

Public Opinion of Forestry 2009, UK

Results from the UK 2009
survey of Public Opinion of
Forestry

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Executive Summary

2009 survey

In 2009, three separate public opinion of forestry surveys were undertaken - across the UK (2,011 interviews), Wales (1,002 interviews) and Scotland (1,040 interviews).

This report presents the results from the UK survey (2,011 interviews) and, where appropriate, highlights changes over time by comparing the results with those from previous surveys.

Some of the questions asked in the 2009 UK survey were the same as those asked in 2007 (and in earlier years); however, a number of new questions were asked on topics such as child safety in woodlands and who the Government should look to for forestry advice.

Separate reports provide more detailed results for England, Wales and Scotland.

Forests, woodlands and trees in the media

78% of respondents had seen or read about forests, woodlands or trees on the television, radio or in the newspapers in the last 12 months. The most common response, given by 48% of respondents, was 'Birds and other animals in woodlands'.

Forest management

98% of respondents selected at least one public benefit as a good reason to support forestry with public money; the top three reasons given were 'to provide places for wildlife to live', 'to help tackle climate change' and 'to provide places for recreation'. In general, support for each benefit was higher in 2009 than in previous years.

When asked about what was important to the public generally (not specially linked to public money) at least 90% agreed with the statements that woodlands 'are important places for wildlife', 'are places where people can relax and de-stress', 'are places where people can have fun and enjoy themselves', 'make areas nicer places to live' and 'are places where people can learn about the environment'. When presented with similar statements relating to how woodlands were important to themselves, at least 90% of respondents agreed with the same topics except 'they are places where I can learn about the environment.'

The Forestry Commission had the most support as the organisation who should have the most influence as a source of forestry advice for the government (71% of respondents

indicated this). Environmental organisations and trusts interested in wildlife (60%) followed as the second most popular group.

Climate change

There was a high degree of agreement with a set of statements regarding the ways in which forests and woodlands can impact on climate change, for example 84% of respondents agreed that 'Trees are good because they remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it in wood'. However, 49% of respondents incorrectly agreed that 'The UK could offset all its greenhouse gas emissions by planting more trees'.

A set of statements was presented to respondents to ascertain their views on the way in which UK forests should be managed in response to climate change. The responses received reflect a general belief that forestry is a method that can be used to mitigate the effects of climate change. For example, 91% of respondents agreed that 'A lot more trees should be planted' while only 13% agreed that 'There is nothing that anyone could do that would make any difference'.

Wood as a fuel

11% of respondents said that they used wood as a fuel in their home, either on its own, or with other fuels. Of these, 57% classified themselves as an occasional user, while only 12% use it as the main fuel for heating their home.

Woodland recreation

77% of respondents had visited a woodland or forest in the last few years, a significantly higher proportion than in 2005 (65%) or 2003 (67%) but the same results to 2007 (77%). Of those respondents who had not visited, 30% gave their main reason for not visiting as 'I'm too busy/not enough time'. Those who had visited also gave this reason (40%) for not visiting more often.

61% of woodland visitors had been to a woodland or forest at least once a month in the summer of 2008 (down from 69% in the 2007 survey). 34% visited at least once a month in the winter of 2008/09 (down from 40% in the 2007 survey).

Of those adults who had visited woodlands in the last few years, 86% visited woodlands in the countryside and 64% visited woodlands in and around towns. One third of visitors reported visiting National Trust woodlands (33%) while 27% reported visiting Forestry Commission woodland.

The most common activities undertaken by those who visited woodland in the last few years was exercise (74%), watching nature (55%) and relaxing or spending time thinking (55%).

97% of those who had visited woodland agreed that they would visit the woodland or forest they visited most often again, while 94% said they would recommend it as a place to visit to a friend or relative.

Engagement with Forest Issues

9 per cent of respondents said that, in the last 12 months, they had either been involved with a community based woodland group (3%), woodland voluntary work (3%), a tree planting event (3%) or been involved or consulted about plans for managing or using woodland in their area (3%).

Around four-fifths of respondents who have children under the age of 15 agreed that “woods are good places for children to learn about the outdoors”, while 7 in 10 thought “playing in woods is good for children’s health”. Two-fifths would be unhappy if their children played alone in woods without an adult present, while 9% thought woods are dangerous places that children should avoid.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Forestry Commission has conducted biennial surveys of public attitudes to forestry and forestry-related issues since 1995. The surveys have evolved since then as follows:

- In the initial surveys, a representative sample of 2,000 adults across Great Britain (GB) was surveyed;
- In 2001, with more interest in country-level results within GB, additional questions were asked of representative samples of 1,000 adults in each of Scotland and Wales;
- Information has also been collected for Northern Ireland in the past through UK wide surveys in 2003 and the separate Northern Ireland surveys (1,000 adults) carried out in 2005 and 2007;
- In 2009 three separate surveys were carried out for the UK, Scotland and Wales. Some questions were asked in all three of the surveys conducted in 2009, but an increasing number of questions have become survey-specific.

The table below is a summary of the previous surveys and presents the approximate number of adults interviewed for each country. England results are a subset of the UK or GB survey.

	2003	2005	2007	2009
UK	4,000 adults	No survey	4,000 adults	2,000 adults
GB	No survey	4,000 adults	No survey	No survey
England	3,412 adults	3,367 adults	3,339 adults	1,685 adults
Wales	1,000 adults	1,000 adults	1,000 adults	1,000 adults
Scotland	1,000 adults	1,000 adults	1,000 adults	1,000 adults
Northern Ireland	No survey	1,000 adults	1,000 adults	No survey

1.2 This report

This report presents the views of the respondents to the UK survey, and highlights any changes over time by comparing the 2009 results with previous surveys.

Separate reports are being published for England, Scotland and Wales giving more in depth information on the specific questions asked in each country, including breakdowns by geographic (regional and urban/rural) and socio-demographic variables.

A full set of tables, reporting the results of each question by geographic and socio-demographic variables are available on the Forestry Commission website alongside this report¹.

¹ <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-5zyl9w>

1.3 Survey design

The UK 2009 survey results presented in this report are taken from the GfK NOP Random Location Omnibus survey carried out from the 5th to 10th March 2009. The survey was based on a representative sample of 2,011 adults (aged 16 or over) across the UK. They were selected from within 175 randomly selected sample points. More details of the sample method are given in Appendix 1: GfK NOP Method.

The UK 2007 survey data were obtained from the TNS CAPI Omnibus survey while the 2003 and 2005 survey data were obtained from the TNS RSGB General Omnibus. These surveys, which had a higher sample size of 4,000 adults for UK/GB, employed a different survey design so comparisons should be taken with care.

All results are subject to the effects of chance in sampling, so a range of uncertainty (confidence interval) should be associated with any result from the survey. The confidence intervals take into account the effect of clustering, weighting and stratification in the survey design (see Appendix 1: GfK NOP Method for more details).

- For questions asked in 2009 to the whole UK sample of 2,011, the range of uncertainty around any figure should be no more than $\pm 3.3\%$. In previous years when the UK sample was larger (i.e. around 4,000) the range of uncertainty should be no more than $\pm 2.3\%$.
- For responses of subgroups, i.e. questions not posed to the whole sample of respondents, the range of uncertainty is correspondingly higher. For example the uncertainty for statistics asked only to those who visited woodland (around 1,500 respondents) should be no more than $\pm 3.8\%$.
- For questions asked to whole samples, differences of more than 4.0% between the 2009 results and earlier results (i.e. 2007 or 2005) are statistically significant.

Results are shown as percentages. These have been individually rounded so may not always sum to the totals provided.

2 Forests in the media

2.1 Forests, woodlands and trees in the media

Respondents were asked whether they had seen or read about UK forests, woods or trees on the television, radio or in the newspapers in the last twelve months. The most commonly identified topic was 'Birds and other animals in woodlands' with nearly half of all respondents (48%) having seen or read something about this in the last 12 months (Table 1). The other topics commonly identified in 2007 ('Tree planting', 'Forests as a place to visit' and 'Forests and woodlands helping to tackle climate change') remain high on the list in 2009.

Table 1: Seen or read about forests, woods or trees in the last 12 months (%)

	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009
Birds and other animals in woodlands	33	22	24	34	48
Tree planting	28	22	21	30	44
Forests and woodlands as places to visit	22	19	18	25	40
Forests and woodlands helping to tackle climate change ¹	.	.	.	35	39
Flowers and other plants in woodlands	20	15	15	22	33
Cycling or mountain biking ²	.	.	.	.	33
Public rights of access to woodlands	27	19	23	24	33
Protests about roads or other developments on woodlands	33	21	18	23	31
Loss of ancient or native woodlands	21	15	15	20	28
Tree pests and diseases	14	9	10	13	27
Community woodlands/new local woodlands	13	10	10	14	22
Wood for fuel/ (short rotation coppice)	9	8	7	11	22
Restoration of ancient or native woodlands	16	12	12	17	21
Creation of new native woodlands	14	11	11	15	19
Live music (in forests or woodlands) ²	.	.	.	.	15
Labelling/certification of wood products	6	7	6	10	13
At least one topic	38	52	50	64	78

Base: All respondents:

2,000 in 2001 (GB), 4,120 in 2003 (UK), 3,892 in 2005 (GB), 4,018 in 2007 (UK), 2,011 in 2009 (UK)

1- New topic in 2007.

2- New topic in 2009.

Overall in 2009, there was an increase in recognition across all topics, with a significantly larger proportion of respondents (78%) having seen or read about at least

one topic than in 2007 (64%). However, as new topics have been introduced in 2009 we need to compare the same topics year on year. Thus, if we remove the topics 'cycling or mountain biking' and 'live music' that were introduced in 2009, on a like-for-like basis, 75% of respondents in 2009 recognised at least one of the topics in comparison with 64% in 2007.

3 Forest management

3.1 Benefits of Forestry

In the UK, public money is used to support forestry for public benefit. Respondents were asked to select the reasons why they believed public money should be used to support forestry in such a way. In 2009, 98% of respondents agreed that there was at least one reason why public money should be used to plant new woodlands and manage existing woodland for public benefit (table 2).

Table 2: Whether respondent believes public benefits are good reasons to support forestry with public money (%)¹

	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009
To provide places for wildlife to live	70	72	67	72	80
To help tackle climate change	.	.	.	61	68
To help prevent the 'greenhouse effect' and global warming.	58	57	55	.	.
To provide places for recreation (such as walking, cycling, horse-riding) ²	58	78	60	63	64
To improve the countryside landscape	55	58	53	55	62
To provide places for families to play ⁴	.	.	.	.	58
To support the economy in rural areas	52	46	41	45	55
To provide places for relaxation and stress-relief ³	.	.	44	48	53
To provide renewable energy including wood as fuel	31	32	28	37	50
To make woods more accessible to all in the community	41	40	36	37	48
To provide places for learning ⁴	.	.	.	.	48
To improve the appearance of towns and cities ⁵	40	41	37	41	44
So that the UK can buy less wood products from abroad	33	33	30	31	42
To restore former industrial land	37	35	30	34	38
To provide timber for sawmills and wood processing	29	28	23	26	28
At least one reason	92	90	89	93	98

Base: All respondents - 2001 (2,000), 2003 (4,120), 2005 (3,892), 2007 (4,018), 2009 (2,011)

NOTE – Respondents could give more than one option.

- 1- Change in question wording, to 'for public benefit' from 'because it is believed it is believed to be of public benefit' in 2009 may prompt a positive response.
- 2- Responses to 'To provide places to walk in' and 'To provide places to cycle or ride horses in' from previous years were amalgamated to match new category in 2009.
- 3- Wording in previous surveys was 'To provide healthy places for physical activity and stress release'.
- 4- New topic in 2009.
- 5- Wording prior to 2009 was 'To create pleasant settings for new and existing developments around towns'.

The most popular reasons for supporting forestry with public money are 'To provide places for wildlife to live' (80%), 'To help tackle climate change' (68%) and 'To provide places for recreation' (64%). In general, a higher proportion supported each of the reasons given in the list than in previous years.

3.2 Importance of forestry to the public and individuals

New questions included in the 2009 survey asked respondents to state their level of agreement with a set of statements regarding the purpose and use of woodlands and forests. Respondents were asked to indicate their opinion twice, once for the importance of woodlands and forests to the public and again for the importance to them personally.

The statements here differ slightly from the questions asked in 3.1 as they are asking for opinion on the importance of forests and woodland generally, rather than asking why public money should be used to support the use of them.

3.2.1 Importance of Woodland and Forests to the Public

Figure 1 shows the level of agreement by respondents with each of the statements relating to importance of woodland to the public.

Over 50% of respondents agreed (selected 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree') with each of the statements and many more respondents agreed with the statements than disagreed (selected 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree').

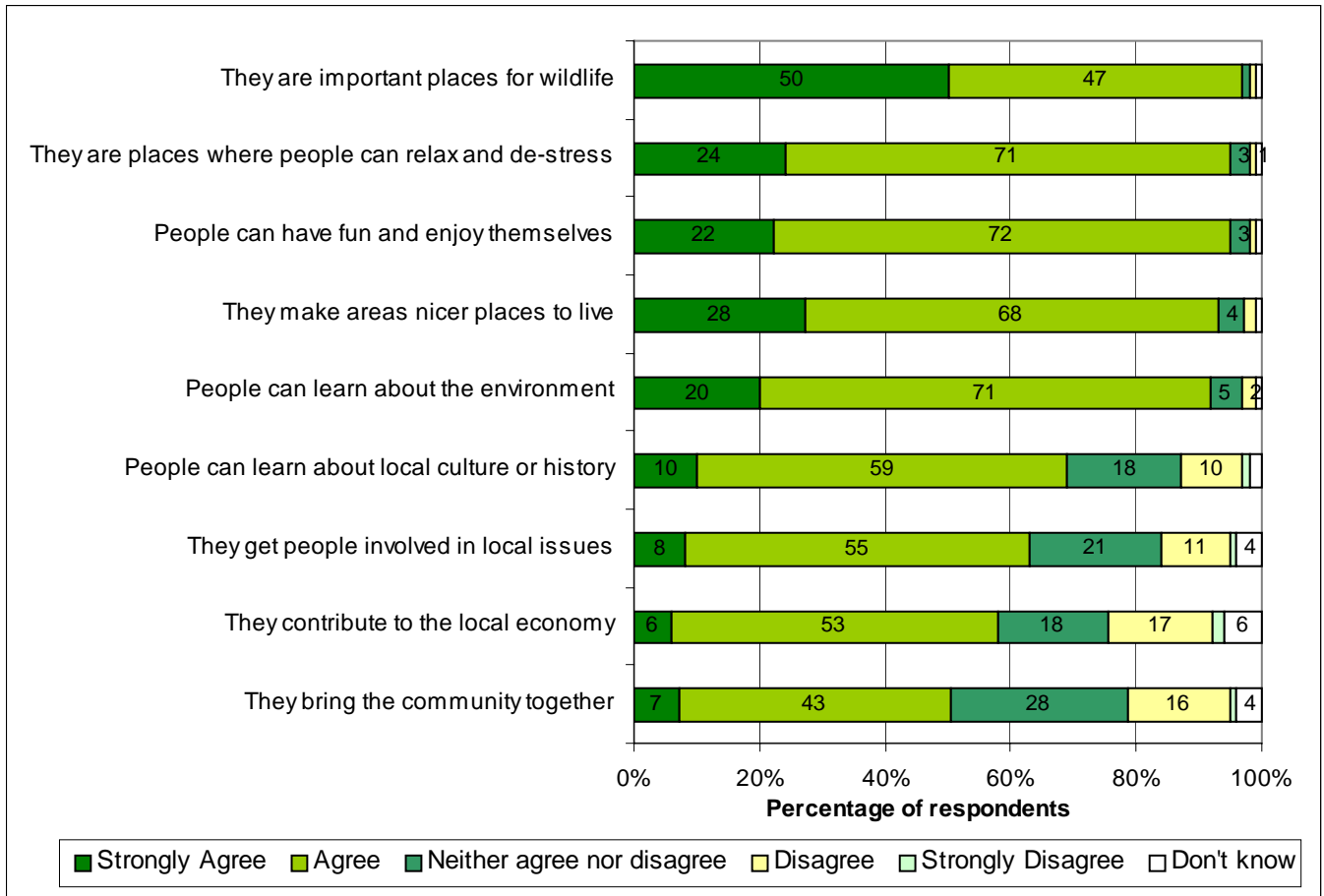
The highest levels of agreement were with the following statements:

- 'They are important places for wildlife' (97% agreed);
- 'They are places where people can relax and de-stress' (95% agreed);
- 'They are places where people can have fun and enjoy themselves' (95% agreed).

The lowest levels of agreements were with the following statements:

- 'They bring the community together' (51% agreed);
- 'They contribute to the local economy' (59% agreed).

Figure 1: Reasons woodlands and forests are important to the public

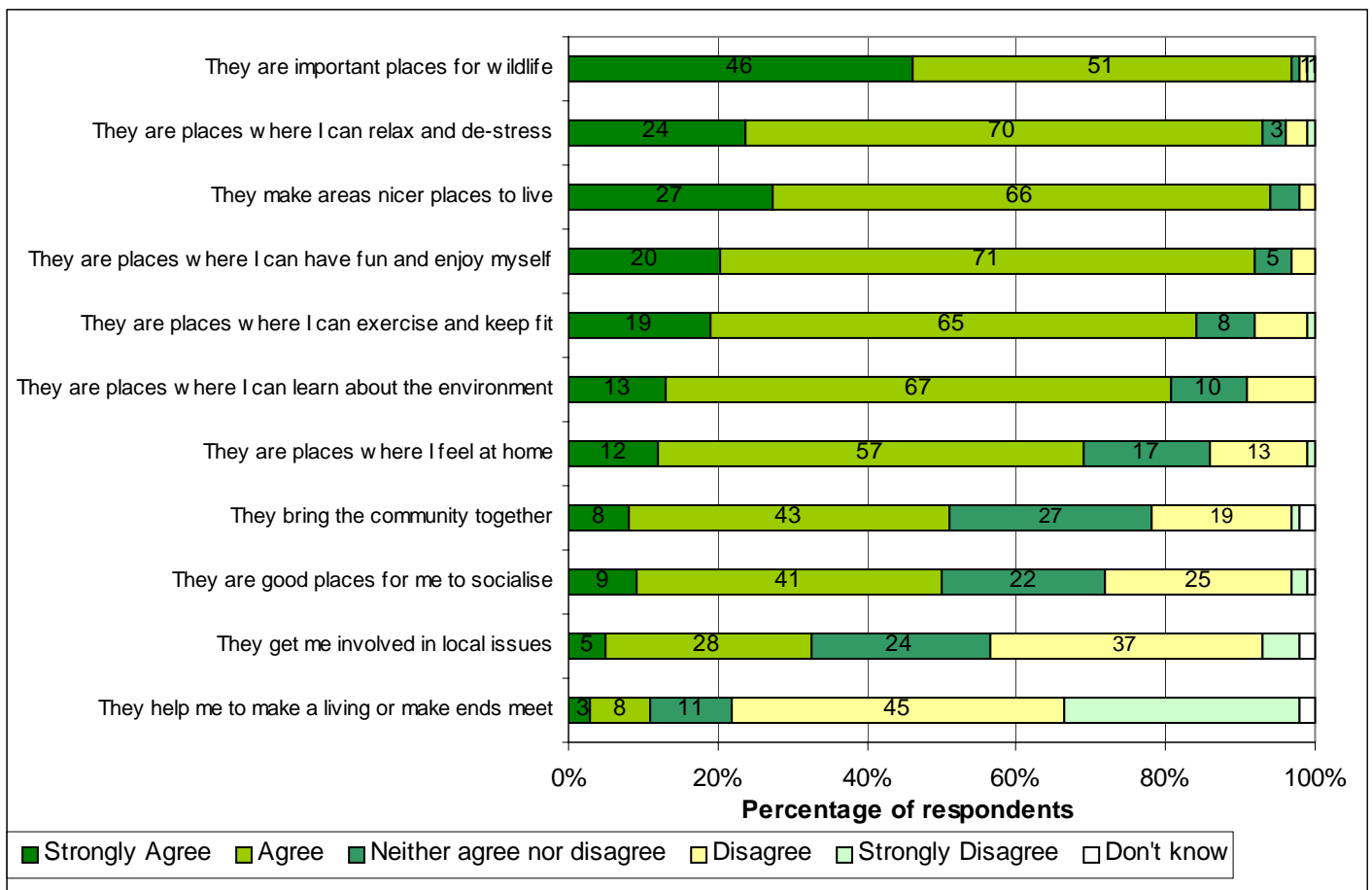


Base: All respondents in UK 2009 (2,011)

3.2.2 Importance of woodland to individual respondents

Later in the survey, respondents were asked if they had visited woodland in the last few years (chapter 6). Those who had visited were also asked to state their level of agreement with a list of reasons as to why woodlands and forests are **important to themselves**.

Figure 2: Reasons woodlands and forests are important to the respondent



Base: All respondents who visited woodlands in the last few years (1,549)

As shown in figure 2, over 50% of respondents who had visited woodlands in the last few years agreed (selected 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree') with **most** of the statements but the statements that had the highest level of agreement were as follows:

- 'They are important places for wildlife' (97% agreed)
- 'They are places where I can relax and de-stress' (94% agreed)
- 'They make areas nicer places to live' (94% agreed)

The lowest levels of agreements were with the following statements:

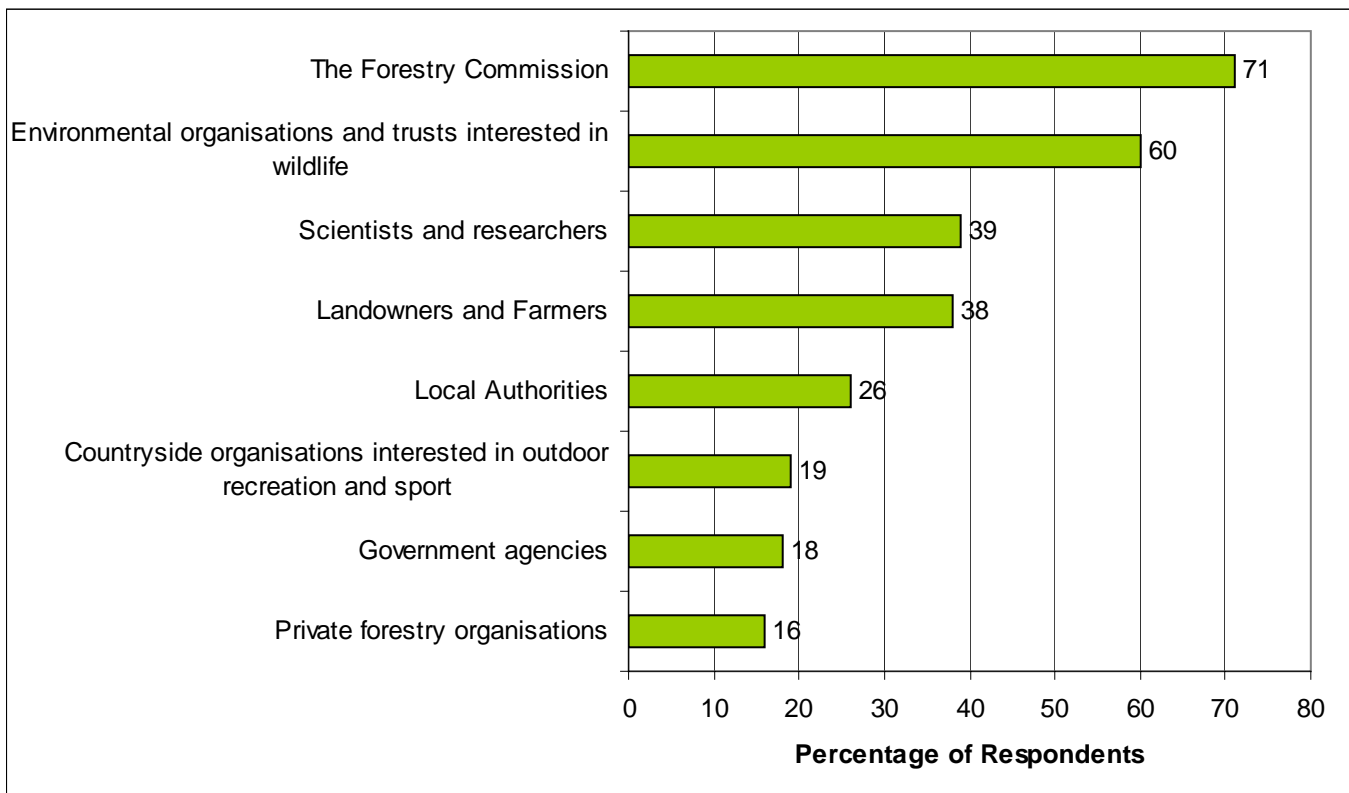
- 'They help me to make a living or make ends meet' (11% agreed)
- 'They get me involved in local issues' (33% agreed)

3.3 Sources of forestry advice for the Government

In attempt to discover who the public think should have the most influence on forestry advice for the Government, a new question was added to the 2009 survey. Respondents were asked to rank their top three from a list of public bodies and other groups based on order of importance (Most Important, Second Most Important and Third Most Important).

Overall, when taking all choices into account, the Forestry Commission is shown as having the most support as a source of forestry advice for the government (Figure 3) with 71% of respondents rating the organisation as either their first, second or third choice. The second most popular option was 'Environmental organisations and trusts interested in wildlife' (60%), followed by 'Scientists/Researchers' (39%) and 'Landowners and Farmers' (38%).

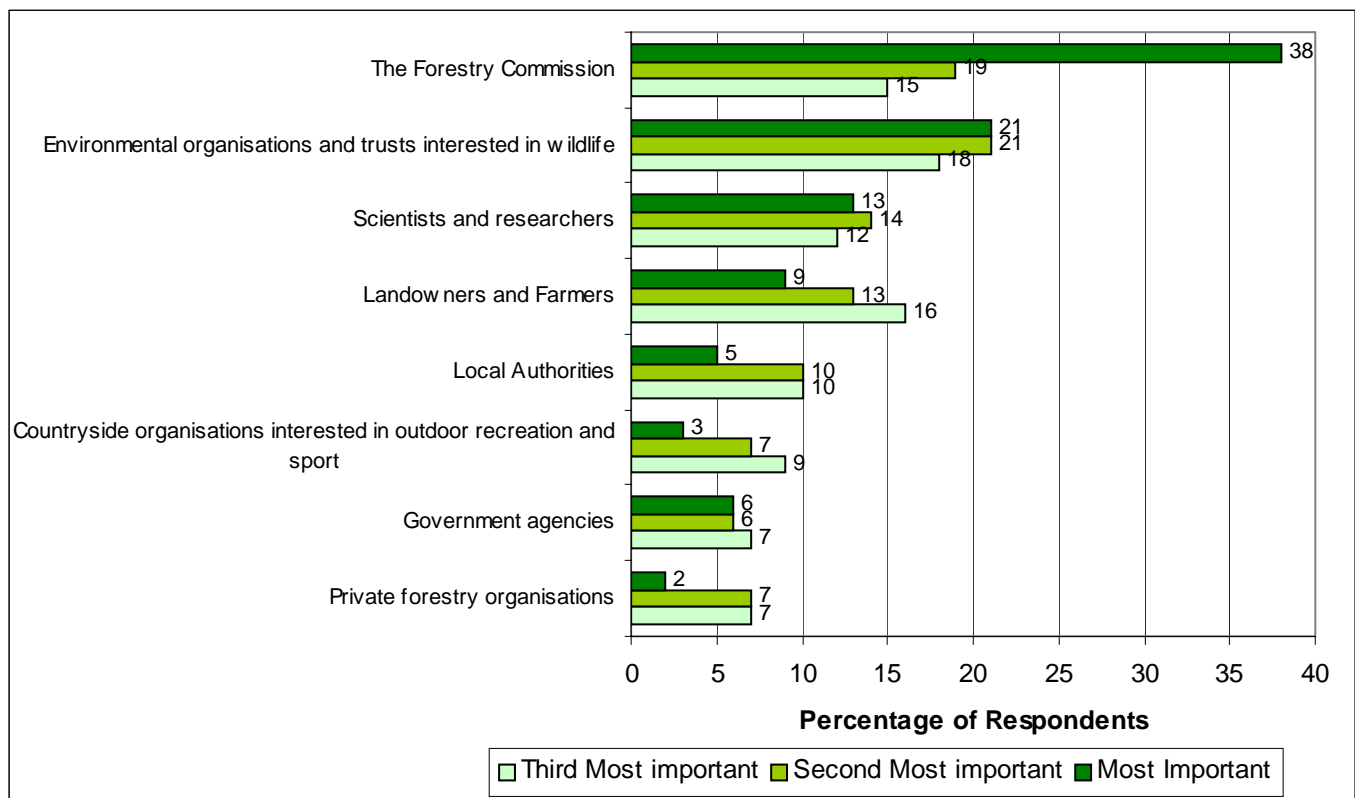
Figure 3: Who should have influence as a source of forestry advice for the government overall (% of respondents who rated groups as their first, second or third choice)



Base: All respondents in UK 2009 (2,011)

When looking at individual choices, 38% of respondents ranked the 'Forestry Commission' as their top choice, followed by 'environmental organisations and trusts interested in wildlife' (21%) and 'scientists and researchers' (13%). 'Environmental organisations and trusts interested in wildlife' were the most popular second and third choices.

Figure 4: Who should have the most influence as a source of forestry advice for the government by first, second and third choice (% of respondents)



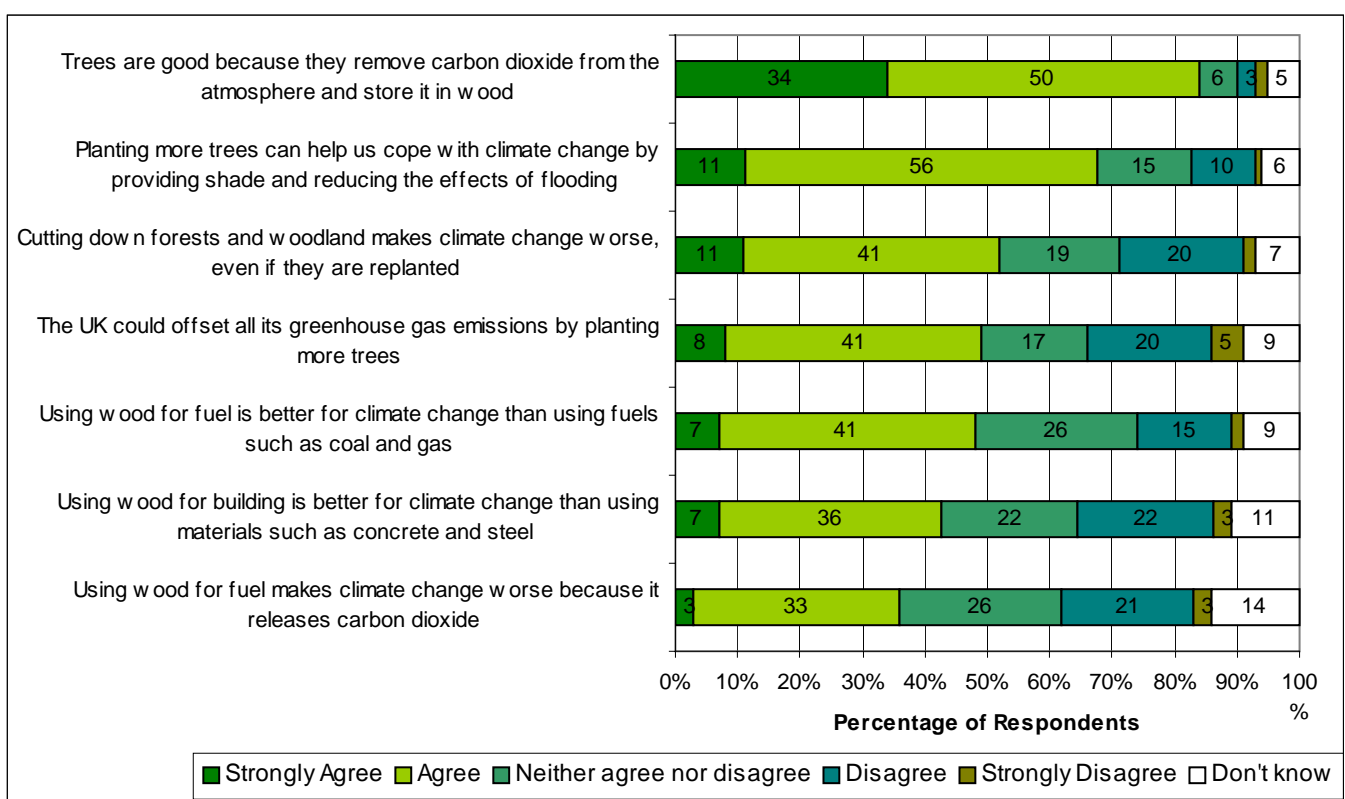
Base: All respondents in UK 2009 (2,011)

4 Climate change

4.1 Woodlands' impact on climate change

In an attempt to gauge both the beliefs and knowledge of the public on the relationship between forests and climate change, respondents were asked about their level of agreement with a set of statements regarding the ways in which forests and woodlands in the UK can impact on climate change.

Figure 5: Ways in which forests and woodlands can impact on climate change (%)



Base: All respondents in UK 2009 (2,011)

Figure 5 shows that the highest levels of agreement, where respondents selected 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree', were with the following statements:

- 'Trees are good because they remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it in wood' (84% agreed);
- 'Planting more trees can help us cope with climate change by providing shade and reducing the effects of flooding' (67% agreed);
- 'Cutting down forests and woodland makes climate change worse, even if they are replanted' (53% agreed).

The lowest levels of agreement were with the following statements:

- 'Using wood for fuel makes climate change worse because it releases carbon dioxide' (36% agreed);
- 'Using wood for building is better for climate change than using materials such as concrete or steel' (43% agreed).

It is helpful to consider the numbered statements shown above in figure 5 alongside the following common expert opinion²:

1. In general, it is believed that forests and woodlands have a key role to play in mitigating the effects of climate change. Forests and woodlands do help to stabilise atmospheric carbon dioxide by sequestering and storing carbon in trees, vegetation and soils.
2. In the short term, cutting down forests and woodlands does make climate change worse, as carbon stocks are released, but in the longer term this is countered by replanting. However, this harvesting and replanting should not be confused with deforestation, which implies a change in land cover from forest to non-forest land, whereas sustainable wood production involves cyclical harvesting and growing.
3. Wood and other materials derived from plants have an important contribution to make towards our future energy needs. Wood can be used as a low-carbon renewable energy source to substitute for fossil fuels.
4. Carbon released by burning woodfuel in modern, efficient systems is re-absorbed by growing trees in a cycle that reduces the amount of carbon released into the atmosphere. The long-term effect of tree planting, good forest management practices and burning woodfuel in efficient systems should be almost carbon neutral, however, such forests would of course not offset other emissions.
5. Wood products can be used as low-energy alternatives to materials such as concrete and steel, which involve high-energy use in their production. The biomass in wood products is also a carbon stock in its own right, just as much as biomass in living trees.
6. Afforestation makes an important contribution by sequestering carbon, but it is not feasible for the UK to become 'carbon neutral' through afforestation alone. It is estimated that to do this would require creation of some 50 million hectares of forest – approximately twice the land area of the UK.

² Statements and principles from the Forestry Commission 'Forestry and climate change' website: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-6umkar>

4.2 Forest management in response to climate change

Respondents were presented with a series of statements regarding the way in which UK forests and woodlands should be managed in response to the threat of climate change.

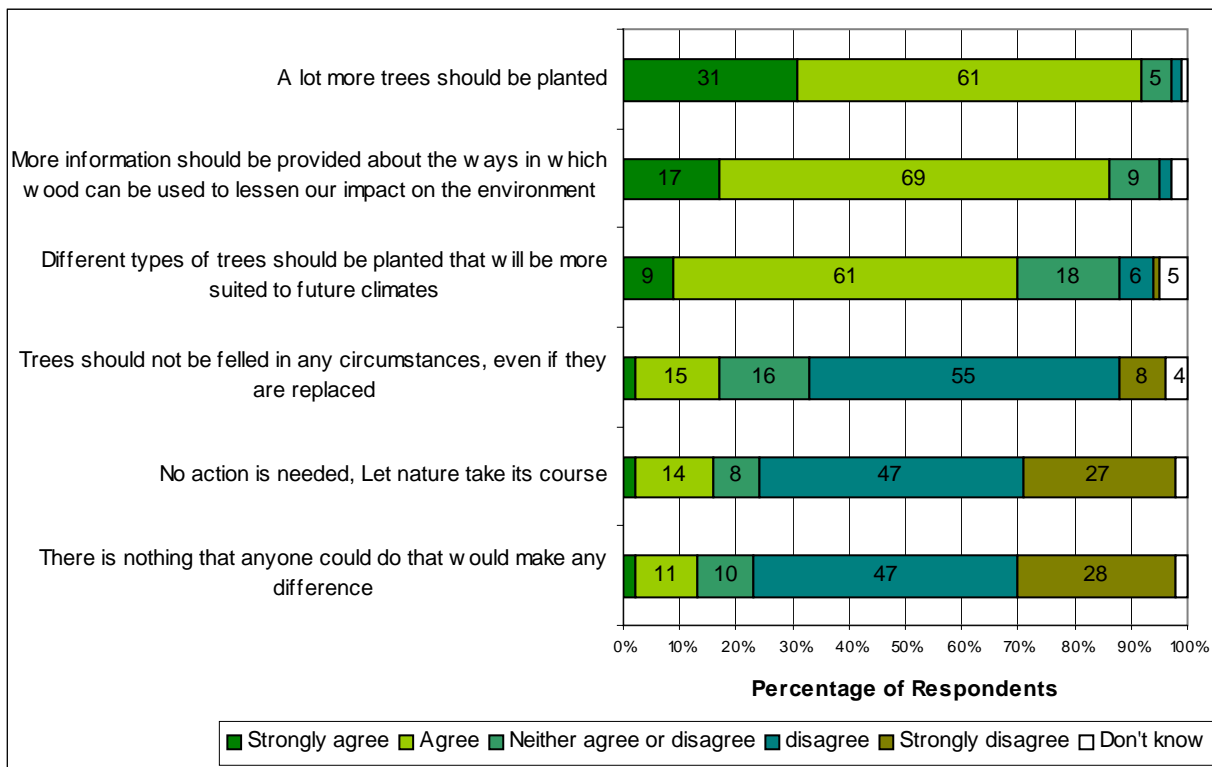
The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that:

- 'A lot more trees should be planted' (91%);
- 'More information should be provided about the ways in which wood can be used to lessen our impact on the environment' (86%); and that
- 'Different types of trees should be planted that will be more suited to future climates' (71%).

Conversely, a majority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that:

- 'There is nothing anyone could do that would make any difference' (75%);
- 'No action is needed; let nature take its course' (75%);
- 'Trees should not be felled in any circumstances, even if they are replaced' (63%);

Figure 6: Management of UK forests in response to the threat of climate change (%)



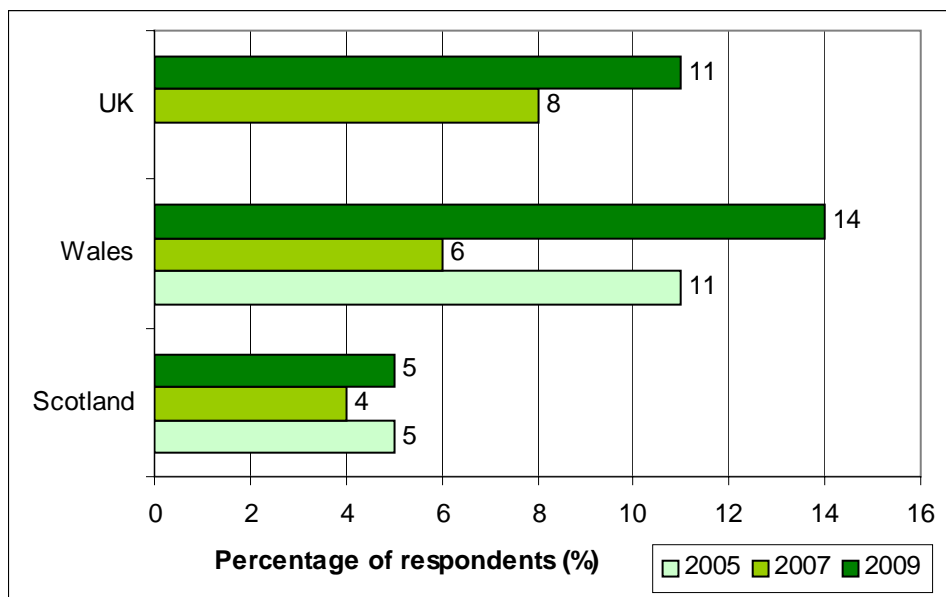
Base: All respondents in UK 2009 (2,011)

5 Wood as a Fuel

5.1 Prevalence of using wood as a fuel

As in 2007, all respondents to the UK survey were asked to state whether or not they use wood as a fuel in their home, either on its own or with other fuels. The same questions were also placed in the Scotland and Wales opinion surveys in 2007 and 2009. Prior to 2007, wood fuel questions were added to the 2005 Wales opinion survey and in a wood fuel consumption study in Scotland (2004/05).

Figure 7: Use of wood as a fuel in the home (%)



All respondents in – UK 2009 (2,011), 2007 (4,018); Wales 2009 (1,002), 2007 (953), 2005 (1,001); Scotland 2009 (1,040), 2007 (1,007), Scotland 2004/5 wood fuel consumption study (4,006)

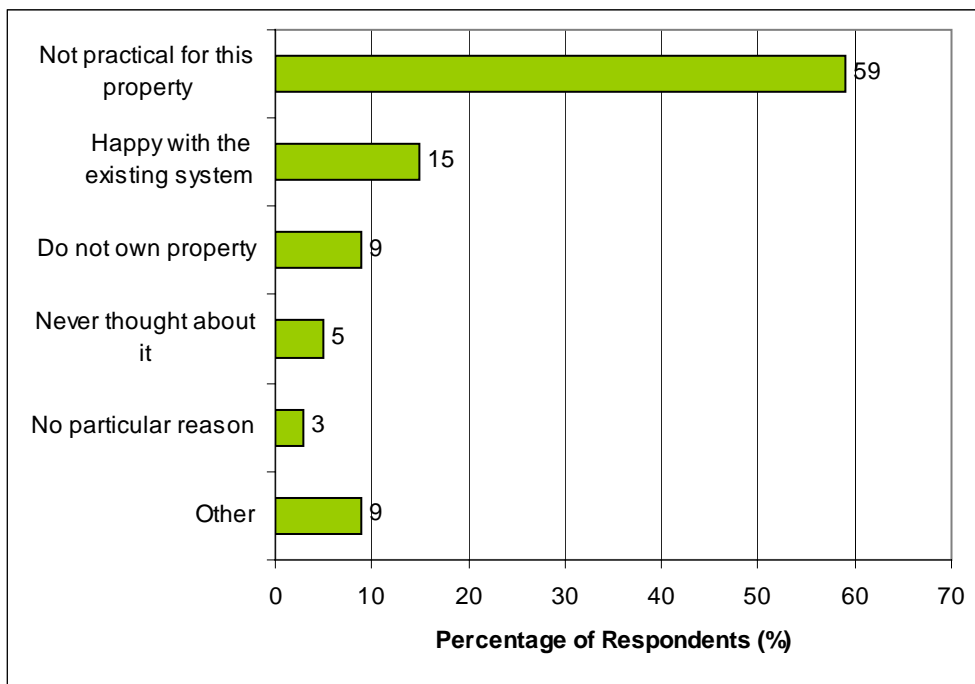
Respondents who said they used wood as a fuel were asked three further questions. The following was reported:

- Four in ten respondents (39%) who used wood as a fuel gathered their wood themselves while the rest bought it 'A few bags at a time' (35%) or received it by the truck load (17%);
- The majority (57% of those who reported using wood as a fuel) said they use wood as a fuel occasionally while 43% would class themselves as regular users;
- 12% of wood fuel users said they use wood as the main fuel for heating their home, while the rest mainly use something else.

5.2 Reasons for not using wood as a fuel

In 2009, respondents who said they did not use wood as a fuel were asked to give the main reason why they did not use wood as a fuel.

Figure 8: Reason respondents do not use wood as a fuel in their home (%)



Base: All Respondents who do not use wood as a fuel (1,787)

The most common reasons cited by respondents who do not use wood as a fuel, either on its own or with other fuels, were that it was not practical for their property (59%), followed by 'Happy with the existing system' (15%) and that they did not own the property (9%).

6 Woodland Recreation

6.1 Proportion visiting woodland

In 2009, just over three-quarters (77%) of respondents said they had visited forests or woodlands in the last few years for walks, picnics or other recreation, representing a significant increase over the results in 2005 but similar to the results in 2007.

Table 3: Visited woodland in last few years (%)

	GB 2001	UK 2003	GB 2005	UK 2007	UK 2009
Visited Woodland in last few years	72	67	65	77	77

Base: All respondents - 2001 (2,000), 2003 (4,120), 2005 (3,892), 2007 (4,018), 2009 (2,011)

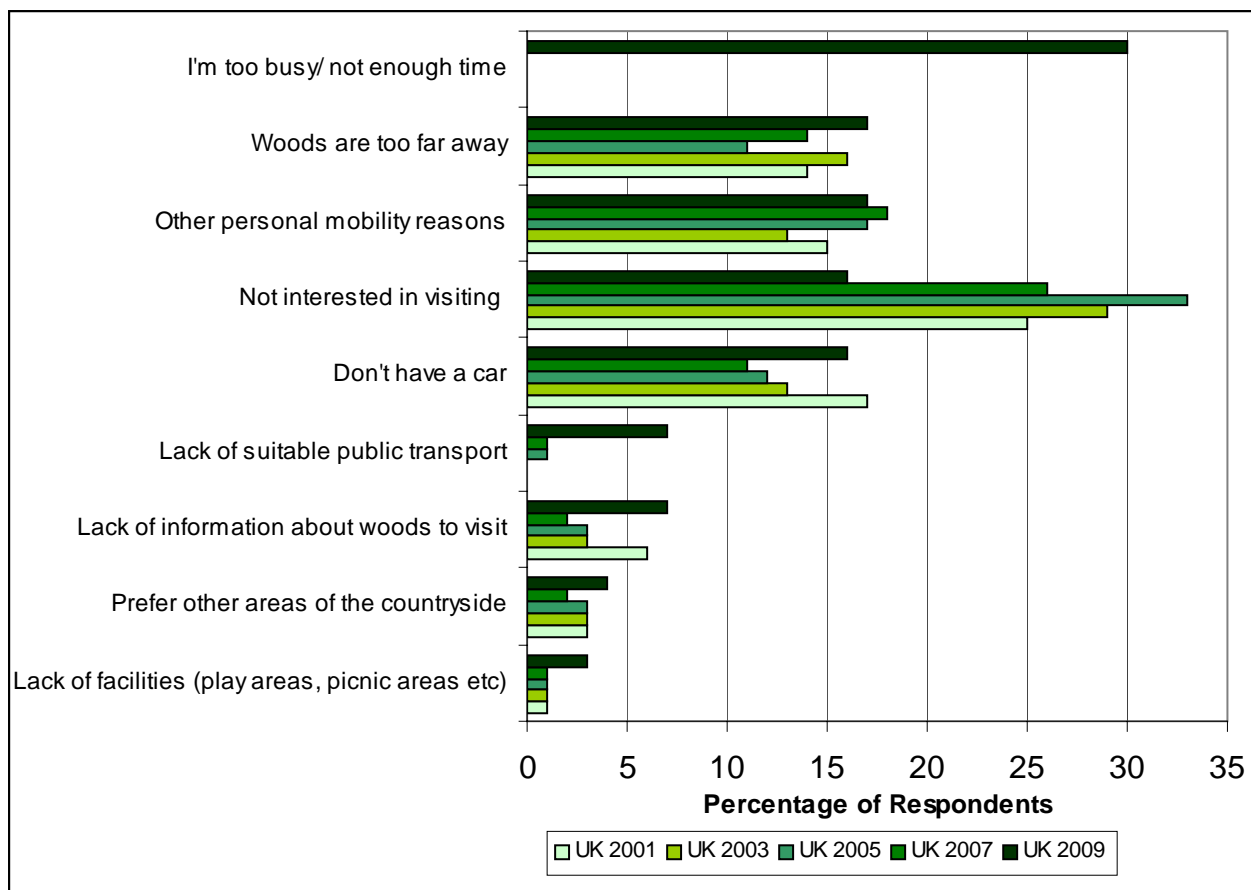
6.2 Reasons for not visiting woodland

All respondents were asked to state their main reasons for not visiting woodland more often or at all.

6.2.1 Reasons for not visiting woodland at all

For those who had not visited woodland or forests in the last few years, 'I'm too busy/not enough time', was the most commonly cited reason for not doing so (30%). Other common answers included 'Woods are too far away' (17%) 'Other personal mobility reasons' (17% of respondents), 'Not interested in visiting' (16%), and 'Don't have a car' (16%).

Figure 9: Main Reasons for not visiting Woodland in the last few years (%)¹



Base: Respondents who had not visited woodland in the last few years:
 2001 (447), 2003 (1,339), 2005 (1,328), 2007 (935), 2009 (462)

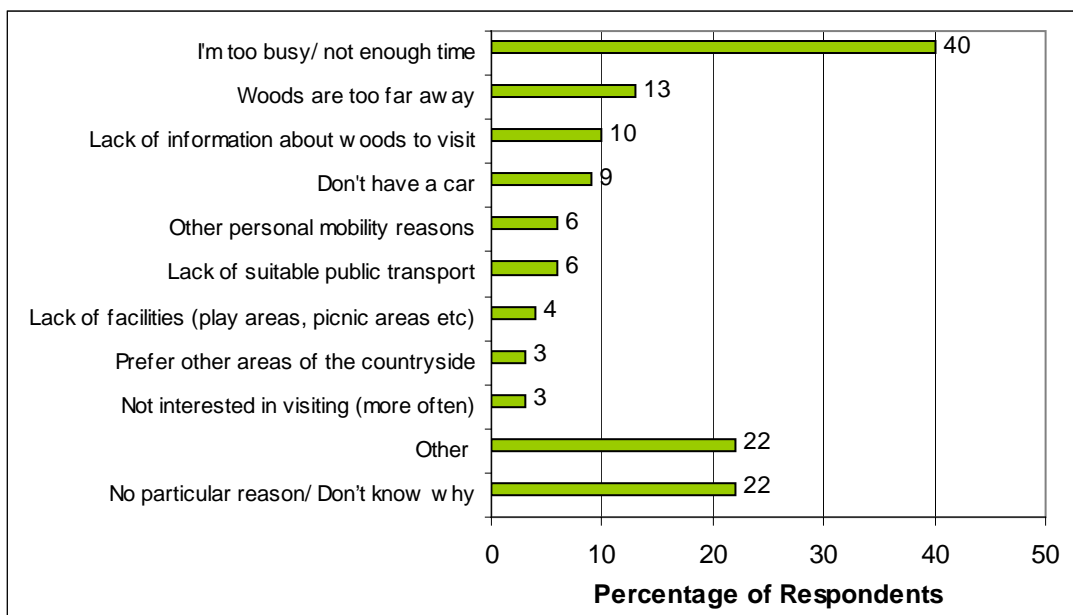
NOTE – Respondents could give more than one option.

1- Inclusion of new category "I'm too busy/ not enough time" may have an impact on the choices respondents make for other categories and on the comparability with previous years.

6.2.2 Reasons for not visiting woodland more often

Of those respondents who had visited woodlands, 40% stated 'I'm too busy/ not enough time' as their main reason for not visiting more often, followed by 22% stating 'no particular reason/ don't know why'. Respondents who had visited were also likely to say 'Woods are too far away' (13%), 'Lack of information about woods to visit' (10%) and 'Don't have a car' (9%) as reasons why they didn't visit more often.

Figure 10: Main Reasons for not visiting Woodland more often (%)



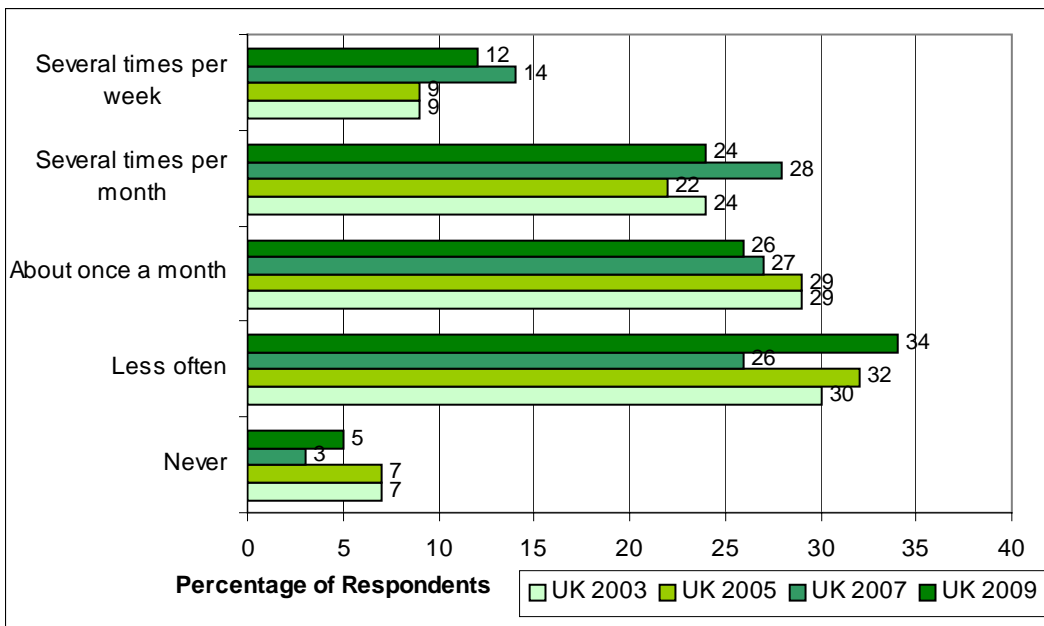
Base: All respondents who had visited woodland in the last few years (1,549)

NOTE – Respondents could give more than one option.

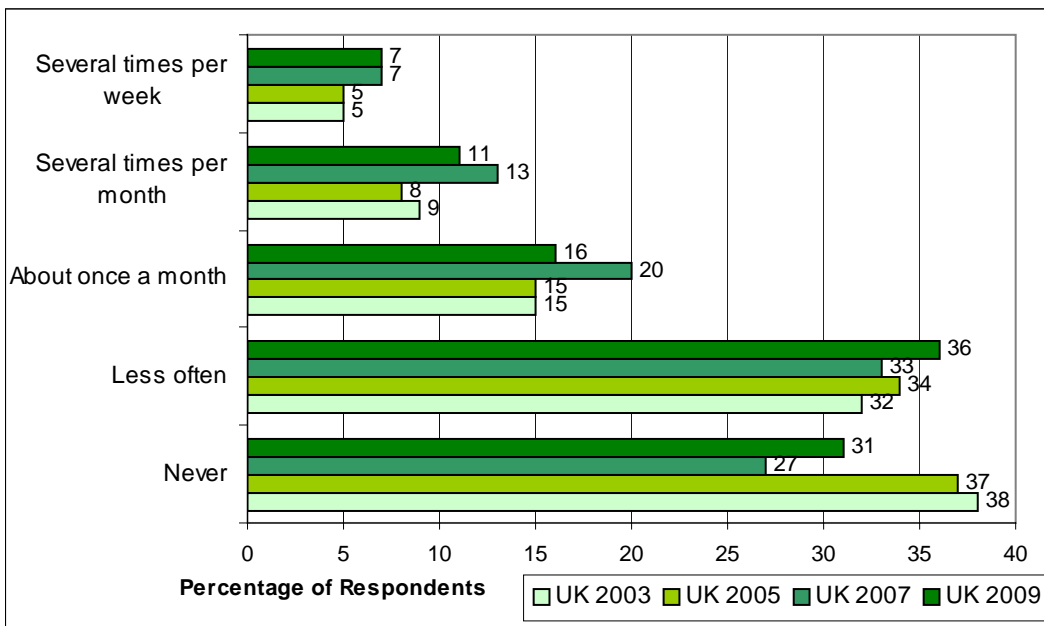
6.3 Frequency of Woodland Visits

Of the respondents who had visited woodlands in the last few years, 61% said that they visited at least once a month during summer 2008 (between April and September 2008) (figure 11). This compares with 34% who said they visited at this rate during the winter 2008/9 (between October 2008 and March 2009) (figure 12).

Only 5% of respondents who had visited woodlands in the past few years said that they did not visit during the summer 2008. However, almost a third of respondents (31%) said they did not visit during the winter.

Figure 11: Frequency of visits in Summer (April to September 2008)


Base: All respondents who had visited woodlands (1,549)

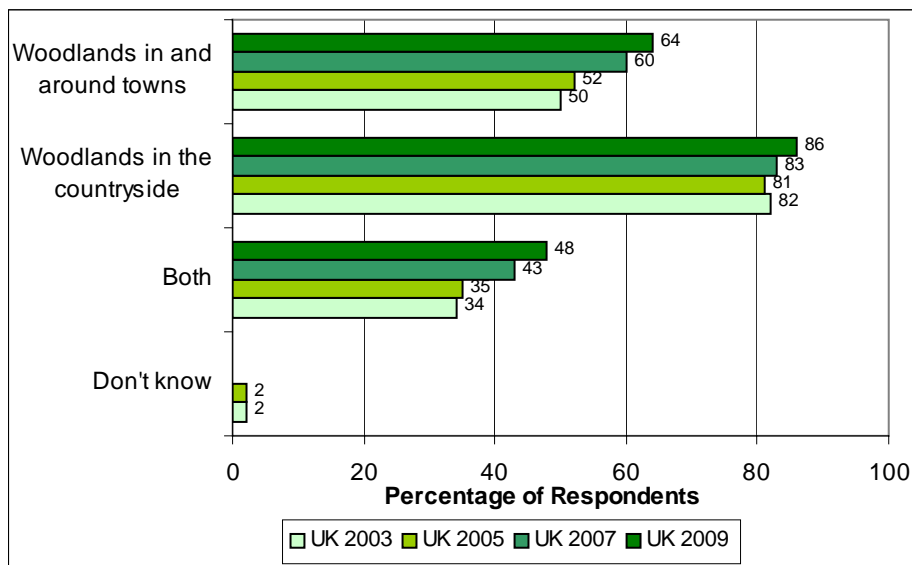
Figure 12: Frequency of visits in Winter (October 2008 to March 2009)


Base: All respondents who had visited woodlands (1,549)

6.4 Type of woodland visited

Respondents who had visited woodlands and forests in the last few years were more likely to visit 'woodlands in the countryside' (86%) than 'woodlands in and around towns' (64%). In addition, nearly half of respondents (48%) reported visiting woodlands and forests in both locations. This pattern is similar to previous years, although the proportion of respondents reporting visiting woodlands in and around towns is significantly higher than it was in 2005 (64% in 2009 in comparison with 52% in 2005).

Figure 13: Type of woodland visited (urban/rural)



Base: All respondents who visited woodland in the last few years:
2003 (2,781), 2005 (2,535), 2007 (3,018), 2009 (1,549)

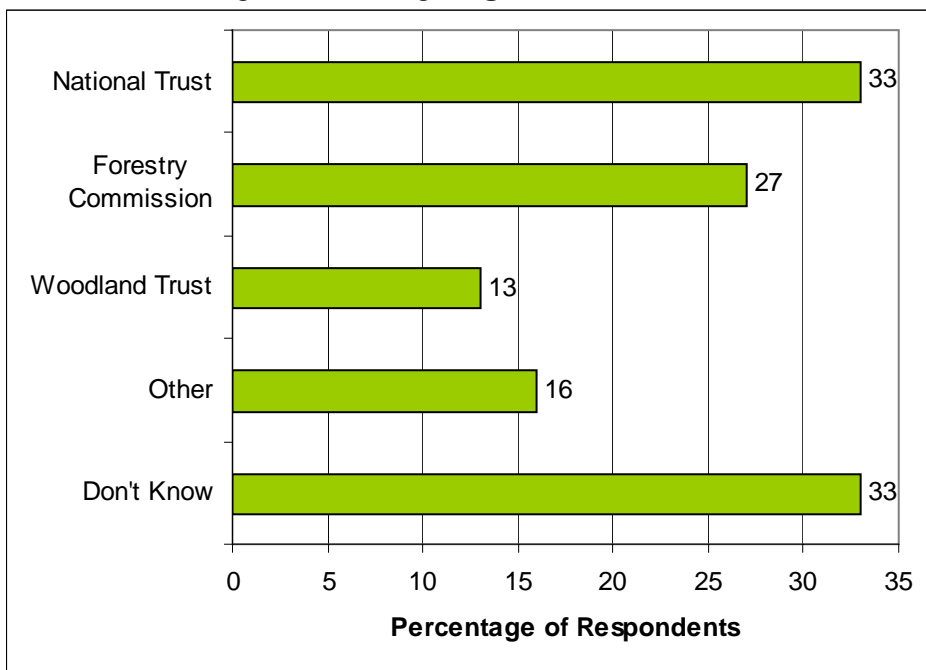
NOTE – Responses for those who said they had been to 'both' types of woodlands have been included in totals for 'Woodlands in and around towns' and 'Woodlands in the Countryside'.

6.5 Management of woodlands visited

In order to gauge who manages the woodland visited and if the public are aware of who manages them, respondents who had visited woodlands in the last few years were asked to state whether the woodlands they visited were managed by the National Trust, Forestry Commission or the Woodland Trust.

Of those who had visited woodlands in the last few years, 33% reported that they had visited woodlands managed by the National Trust. A quarter (27%) also reported visiting Forestry Commission managed woodlands and 13% cited the Woodland Trust as managing the woodlands that they visited. One third (33%) said that they did not know who managed the woodlands they had visited.

Figure 14: Whether respondents knew who managed the forests or woodlands they visited, by region (%)



Base: All respondents who visited woodland in the last few years (1,549)

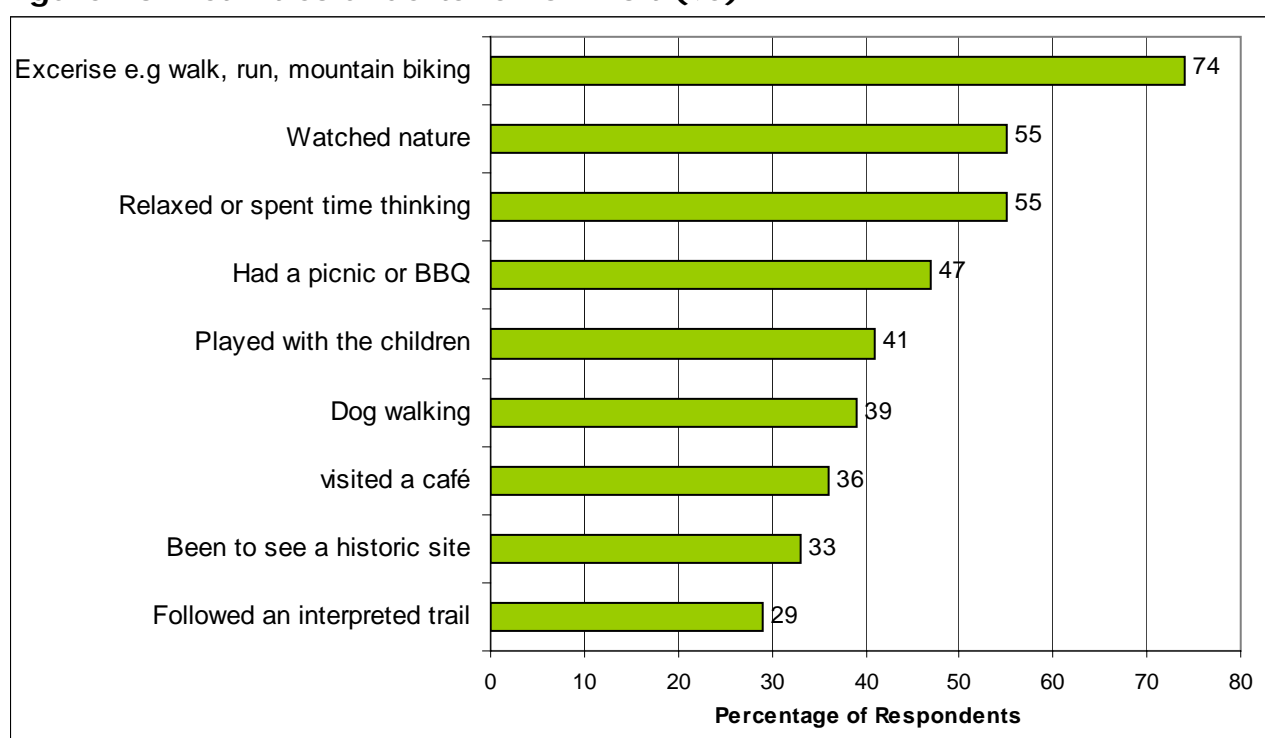
NOTE: Respondents could select more than one option

6.6 Participation in activities during woodland visit

Respondents who had visited woodlands in the last few years were asked to state what activities, if any, they had taken part in during their visit.

The most popular activity undertaken was 'exercise e.g walking, running, mountain biking' (cited by 74% of those who had visited), followed by watching nature (55%) and relaxing/spending time thinking (55%). Other popular activities included having a picnic or BBQ (47%) and playing with children (41%).

Figure 15: Activities undertaken on visit (%)



Base: All respondents who had visited woodland in the last few years (1,549)

NOTE- Respondents could select more than one option.

6.7 Satisfaction with woodland visits

Respondents who had visited woodlands in the last few years were asked to consider the woodland or forest they visited most often and state their level of agreement (on a 5 point scale from 'Strongly agree' to 'Strongly disagree') with the following:

- 'You would visit again';
- 'You would recommend it as a place to visit to a friend or relative'.

In the UK, almost all respondents said they would visit the forest again (97%). Similarly the vast majority said they would 'recommend it as a place to visit to a friend or relative' (94%).

7 Engagement with Forest Issues

7.1 Community Engagement

Respondents were asked whether they had been involved in woodland consultations or any volunteer groups and organised events associated with woodlands in the last 12 months.

Table 4 shows that in the last 12 months 9 per cent of respondents said that they had been involved with:

- Or consulted about plans for creating/managing or using woodland (3%);
- In voluntary work in connection with a woodland (3%);
- A community based woodland group (3%);
- An organised tree planting event (3%).

Table 4: Engagement with woodland consultations, organised events, volunteering or a woodland community group in the last 12 months (%)

	UK 2009
Been involved or consulted about plans for creating/ managing or using woodlands in your area	3
Been involved in voluntary work in connection with a woodland (e.g physical work in a wood, admin, fund raising , running a group)	3
Become or are you a member of a community based woodland group such as a 'Community Trust' or 'Friends of Group'	3
Been involved in an organised tree planting event	3
At least one of these	9
None of these	91

Base: All respondents in UK 2009 (2,011)

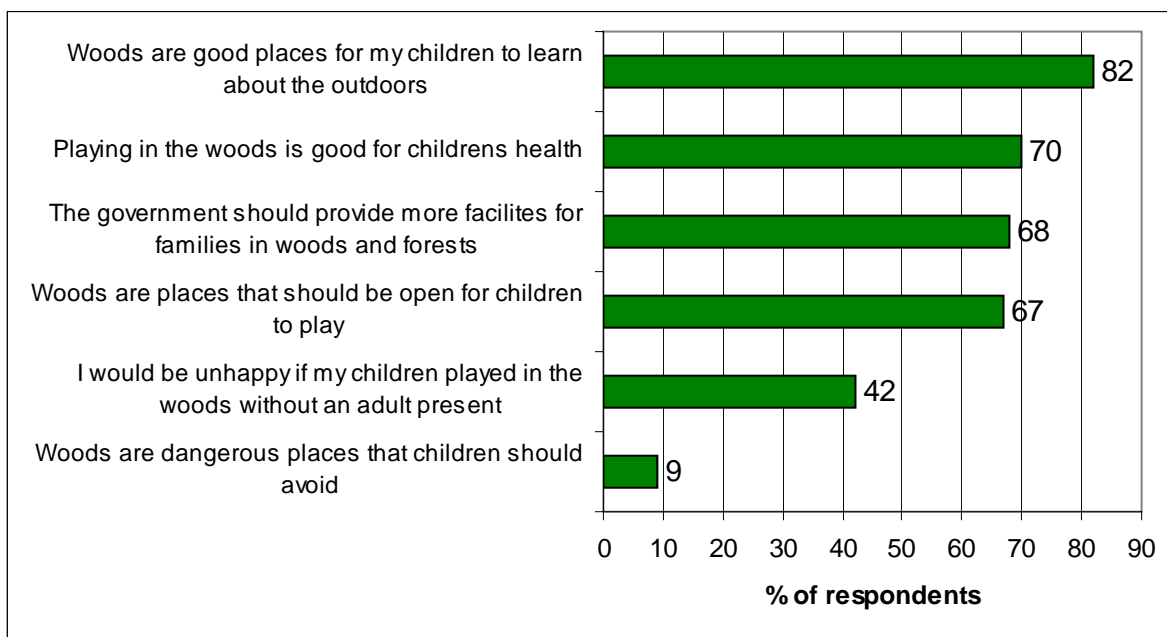
7.2 Children in woods and forests

Respondents with children under 15 years old were asked to state if they agreed with a list of statements about children and woodlands.

Four fifths (82%) of respondents with children under the age of 15 agreed that 'Woods are good places for my children to learn about the outdoors' while 70% agreed that 'playing in the woods is good for children's health'. Around two thirds (68%) said 'the government should provide more facilities for families in woods and forests'.

The majority of respondents (67%) thought 'Woods are places that should be open for children to play'. However, two fifths (42%) said 'I would be unhappy if my children played in the woods without an adult present' while one in ten (9%) said that 'Woods are dangerous places that children should avoid'.

Figure 16: Level of agreement to statements about children and woods (%)



Base: All respondents with children under 15 years old (658)

Appendix 1: GfK NOP Method

UK 2009 survey

The GfK NOP Random Location Omnibus employs a quota sample of individuals with randomly selected sampling points. The sample design is essentially a 3-stage design, sampling first parliamentary constituencies, and then output areas within those selected constituencies and finally respondents within the output areas. The sample is based on 175 sampling points.

Stratification of parliamentary constituencies

The first-stage sampling units for the survey are parliamentary constituencies, which are initially stratified by government office region. In Scotland, a further stratification is by the Strathclyde Region and the rest of Scotland while in Wales, the South East is stratified separately from the rest of Wales. Within each Standard Region, constituencies are classified into four urban/rural types (Metropolitan county, other 100% urban (greater than 7 persons per hectare), mixed urban/rural and rural. Within each of the resultant 46 cells, as a final stratification, constituencies are listed in order of the percentage of people resident in households whose head is in socio-economic Groups 1, 2, 3, 4 or 13 (approximates to Social Grades A&B).

Selection of parliamentary constituencies

When all the constituencies have been listed in the above way, the electorate of each constituency is entered on the list and a cumulative total of electors by constituency is formed. From the file of constituencies, a sample of 175 must be drawn thus the total number of cumulative electors (N) on the list is divided by 175 and a random number between 1 and $N/175$ is selected.

This random number identifies an elector, in the cumulative total of electors, and the constituency this elector is in becomes the first selected constituency in the sample. To obtain the other 174 constituencies, the sampling interval $N/175$ is added on 174 times to the initial random number to select the 175 constituencies required.

The Selection of Output Areas

Within each selected constituency, an output area is selected for each wave of the Omnibus. These output areas are selected at random, but with some stratification control so that the sample of areas drawn is representative of the sample of constituencies and therefore of the United Kingdom in demographic terms. The variables used for stratification are age, sex, social class, and geodemographic profile (Mosaic classification). Once the areas have been selected, the profile of the aggregated set of areas is checked against the national profile to ensure that is representative. Each area is a small area, containing in average around 150 households. Each output area is

therefore homogenous, with the people living within it being fairly similar in social grade terms.

Therefore, when quotas are set for interviewing within each output area, the variables we control for are age and sex within working status. No quota is set for social grade, as the selection of areas ensures that the sample is balanced in this respect. This procedure is repeated for each wave of the Omnibus, producing a different sample of areas for each week of fieldwork.

The Selection of Respondents

For each selected output area, a list of all residential addresses is taken from the Postal Address File (PAF), which is used by the interviewer to identify the households at which they can interview. In addition to the address listing for an output area, the interviewer is also given a quota sheet in order to target certain groups in terms of age and sex within working status. Each interviewer must interview 12 people within an output area, and the quotas are different for each area in order to reflect the demographic profile of that area.

Appendix 2: UK Questionnaire 2009

Q1	<p data-bbox="245 448 320 479">[All]</p> <p data-bbox="245 488 1369 638">You may have seen or read about UK forests, woods or trees on the television, radio or in the newspapers. From this list, can you please tell me which of these topics you have seen or read anything about in the last 12 months?</p> <p data-bbox="1161 647 1362 678">(Multi choice)</p> <ul data-bbox="245 687 1155 1395" style="list-style-type: none">• Birds and other animals in woodlands• Flowers and other plants in woodlands• Forests and woodlands as places to visit• Community woodlands / new local woodlands• Tree planting• Tree pests and diseases• Wood for fuel / (short rotation coppice)• Loss of ancient or native woodlands• Restoration of ancient or native woodlands• Creation of new native woodlands• Public rights of access to woodlands• Protests about roads or other developments on woodlands• Labelling/certification of wood products• Forests and woodlands helping to tackle climate change• Live music• Cycling or mountainbiking• Other (specify)• None of these
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<p>Q2</p>	<p>[All] “In the UK, public money is given to plant new woodland and to manage existing woodland for public benefit. From this list, please tell me which of the following reasons are good reasons to support forestry in this way?”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Multi choice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the economy in rural areas • To provide timber for sawmills and wood processing • To provide renewable energy including wood as fuel • So that the UK can buy less wood products from abroad • To make woods more accessible to all in the community • To help tackle climate change • To provide places for wildlife to live • To provide places for recreation (such as walking, cycling, horse-riding) • To provide places for relaxation and stress release • To provide places for families to play • To provide places for learning • To improve the countryside landscape • To improve the appearance of towns and cities • To restore former industrial land • None of these
<p>Q3</p>	<p>[All] Would you agree or disagree with the following statements about the ways in which forests and woodlands in the UK can impact on climate change?</p> <p>(1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, and (6) don't know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees are good because they remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it in wood • Cutting down forests and woodland for timber makes climate change worse, even if they are replanted • Using wood for fuel is better for climate change than using fuels such as coal and gas • Using wood for fuel makes climate change worse because it releases carbon dioxide • Using wood for building is better for climate change than using materials such as concrete and steel • The UK could offset all its greenhouse gas emissions by planting more trees • Planting more trees can help us cope with climate change by providing shade and reducing the effects of flooding

Q4	<p>[All] Do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding how UK forests and woodlands should be managed in response to the threat of climate change? (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, and (6) don't know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is nothing that anyone could do that would make any difference • No action is needed; let nature take its course • A lot more trees should be planted • Trees should not be felled in any circumstances, even if they are replaced • Different types of trees should be planted that will be more suited to future climates • More information should be provided about the ways in which wood can be used to lessen our impact on the environment
Q5	<p>[All] Have you in the past 12 months... (Multi choice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Been involved or consulted about plans for creating/ managing or using woodlands in your area. • Been involved in an organised tree planting event • Been involved in voluntary work in connection with a woodland (e.g. physical work in a wood, admin, fund raising, running a group) • Become or are you a member of a community based woodland group such as a 'Community Trust' or 'Friends of Group' • None of these
Q6	<p>[All] Who do you think should have the most influence as a source of forestry advice for the Government? Please select your top 3 based on order of importance (select most important, second most important and third most important).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental organisations and trusts interested in wildlife • Countryside organisations interested in outdoor recreation and sport • Landowners and farmers • Private forestry organisations • Government agencies • Local Authorities • Scientists and researchers • The Forestry Commission

Q7	<p>[All]</p> <p>a - Do you have children less than 15 years old?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p>[Ask If answered yes to Q7a]</p> <p>b. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woods are dangerous places that children should avoid, • I would be unhappy if my children played in woods without an adult present, • Woods are good places for children to learn about the outdoors, • Woods are places that should be open for children to play, • The Government should provide more facilities for families in woods and forests, • Playing in woods is good for children's health. • None of these
Q8	<p>[All]</p> <p>a. Do you ever use wood as a fuel in your home, either on its own or with other fuels?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No (Go to Q8e) <p>[Ask If answered yes to Q8a]</p> <p>b. Do you get the wood by the truck load, or a few bags at a time, or gather it yourself?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by the truck load • a few bags at a time • gather it yourself • Other (specify) <p>[Ask If answered yes to Q8a]</p> <p>c. Do you use wood as a fuel regularly or only occasionally?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regularly • occasionally <p>[Ask If answered yes to Q8a]</p> <p>d. Is the wood the main fuel for heating your home, or do you mainly use something else?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • main fuel • Something else (specify) <p>[After Q8d, skip to Q9]</p>

	<p>[Ask If answered no to Q8a]</p> <p>e. What is the main reason that you do not use wood as a fuel in your home?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never thought about it • Happy with the existing system • Not practical for this property • Concerned about cost • Concerned about efficiency • Concerned about ease of use • Concerned about environmental issues • Do not own property • Lack of local help/suppliers • Other [specify]
<p>Q9</p>	<p>[All]</p> <p>a. In the last few years have you visited forests or woodlands for walks, picnics or other recreation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p>b. Which of the following, if any, are the main reasons for you not visiting woodland/forests more often or at all?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Multi choice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not interested in visiting more often • Don't have a car • Lack of suitable public transport • Other personal mobility reasons (difficulty in walking, unwell, etc.) • Woods are too far away • Lack of facilities (play areas, picnic areas, etc.) • Lack of information about woods to visit • Prefer other areas of countryside • Concerns that woods are not safe • Woodlands are badly maintained • Cost of visiting • Lack of confidence • I'm too busy/ not enough time • Other (please specify)

	<p>[Ask If answered yes to Q9a Others to Q11]</p> <p>c. Did you visit woodlands in the countryside or woodlands in and around towns or both?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodlands in the countryside • Woodlands in and around towns • Both <p>[If answered yes to Q9a]</p> <p>d. Thinking of the woodland/ forest you have visited most often, please state your agreement with the following: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, (6) Don't know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You would visit again. • You would recommend it as a place to visit to a friend or a relative. <p>[If answered yes to Q9a]</p> <p>e. Do you know who managed the woodlands you have visited? (Multi choice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forestry Commission • Woodland Trust • National Trust • Other • Don't know
Q10	<p>[If answered yes to Q9a]</p> <p>How frequently did you visit forests and woodlands last summer, i.e. between April and September 2008?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several times per week • Several times per month • About once a month • Less often • Never <p>[If answered yes to Q9a]</p> <p>And how often this winter, i.e. since October 2008?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several times per week • Several times per month • About once a month • Less often • Never

<p>Q11</p>	<p>[ALL] Now thinking specifically about woodlands and forests and why they are important to the public please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements. I think woodlands and forests are important to the public because: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, and (6) don't know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They contribute to the local economy • They are places where people can relax and de-stress • They are places where people can exercise and keep fit • They are places where people can have fun and enjoy themselves • They are places where people can learn about the environment • They are places where people can learn about local culture or history • They are important places for wildlife • They bring the community together • They make areas nicer places to live • They get people involved in local issues
<p>Q12</p>	<p>[If answered yes to Q9a Others to Q14a] Now thinking specifically about woodlands and forests you have visited and why they are important TO YOU PERSONALLY please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements. Woodlands and forests are important to me because: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, and (6) don't know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They help me to earn a living or make ends meet • They are places where I can relax and de-stress • They are places where I can exercise and keep fit • They are places where I can have fun and enjoy myself • They are good places for me to socialise • They are places where I can learn about the environment • They are places where I can learn about local culture or history • They are important places for wildlife • They bring the community together • They make areas nicer places to live • They get me involved in local issues • They are places where I feel at home

Q13	<p>[If answered yes to Q9a]</p> <p>Thinking of your visits to woodlands / forests over the past few years / what activities have you taken part in? (multi choice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise e.g. walk, run, mountain biking • Dog walking • Horse riding • Been on a guided walk or talk • Followed an interpreted trail • Been to enjoy sculpture or arts and crafts • Been to see an ancient tree • Been to see a historic site • Attended an organised event in a wood that involved physical activity • Visited a cafe • Had a picnic or barbecue • Played with the children • Watched nature • Relaxed or spent time thinking • Volunteered • Attended cultural event or activity (e.g. exhibition, performance or ceremony) • None • Other (specify)
Q14	<p>[ALL]</p> <p>a. Do you consider yourself to have any of the following disabilities or health problems? (Multi choice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility disability • Visual impairment • Hearing impairment • Mental health problem • Physical disability • Other • None of the above <p>[Ask all with a disability Others to Q15]</p> <p>b. Does your disability affect your use of this site or other greenspaces?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No



Q15

[ALL]

And which of these best describes your ethnic origin?

(one answer)

A. White

1. Any White background

B. Mixed

2. White and Black Caribbean

3. White and Black African

4. White and Asian

5. Any Other Mixed background, (please specify)

C. Asian or Asian British

6. Indian

7. Pakistani

8. Bangladeshi

9. Any Other Asian background, (please specify)

D. Black or British Black

10. Caribbean

11. African

12. Any Other African background, (please specify)

E. Chinese or other ethnic group

13. Chinese

14. Any Other, (please specify)