

Visitor Monitoring Guidance Notes January 2009

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1.0 Introduction

Forest Enterprise has been running a co-ordinated visitor monitoring programme since 1996. The programme has two main elements:

- Interviewer based visitor surveys
- Counting the number of visitors to a range of sites

This guidance note builds on the experience gained from carrying out surveys and updates the information issued in 1995 during the visitor monitoring training courses. It gives guidance on how to plan and carry out surveys and the background to the national programme. We have published reports of the major survey results and copies are available from Statistics.

This guidance note and any revisions will be published on the Statistics Intranet site by 1/4/99.

2.0 Why should we survey and count visitors?

There are many reasons for trying to find out the number and type of visitors that are using Forestry Commission woodland. These will vary depending on the location and scale of the site you are managing, but there are some common themes.

2.1 Planning projects

It is useful to know the numbers and types of visitors we are attracting to a location before carrying out work. This allows you to gauge the interest in what you are planning to do and gives you a baseline to measure the impact of the changes. The information may also be essential in gaining external funding.

Different groups of people require different products and services whether they are shopping in a visitor centre or using a forest walk. By knowing the types of customers we can plan changes to suit them or to attract new visitors.

2.2 Resource allocation

Resource allocation is not just about most money to the busiest site. It means looking at the needs of visitors against the resource we have to offer. By knowing numbers and types of visitors it is easier to plan.

A local dog walking wood with many visitors may need little infrastructure and is low cost. Tourist destinations may attract fewer people but contribute significantly to the local economy and raise income; this may require a greater input of resources.

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2.3 Customer satisfaction

We need to know what visitors think of the facilities that we are providing and how we could improve them. We also report on the level of visitor satisfaction across a sample of sites in our annual report.

2.4 Non market benefits

We deliver a range of benefits from Forestry Commission woodland. Public access and enjoyment are key to our objectives and we need to monitor use and satisfaction to report to government.

The notional benefit from public access forms a significant part of the return on the FC estate.

3.0 Survey types

There are several different methods of carrying out a survey. The two main types are; interviewer administered and self-completion. So which type is best for you?

Statistics at Silvan House can advise you on which type of questionnaire would be most suitable for you and can design the questionnaire based on your suggestions of subjects.

3.1 Self completion

In a self completion survey, you hand out a questionnaire asking the visitor to hand it back at the end of the visit or post it back freepost. Handing out a questionnaire takes little time and it can be included in a leaflet or other literature given to visitors, or perhaps placed on a counter in a Forest shop. This type of questionnaire is particularly suited to visitor centre locations. Especially if you are wanting to find out the views of visitors to the centre over a long period of time (perhaps continuously) at fairly low cost.

The main drawback is the response rate - typically less than 30% of questionnaires are completed and returned. Also, those who want to complain or give praise are more likely to respond, so the completed forms received back may give a biased picture. Self completion questionnaires need to be short and simple, to encourage as many respondents as possible to complete and return them. A prize draw or providing a free pen or pencil can improve response rates.

3.2 Interviewer administered

The interviewer administered survey can collect more information than a short self-completion questionnaire and most visitors are happy to stop and answer questions in a short interview - refusal rates are rarely more than 5%. The sampling procedure is designed to catch a representative sample of visitors. Normally a sample of around 200-300 groups is sufficient to provide enough information for analysis. At busier sites this

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may be achieved in 30 hours of interviewing but at quieter sites this may be difficult to achieve, even with up to 100 hours of interviewing.

Section 4 gives more detailed information on the interviewer-administered type questionnaire.

3.3 Other types of survey

Other types of survey include postal surveys, telephone surveys, interviews in the street and door-to-door interviews.

3.4 Alternatives to surveys

You may wish to consider other ways of seeking views, rather than running a survey. These alternative methods include:

- inviting representatives to participate in a focus group
- holding a public meeting
- inviting people to write in
- organising an Open Day and speaking to those who attend

Professional facilitators or consultants can be hired to help in some of these activities.

You may also wish to consider whether there is scope for making use of information collected by others, for example local authorities or national parks. Another option is to encourage local schools or colleges to carry out projects related to the site(s).

These alternative methods can also be used in conjunction with surveys, to identify potential issues before running a survey.

4.0 Interviewer administered surveys

4.1 Questionnaire design

Once you have decided on the topics you want to ask about, Statistics at Silvan House can help by designing a suitable questionnaire for you.

4.2 Sample size

When choosing a sample it is important to limit the inevitable random variation to an acceptable level. The effect of random variation can be expressed by a confidence interval or "range of uncertainty" around any estimates produced. The smaller the sample, the greater is the effect of random variation.

For example, if you have a sample of 300 questionnaires (i.e. 300 groups of visitors were interviewed) and 30% give a certain response to a question then you will expect on average that 30% of all visitors to that site would give that response. The range of

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uncertainty in this case is about +/- 5%; i.e. we can be fairly confident that the true proportion of all visitors who would give that response is between 25% and 35%.

The range of uncertainty decreases as the sample size increases, but only in proportion to the square root of the sample size. For example, increasing the sample size four fold only cuts the range of uncertainty in half. This makes it very expensive to get very precise estimates. A reasonable target sample size for a one off survey is to get around 200-300 responses. If you are running a survey to produce results for more than one location, or to disaggregate by weekend or weekday visitors, then you should have a larger sample size; a minimum of around 100-150 responses for each location is reasonable.

4.3 Interview schedule

You want to interview a representative sample of visitors. If interviewing is concentrated into a few days there is a risk that these days will not be 'typical' and the survey results will be biased. For example, the weather may be unusually good or bad or there may be a special event on. It is better to split the interviewing up into several shorter periods spread over the full range of times of the day and days of the week.

The shorter we make each period, the more periods we can have, so the better the sample. Interviewers may get bored (and less effective) staying at the same location too long. On the other hand, short periods may be inefficient if the interviewer has a long distance to travel to the site. The balance between these two arguments will vary between sites, but a period of around 2 hours would typically be best.

A structured interview timetable, that selects periods from different days of the week and times of the day, should ensure that the sample is fairly representative. The number of hours of interviewing will depend on the sample size required, the level of visitors to the site and the length of the interview. If you expect to complete around 4 interviews an hour on average and if you are aiming to get 150 completed questionnaires then you would need to timetable around 40 hours of interviewing.

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Two sample timetables are shown below. The first is designed for a survey that has to be completed in a short period, with interviewing in blocks of 4 hours to reduce travel time. It has a total of 36 hours of interviewing spread over a sample period of 9 days. The survey runs in the periods marked X.

| | Sat | Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 9-11 | X | | X | | | | | | X |
| 11-1 | X | | X | X | | X | | | X |
| 1-3 | | X | | X | X | X | | X | |
| 3-5 | | X | | | X | | X | X | |
| 5-7 | | | | | | | X | | |

Given sufficient time and resources it would be better for a survey to be spread out over a much longer period, in blocks of 2 hours, to get a sample that is more representative of all visitors. This is done in the second example which has 40 hours spread over a 5 week period, though the weeks need not be consecutive.

| | Sat | Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri |
|--------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|
| Week 1 | 11-1 | 1-3 | 11-1 | | 3-5 | | 5-7 |
| Week 2 | 3-5 | 11-1 | | 9-11 | | 1-3 | |
| Week 3 | 1-3 | 9-11 | 3-5 | | 1-3 | | 11-1 |
| Week 4 | 9-11 | 3-5 | | 5-7 | | 9-11 | |
| Week 5 | 11-1 | 1-3 | | | | | |

This complete coverage may not be the most efficient sampling scheme. If most visitors come at weekends and the site is quiet for most of the time on weekdays, the interviewers may waste a lot of time on weekdays hanging around waiting for someone to interview. It would be more efficient to sample more intensively at busy times (for example weekends). In doing this from a limited budget, the survey may not be able to cover all potential periods in the week but you would not go far wrong by assuming that visitors on Tuesday or Thursday mornings are similar to those on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings.

4.4 Selecting and briefing an interviewer

You will need to find a suitable interviewer to carry out this survey. You could use local Forest District staff or you could contract a student from a local college or a member of a local Friends' group. A typical rate of payment for interviewers on contract is around £5 an hour.

The main quality you want from an interviewer is a friendly and self-confident manner, so that the interviewer will be happy to approach visitors and the visitors will agree to participate. You also want to choose someone who is reliable, so that you can be confident that they will turn up on all the agreed survey periods and will ask all the questions. Someone who is very outgoing and sociable may spend too much time

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chatting and providing information to visitors; you may see this as a side benefit of the survey but it could leave you with too few completed interviews.

At some remote locations you may have concerns about the personal security of a single interviewer. Possible solutions would be to use Forest District staff or others accustomed to the area, to provide a two-way radio, or to have a pair of interviewers at that location.

An interviewer who is paid as a Forestry Commission contractor must be given a contract specifying what work is required. This should also make clear that the contractor is responsible for tax and NI contributions.

Before starting the survey each interviewer should be thoroughly briefed and should carry out several practice interviews. Section 4.5 ('Running the survey') should be read by all interviewers. This explains how the survey should be carried out and how the questionnaires should be completed.

Interviewers should also be asked to feed back comments on how the survey is going, both during the survey and at the end. For feedback at the end, a structured questionnaire may be helpful; an example is available from the Statistics branch.

4.5 Running the survey

Where to interview

Interviewing normally takes place at a car park and groups are interviewed as they return to their cars. Interviewers should ensure that they are able to interview any group that should be covered by the survey - this will sometimes require them to move around.

Who to interview

The interviewer should interview the next group of people to pass after completing the previous interview. If at a car park, a "group" will normally be those who have travelled together in a car. If the party came by coach or minibus, the "group" is whatever number are together when you see them (e.g. this could be a family group of three from a coach party or could be a complete minibus load if they all remain together).

The interviewer should choose one person from the group to interview. This should be an adult. The person should be selected at random - e.g. in a traditional family group, approach the father half the time and the mother half the time. If you choose one person but the group would prefer someone else to answer then that is OK; the benefits of having a willing interviewee outweigh the possible bias that could be caused by the person being self-selected. Try to take all the answers from the one person but it is OK if others in the group answer as well.

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If a group has been interviewed before for the same survey, then they should not be interviewed again. If a group declines to be interviewed do not press them. Typically refusals add up to under 5% of visitors so omitting them does not make the sample too unrepresentative. However it would be useful to keep a note of the number of refusals; if this is relatively high then it may suggest that a different survey location may be better.

Questionnaire layout

Before starting the survey, the interviewer should be familiar with the questionnaire layout. Questionnaires designed by the Statistics branch use certain conventions to make the questionnaire easy to complete.

Text for the interviewer to read out is in **bold**. The interviewer should read out the words as they are written; only use different words if it is necessary to prompt the respondent. If the interviewer finds any of the wording awkward then report this in feedback so that the wording can be improved for future surveys.

Instructions and advice to the interviewer are in *italics*. It is important that interviewers know when a question should be skipped and whether a question seeks one or several answers.

Most questions offer a list of alternative responses in normal type. These responses should not be read out, but the interviewer can use the lists to prompt for answers if the respondent hesitates.

The answer is recorded by circling the number next to the response. A coloured ball-point or fibre-tip pen should be used. Make sure there is a spare pen in case one runs out during an interview. In questions where the instruction is "Circle one" only one number should be circled, otherwise there will be problems during data entry and analysis. If a question allows for more than one response and the respondent only gives one answer, then the interviewer should prompt to see if there is anything else.

Examples of questionnaires and a batch sheet (see below) are provided in section 8.

Batch covering sheet layout

Each batch of interviews covers a single period of interviewing at one location, typically 2 hours. The interviewer should fill in a batch sheet for each period. This sheet gives information that applies to the whole period of interviewing to save having to record this on each questionnaire. The details requested on the batch sheet are:

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| <i>Batch number</i> | 1 for your first batch, 2 for the second and so on. Batch numbers within one survey must be unique. |
| <i>Location</i> | The name of the forest or car park |

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| | |
|---|---|
| <i>Forest District</i> | This will be pre-printed if the form is only used in one District |
| <i>Interviewer (initials)</i> | Only really needed at locations using different interviewers |
| <i>Date</i> | Day, month, year |
| <i>Day of week</i> | Monday=1, Tuesday=2, ..., Saturday=6, Sunday=7 |
| <i>Time batch started</i> | Use 24 hour clock |
| <i>Time batch ended</i> | Use 24 hour clock |
| <i>Groups passing but not interviewed</i> | See below |
| <i>Completed interviews</i> | The number of interviews completed in the period |
| <i>Weather</i> | Rain, cloud, temperature and wind |

When the batch sheet asks for the number of groups of visitors who pass but are not interviewed, note that it is the number of groups that is wanted not the number of individual visitors. There is a number grid on the batch sheet that can be used to keep track of the number passing. This information can be used to provide estimates for the total number of visitors to a location.

The batch sheet should be placed on the top of the pile of questionnaires in the batch and the whole bundle should be fastened together. In case the batch gets separated, each questionnaire should have the batch number written in the top right hand corner. Each questionnaire is also given a form number; in each batch start again with form number 1 for the first interview carried out. The combination of batch number and form number gives a unique identifier for any questionnaire at the location. This is essential for data checking and analysis.

4.6 Results

Once the survey has been completed all the batches of questionnaires should be passed on to the statistics branch in Edinburgh so that the results can be entered onto the computer and then analysed. For a long survey, you may prefer to send in batches at 2 to 3 week intervals. Initial tables of results and a brief commentary will be sent to the Forest District within a few weeks of the Statistics branch receiving the completed batches. Generally, the results will be written up into a report containing sections on the background to the survey, a description of the location where it was held and the analysis of the results illustrated with tables and charts. There is ample opportunity for the Forest District to ask for any extra analysis on the results and comment on the report before it is published.

5.0 Counting visitors

Woodland visits are usually scattered over a wide area and there is often no entrance fee. We need to count across the range of types of visit from trips to visitor centres to dog walking.

We need to record factors such as:

- the duration of the visit
- the distance travelled
- activities undertaken
- the type of visit (school group, horse rider, events)

5.1 How to count

There are many different methods to build up a picture of visitor numbers, at specific sites, and as part of an estimate of total visits to the area:

Automatic counters

- traffic counters at car parks
- traffic counters on access roads
- people counters on paths or visitor centres

Manual Methods

- click counters in visitor centres
- sample counts of parked cars or traffic movements
- sample counts of visitors passing

Management data

- ticket sales (pay and display)
- till transactions
- hire transactions
- special events
- education services

You need to select the system that best meets your needs. Expensive systems may be best for long term monitoring where accuracy is required. You should consider the costs and benefits of each system to your needs. Permanent automatic counters should only generally be placed on important sites. As a guide less than 10,000 visitors per year (rather than cars in a car park) does not warrant a permanent counter. Other factors may include; level of expenditure, potential for income generation.

Traffic counters - The most simple traffic counter is a pneumatic tube that must be read regularly and will give the total number of vehicles that have passed over it. More

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complex systems use an induction loop and may have a datalogger or cassette that can be read into a computer. The more complicated systems allow for detailed interrogation of the information back in the office. Details of different types of counters are in section 5.3.

5.2 Calibration

A calibration exercise should be carried out on a traffic counter to estimate the average number of visitors per vehicle and to check on the number of counts recorded per vehicle/ person.

Calibration should be carried out when a counter is initially installed (or moved to another location) or when changes made to the site are likely to make a difference to the figures (e.g. the addition of a playground which may result in more family groups visiting, thus raising the average number of people per vehicle).

Blank forms can be provided by the statistics branch for use in calibration. Vehicles should be recorded on the form as they pass the counter. The type of vehicle, number of people and counter reading should also be recorded. The statistics branch can then analyse the forms and produce a calibration factor, i.e. the figure by which counts should be multiplied to estimate total visitors.

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5.3 Types of equipment

This list has been compiled from information from equipment suppliers. Inclusion in the list does not imply recommendation. There may well be other suppliers that you are using who are not included. Maintenance contracts may also be available from suppliers.

Pedestrian counters

Derek Smith 01350 727561
Radio and Electronics Branch
Inver Park
Dunkeld
Perthshire
PH8 0JR

Infra red switches, passive infra red proximity systems, pressure pads, gate counters.

ELE International 01422 218355
Eastman Way
Hemel Hempstead
HP2 7HB

Beam detectors for indoor use

A & P Chalmers Ltd 01463 790400
Kaluna House Nairnside
Inverness
IVI 2BU

Radio beam, step counter, people and bicycle counter (can distinguish between the two), gate counter, datalogger.

Bicycle counters

A & P Chalmers Ltd
See above

People and Bicycle counter, datalogger.

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Counters and Accessories Ltd 01908 511122
Unit 18, Lodge Farm
Wolverton Rd
Castlethorpe
Milton Keynes
MK19 7ES

Counter and datalogger available.

Vehicle counters

Derek Smith
Radio and Electronics Branch
See above

Infra red switches, magnetic loops, pneumatic switches.

A & P Chalmers Ltd
See above

Automag car counter, dataloggers.

Counters and Accessories Ltd
See above

Datalogger and induction loop system currently used in England and recommended.

Other equipment

Metric Parking 01285 651441
Love Lane
Cirencester, GL7 1YG

Time log for ticket sales from pay and display and tills.

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5.4 Trends index sites

This list of sites are the core sites that are used to calculate whether we have met our corporate target to increase visitor numbers. The list is used to compare FC sites against other recreation providers on a year to year basis rather than against an absolute target. A report is published annually and is available from Statistics.

Scotland

| FD | Category | Location |
|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Aberfoyle | A Vehicle | Kinshaldy |
| Aberfoyle | A Vehicle | QEFP |
| Aberfoyle | A Vehicle | Strathyre |
| Ae | A Vehicle | Ae |
| Ae | A Vehicle | Mabie |
| Borders | A Vehicle | Cardrona |
| Borders | A Vehicle | Glentress |
| Buchan | A Vehicle | Back o Bennachie |
| Cowal | A Vehicle | Cnoc na Dail |
| Cowal | D VC Counter | Ardgartan VC |
| Dornoch | A Vehicle(Pneumatic) | Balblair |
| Fort Augustus | A Vehicle (Magic Eye) | Affric CFR Threshold |
| Fort Augustus | D Counter(Magic Eye) | Farigaig VC |
| Galloway | A Vehicle | Dalbeattie Town Wd |
| Galloway | A Vehicle | Raiders' Road F Drive |
| Galloway | A Vehicle | Stinchar Bridge |
| Galloway | B P&D Tickets | Clatteringshaws |
| Galloway | D VC Counter | Kirroughtree VC |
| Galloway | D VC Counter | Stroan VC |
| Inverness | A Vehicle (Induction) | Allt Mhor |
| Inverness | A Vehicle (Induction) | Glenmore |
| Kincardine | A Vehicle | Countesswells |
| Kincardine | A Vehicle | Kirkhill Main |
| Kincardine | A Vehicle | Tyrebagger P |
| Lochaber | A Vehicle (Infra red) | Linnhe |
| Lorne | A Vehicle(Pneumatic) | Aros Park |
| Lorne | A Vehicle(Pneumatic) | Glencoe Lochan |
| Lorne | A Vehicle(Pneumatic) | Sutherlands Grove |
| Moray | A Vehicle | Culbin -Wellhill |
| Moray | A Vehicle | Roseisle |
| Moray | A Vehicle | Winding Walks CP |
| Tay | A Vehicle | Dalerb Picnic Site |
| Tay | A Vehicle | Faskally Wood |
| Tay | B P&D Tickets | Queens View |
| West Argyll | A Vehicle(Pneumatic) | Ardcastle |

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England

| FD | Category | | Location |
|-------------------------|----------|--------------|---------------------------|
| East Anglia | A | Vehicle | Lynford Stag |
| East Anglia | A | Vehicle | Two Mile Bottom |
| East Anglia | B | Forest Drive | High Lodge |
| Forest of Dean | A | Vehicle | Beechenhurst |
| Forest of Dean | A | Vehicle | Symonds Yat |
| Kielder | A | Vehicle | Chopwell |
| Kielder | A | Vehicle | Kielder Castle |
| Kielder | A | Vehicle | Simonside |
| Kielder | A | Vehicle | Warksburn |
| Kielder | B | Forest Drive | Hamsterley |
| Lakes | A | Vehicle | Bogle Crag |
| Lakes | B | P&D Tickets | Grizedale Main + Old Hall |
| Lakes | B | P&D Tickets | Whinlatter Main |
| New Forest | A | Vehicle | Blackwater |
| New Forest | A | Vehicle | Bolderwood (E) |
| New Forest | A | Vehicle | Bolderwood (W) |
| New Forest | A | Vehicle | Bolton's Bench |
| New Forest | A | Vehicle | Moors Valley |
| North York Moors | B | Forest Drive | Dalby |
| North York Moors | B | Forest Drive | Newtondale |
| North York Moors | D | Hand counter | Dalby VC |
| Northants | A | Vehicle | Salcey |
| Northants | A | Vehicle | Wakerley |
| Northants | B | P&D Tickets | Bourne |
| Peninsula | A | Vehicle | Cardinham |
| Peninsula | A | Vehicle | Eggesford |
| Sherwood & Lincolnshire | A | Vehicle | Blidworth Bottoms |
| Sherwood & Lincolnshire | A | Vehicle | Thieves Wood |
| Sherwood & Lincolnshire | B | P&D Tickets | Forest Centre |
| South East England | A | Vehicle | Upperford Copse |
| South East England | A | Vehicle | West Walk |
| South East England | A | Vehicle | Woodend |
| South East England | B | P&D Tickets | Wendover Wood |
| South East England | D | VC Counter | Alice Holt VC |
| South East England | D | VC Counter | Bedgebury VC |
| South East England | D | VC Counter | QECP VC |
| West Midlands | B | P&D Tickets | Wyre |
| West Midlands | D | VC Counter | Cannock VC |
| West Midlands | D | VC Counter | Delamere VC |
| Westonbirt | C | Pedestrian | Westonbirt |

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Wales

| FD | Category | Location |
|----------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Canolbarth | A Vehicle | Black Covert |
| Canolbarth | A Vehicle | Hafod |
| Canolbarth | A Vehicle | Nant yr Arian |
| Coed y Cymoedd | A Vehicle (Tickets) | Cwmcarn For Dr |
| Coed y Cymoedd | A Vehicle | Fforest Fawr |
| Coed y Cymoedd | A Vehicle | Wyndcliffe |
| Coed y Cymoedd | B P&D Tickets | Garwnant VC |
| Coed y Cymoedd | D VC Counter | Afan VC |
| Dolgellau | B P&D Tickets | Coed Y Brenin VC |
| Llanrwst | A Vehicle (Barrier) | Newborough Beach |
| Llanrwst | B P&D Tickets | Caen y Coed |
| Llanrwst | B P&D Tickets | Llyn Geirionydd |
| Llanrwst | B P&D Tickets | Moel Famau |
| Llanymddyfri | A Vehicle | Llyn Brianne PS |
| Llanymddyfri | A Vehicle | Pembrey |

5.5 Random counts of parked cars

One method of counting visitors at less important areas (i.e. sites at which an automatic counter cannot be justified) is to record counts of parked cars.

To do this, the number of cars parked in a car park should be recorded on a large number of occasions, covering different times of year, days of the week and times of day. The statistics branch can provide a form for recording counts. It is important in this method to ensure that there are a large number of observations (at least 100) and that all days of the week and months of the year are represented. The statistics branch will then analyse the data and provide an estimate of the annual number of cars and a formula which can be used to estimate the number of cars which can be expected at the site at any given time and in any particular conditions.

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6.0 Using the results

Once you have the information from surveys and counts you need to interpret it to plan and develop recreation sites. Some of the factors you can use are detailed below:

6.1 Type of visitor

A range of visitors will come to all sites but many attract a greater proportion of a particular group. By finding out who uses the site you can plan management and consultation.

Local people - typically from within 15 miles of the site. They may often be dog walkers and will generally know the site well and will visit it regularly, more than once a week. They may not require waymarked trails but will notice changes and need to be informed of what we are planning to do. The duration of their visit is likely to be less than 2 hours.

Day trippers - generally will live within 2 hours drive of the site and will visit several times a year. May be visiting a site for a specific reason and will be quite sensitive to change - they are less likely to see changes happening. They will require more infrastructure than local people but it should be geared to their needs. Visits are likely to be over 2 hours long.

Tourists - Generally live some distance from the site, over 2 hours. Visits may be a one off or in some areas an annual holiday. They will generally need more facilities and will be less sensitive to change. Visits are likely to be over 2 hours long.

6.2 Transport

Most visitors will arrive by car. But you may find that particular locations attract cyclists, coach parties or other groups. By identifying the methods of transport you can encourage (or discourage) certain groups by how you develop the site.

6.3 Frequency of visit

Often relates to the type of visitor. Can be useful if you are trying to develop more community involvement or when considering whether to make changes to the site. Regular visitors may like the site as it is. But you may encourage more trips by responding to their needs.

6.4 How visitors find out about sites

Surveys will often give clues as to where visitors expect to find information. Often not the local forest office! This information can be used to develop publicity locally and nationally.

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6.5 Purpose of visit

People visit sites for a variety of reasons. It is important to know why people are visiting a site. There is little point in developing new riding routes or children's play areas in a woodland that is already very busy with dog walkers.

6.6 Visitor satisfaction

By measuring the visitor satisfaction of a range of aspects of a site we can identify areas for improvement. The rating may also relate to how important a certain aspect of the site is to visitors. It is also important to ask about things that aren't provided to find out if important facilities are missing.

6.7 Use of facilities

Finding out what people use is important. You may discover that only one trail out of three is used on a particular site, although there are high numbers of visitors overall. By concentrating your efforts on what people use you may be able to achieve a higher standard at lower cost.

7.0 Contacts

Paddy Harrop
Recreation and Education Support
National Office for England
Forestry Commission
9 Clifton Moor
York
YO30 4XG

Tel: 01904 696311
E-mail: paddy.harrop@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Laura Stewart
Marketing Co-ordinator
Forestry Commission Scotland
Silvan House
231 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh
EH12 7AT

Tel: 0131 314 6478
E-mail: laura.stewart@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

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Andy Fryers
Visitors Service Manager
Forestry Commission Wales
Bwlch Nant Yr Arian
Ponterwyd
SY23 3AD
Wales

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Guidance Note

8.0 Examples of questionnaires

STANDARD FD SURVEY

BATCH COVERING SHEET

Batch number

1. Location

2. Forest District

3. Interviewer (initials)

4. Date

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|----|
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | 00 |
|----------------------|----------------------|----|

Day Month Year

5. Day of week

Mon=1, ..., Fri=5, Sat=6, Sun=7

6. Time batch

Started

am / pm

Ended

am / pm

7. Number of groups passing
but not interviewed

You can use this tally
to count groups passing

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 0 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 0 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 0 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 0 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 0 |

8. Number of completed
interviews

9. Weather (circle one number on each row: use 2= middling/mixed)

Dry 1 2 3 Wet