends	3.65	3.53	3.89	3.41	4.0	3.7	3.7
Choice of paths for walking	3.38	3.34	3.03	3.03	3.7	3.5	3.3
Choice of trails for cycling	3.19	3.17	2.54	2.92	n/a	3.0	3.0
Choice of trails for other activities (e.g. horse riding)	2.89	3.2	2.18	2.62	3.4	3.3	2.9
Clear signposting on footpaths	3.36	2.94	n/a	2.97	n/a	3.2	3.1
Enough car parking	3.25	3.13	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3.2
Feeling happy to leave your car in the car park	3.26	3.23	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3.3
Feeling safe in the forest	3.49	3.19	3.34	3.08	3.7	3.8	3.4
Information about the site's history and conservation	2.67	2.49	n/a	2.22	3.1	2.3	2.6
Leaflets and maps to help you find your way around	3.00	2.36	n/a	1.96	2.9	2.5	2.6
Solitude, peace and quiet	3.67	3.45	3.84	3.53	3.9	3.6	3.7
Value for money of your whole trip or day out	3.67	3.45	4.11	3.76	4.2	3.8	3.8
Convenient/ close to home	n/a	n/a	4.4	3.92	4.4	3.7	4.1
Picnic tables/ seats	n/a	n/a	1.82	2.45	2.8	3.4	2.6

	Thames Chase	South Yorkshire	South Wales	North West England	South West England	North & Mid Wales	AVERAGE
IMPACT OF OTHER USERS							
Walkers	0.60	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.3
Children	0.50	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.2	0.3	0.3
Cyclists	0.50	0.1	-0.1	0.3	-0.1	0.1	0.1
Motorbikers/moto cross	0.00	-1.3	-1.3	-1.2	0.2	0.2	-0.6
Horse riders	0.50	0	-0.1	0.2	-0.7	0.3	0.0
Vehicles driving in wood	n/a	-1.9	-1	-1.25	-0.3	-0.6	-1.0
OTHER NEGATIVE IMPACTS							
Forest operations such as felling	0.04	0.03	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
Muddy tracks	0.13	0.27	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.2
Dogs and dog dirt	0.57	0.29	0.42	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.4
Vandalised, missing or damaged signposts	0.37	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.3
Litter or fly tipping	0.39	0.42	0.54	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.4
Noise from other users or motorised sports	0.20	0.52	0.61	0.7	0.1	0.1	0.4

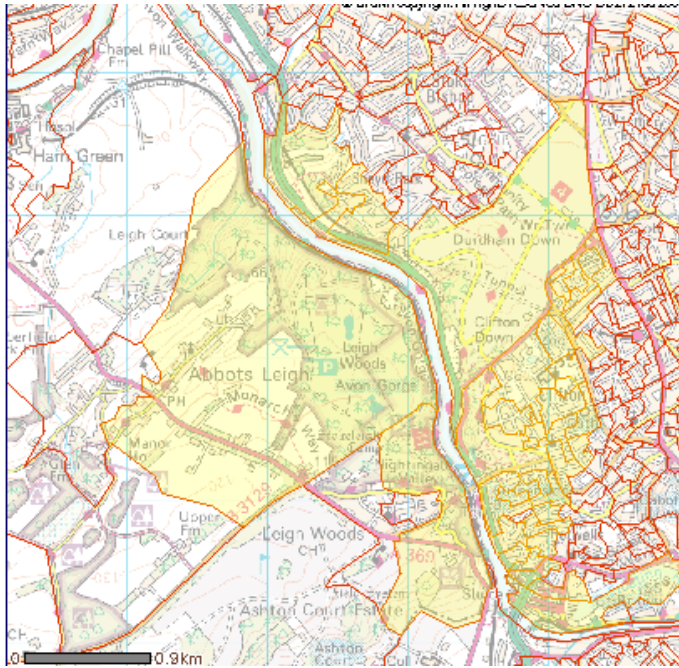
Site locations

Leigh Woods

Location of woodland

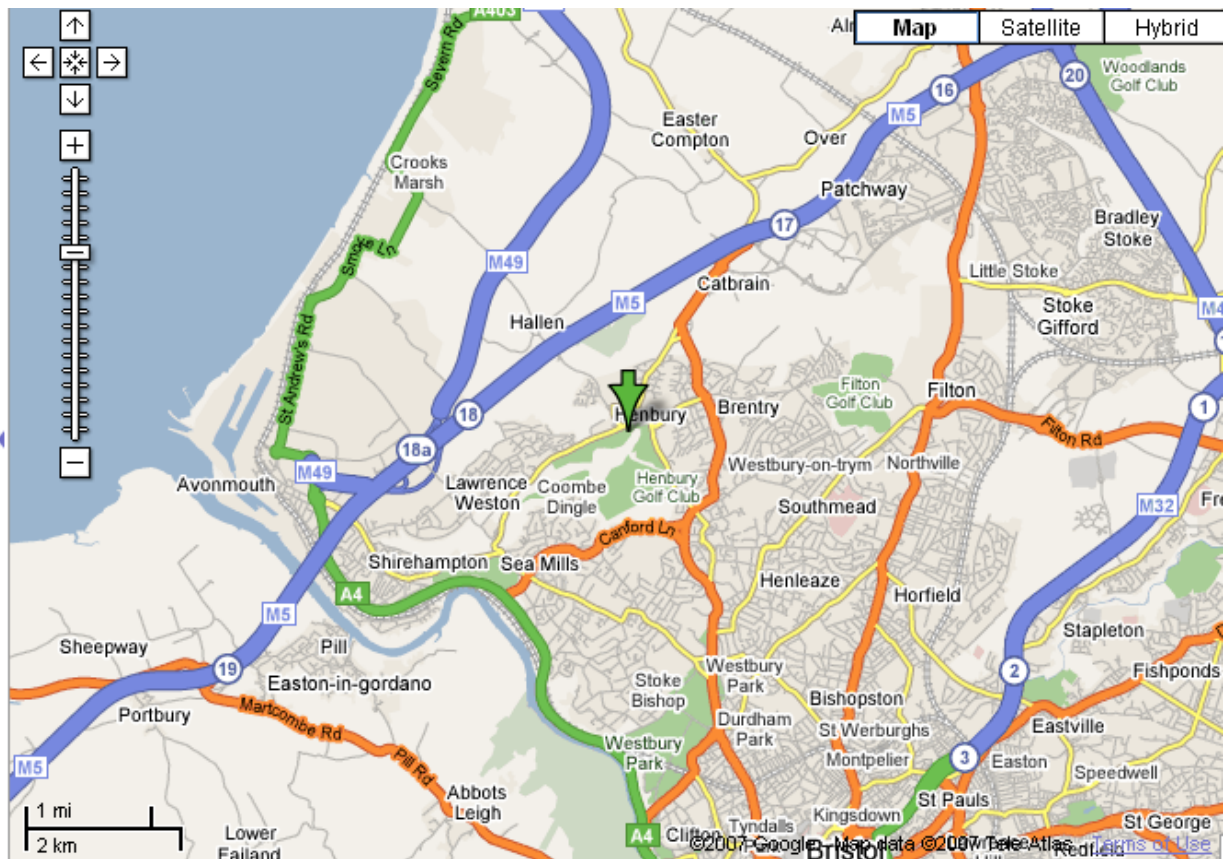


Survey catchment area

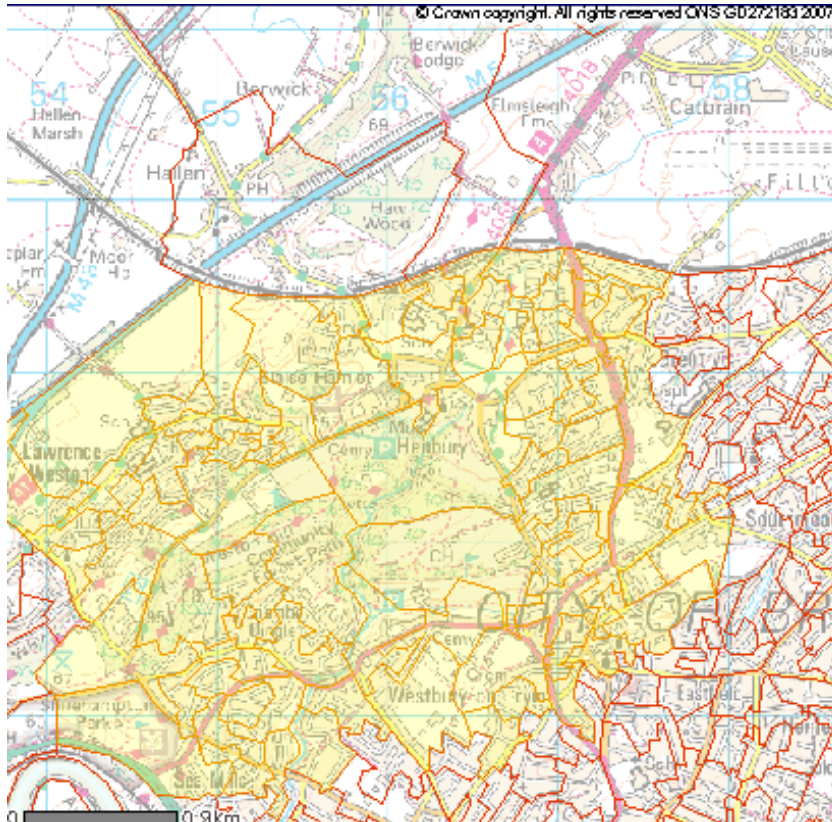


Blaise Castle

Location of woodland



Survey catchment area



ACORN classifications

CATEGORY	% UK POP	GROUP	% UK POP	GROUP	TYPE	% UK POP		
1 WEALTHY ACHIEVERS	25.1	A WEALTHY EXECUTIVES	8.6	A	1	1.7		
					2	1.5		
					3	2.7		
					4	2.6		
		B AFFLUENT GREYS	7.7	B	5	1.8		
					6	2.0		
					7	1.9		
					8	2.0		
		C FLOURISHING FAMILIES	8.8	C	9	2.1		
					10	2.3		
					11	3.7		
					12	0.6		
2 URBAN PROSPERITY	10.7	D PROSPEROUS PROFESSIONALS	2.2	D	13	0.9		
					14	1.4		
		E EDUCATED URBANITES	4.6	E	15	1.1		
					16	0.9		
					17	0.6		
					18	1.1		
					19	0.9		
		F ASPIRING SINGLES	3.9	F	20	0.6		
					21	1.6		
					22	1.2		
					23	0.4		
					3 COMFORTABLE OFF	26.6	G STARTING OUT	2.5
25	1.4							
H SECURE FAMILIES	15.5	H	26	1.9				
			27	2.9				
			28	2.6				
			29	3.3				
			30	3.6				
I SETTLED SUBURBIA	6	I	31	1.1				
			32	0.9				
			33	3.0				
J PRUDENT PENSIONERS	2.6	J	34	2.1				
			35	0.7				
36	1.9	4 MODERATE MEANS	14.5	K ASIAN COMMUNITES	2.5	K	37	0.5
							38	1.1
L POST-INDUSTRIAL FAMILIES	15.5		L	39	2.8			
				40	2.1			
M BLUE-COLLAR ROOTS	6		M	41	3.3			
				42	2.8			
				43	1.8			
5 HARD-PRESSED	22.4		N STRUGGLING FAMILIES	14.1	N	44	3.3	
						45	3.0	
						46	1.4	
						47	2.6	
						48	2.1	
		O BURDENED SINGLES	4.5	O	49	1.7		
					50	1.8		
					51	1.9		
		P HIGH-RISE HARDSHIP	1.6	P	52	0.8		
					53	0.9		
		Q INNER CITY ADVERSITY	2.1	Q	54	0.8		
					55	1.1		
56	1.1	U UNCLASSIFIED	0.3	U	57	0.3		
					57	0.3		

Questionnaire

