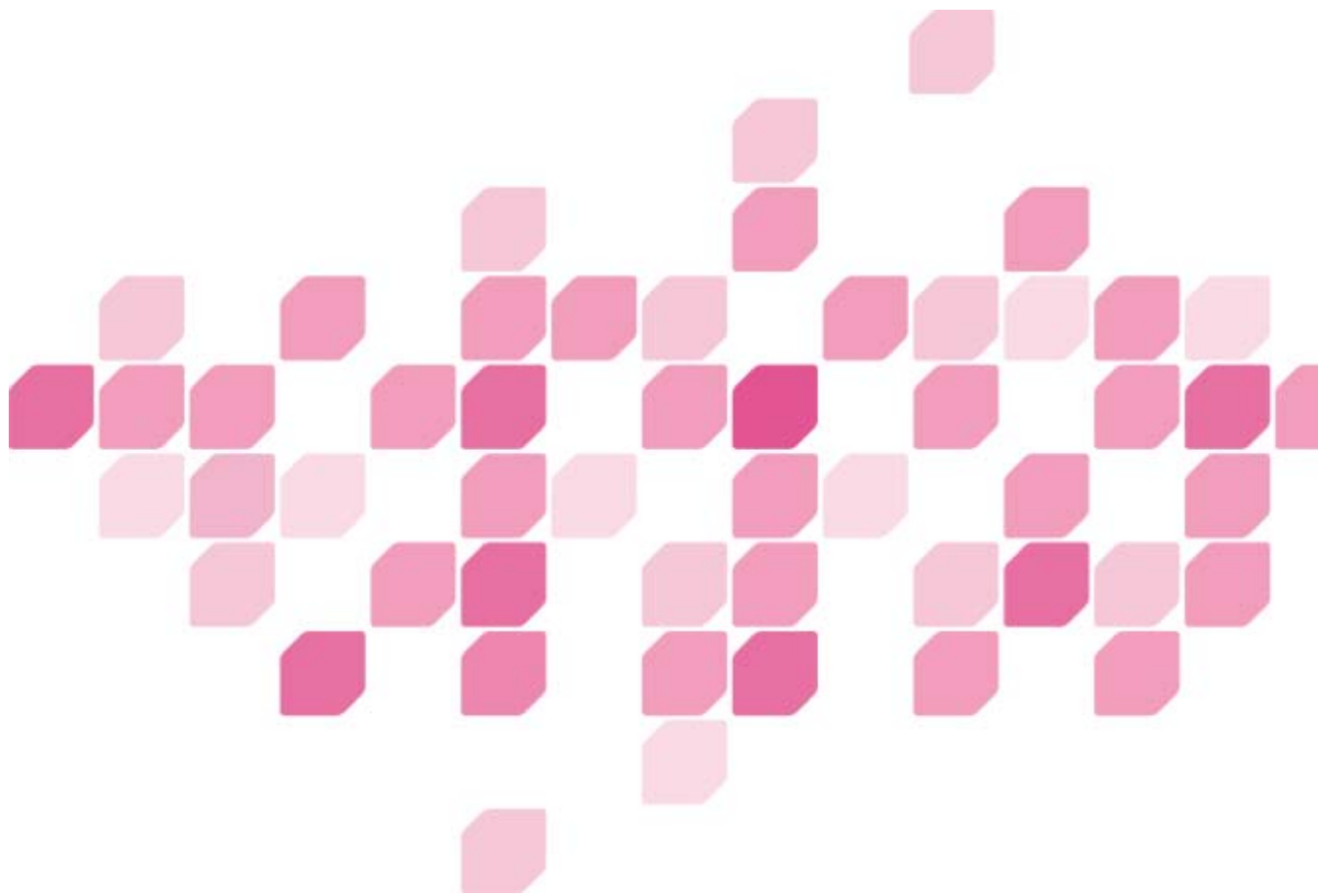


Monitoring the quality of experience in Sherwood Pines Forest

Final Report

February 2007



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A. Background and introduction

Background

Forestry Commission (FC) forests and woodlands offer many recreation opportunities such as walking, cycling and picnicking, as well as more formalised activities such as mountain biking, horse riding, car rallies and orienteering. They also offer log cabins, camping and caravan accommodation, with a number of sites also equipped with a visitor centre. Printed material is produced in order to maximise the visitor experience and the FC is currently working alongside Ordnance Survey to incorporate information on land access into their maps.¹

In June 2002, TNS (then NFO) were commissioned to undertake a study which would investigate what constitutes quality of experience for visitors, addressing related concepts such as motivations, expectations and the needs of different groups. The output of this study was a survey method which could be used across Forestry Commission sites to effectively monitor quality of experiences.

Reflecting the increasing importance of community forests, TNS were commissioned in 2004 and 2005 to undertake surveys amongst residents of areas close to selected woodland sites in the Thames Chase and South Yorkshire areas. Research conducted at these sites employed a method developed from the on-site QOE approaches and investigated the profile of both users and non-users of the forests, the motivations and barriers to use, the benefits received from the forest and any improvements that could be made.

The *Forestry Commission Corporate Plan for England and Great Britain* identifies a need for further evidence to demonstrate the benefits that woodlands and forests bring to society and it is on this basis that the FC continued the QOE survey programme through a series of on-site and community surveys in England and Wales during 2006. These surveys had the following key objectives

¹ 'Forestry Commission Corporate Plan for England and Great Britain Activities 2005/06'
[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/gbengcorp2005.pdf/\\$FILE/gbengcorp2005.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/gbengcorp2005.pdf/$FILE/gbengcorp2005.pdf)

- to undertake on-site surveying of around 300 visitors per site at 5 sites in England and Wales in 2006;
- to undertake community surveys at a minimum of 300 households surrounding 2 community woodland areas, one in England, one in Wales in 2006;
- to provide full reports and data to FC;

Method

A total of 303 visitors were interviewed at Sherwood Pines Forest between 26th July and 28th October during 22 days of interviewing.

Visitors who used the site at least once a month were interviewed and asked to rate both the levels of importance of different aspects of woodland and forest visits and their satisfaction with the same aspects at Sherwood Pines Forest. Visitors who came less often were interviewed for a shorter period before being given a questionnaire regarding their levels of satisfaction. This was completed and returned, using a reply-paid envelope. Copies of the questionnaires used are appended.

Report

This report provides the results of the survey undertaken at Sherwood Pines Forest. As mentioned previously, similar surveys have also been undertaken in nine other Forestry Commission sites to date, providing a total 'database' of over 3,800 interviews with forest users. The results of the surveys undertaken at other sites have been used within this report to help draw comparisons and to highlight the key variations at Sherwood Pines. It should be noted that variations between the results obtained at Sherwood Pines and at other locations may not always be statistically valid (i.e. are within margins of error) so should be treated with some caution.

A total of 303 visitors were interviewed and 63 self completion questionnaires were returned (30% of the 213 distributed). The following section provides the survey results across the total survey sample and, where appropriate, compares the responses provided by visitors in different demographic groups and those taking part in different activities.

Answers to open ended questions have been appended.

B. Main results

Summary

The largest proportion of visitors to Sherwood Pines were in the Family lifecycle, with these visitors more likely than others to take part in a picnic or barbeque while on site. Smaller proportions of visitors were categorised as Empty Nesters or Young Independents, who were the most likely to take part in cycling.

Sherwood Pines attracts a high proportion of visitors from the East Midlands area, although approximately a fifth of visitors interviewed came from the Yorkshire and Humberside region. Within the East Midlands, visitors were most likely to come from the Nottingham area, particularly the Mansfield and Mansfield Woodhouse areas.

Most visitors were on a short trip of less than an hour from home, especially frequent visitors to the site and dog walkers. Amongst those not from the local area, Sherwood Pines played an important role in the decision to visit for a large proportion of visitors.

Cycling was a frequently undertaken leisure activity at Sherwood Pines forest. Other leisure activities undertaken at the site include walking, visiting the café and having a picnic or barbeque on-site. Visitors to Sherwood Pines appreciated the peace and tranquillity of the forest, the open spaces, the convenience, the cycling facilities available and the activities on offer for children.

Given the proportion of visitors on a repeat visit to Sherwood Pines forest, it is perhaps unsurprising that previous experience and/or knowledge of the site was the most frequently mentioned information source. Less frequent visitors were likely to have had the forest recommended to them, while the Internet was used more often by those in the Young Independent lifecycle.

Encounters with other visitors were, on the whole, positive. However, motorbikes and other vehicles driving in the forest, as well as dogs and dog dirt, vandalised, missing or damaged signposts and litter or fly tipping were most likely to be mentioned as having a more negative impact upon visitor enjoyment. While almost half of visitors could not think of any improvements that needed to be made, those who could were most likely to suggest improving the provision of dog bins and litter bins and better signposting.

A summary of the results of the TRI*M analysis regarding visitor experience can be found at the end of Section C.

Visitor profile

To determine the types of people using the forest, visitors were asked to provide some information about their age, family situation and place of residence.

Demographics

Table B-1 – Age and lifecycle (%)

Base: All respondents (303)

	%
Age	
16 – 24	10
25 – 34	21
35 – 44	36
45 – 54	14
55 – 64	11
65+	8
Lifecycle	
Young Independents	17
Families	49
Empty Nesters	27
Other	7

Some 36% of visitors to Sherwood Pines were in the 35-44 age bracket, while approximately a third were aged 34 or under (31%). A quarter of visitors were between the ages of 45 and 64 (25%), with a small proportion over the age of 65 (8%).

In terms of lifecycle, almost half of visitors were in the Family lifecycle (any children in household, 49%). Slightly more than a quarter were classified as Empty Nesters (aged 55+, no children in household, 27%) while 17% were in the Young Independent lifecycle (under 35, no children living in the household). A small proportion of visitors (7%) did not fit into the any of these lifecycle groupings.

It is also useful to compare these results with the averages obtained across all of the forests included in this programme of research to date². A larger proportion of visitors at Sherwood Pines were under the age of 34 than the average across all sites (31% v 25%), while the proportion of those aged 45 and over was lower (33% and 44% respectively). In terms of specific locations, the age and lifecycle profile at Sherwood Pines was most alike that recorded in Delamere and Hamsterley Forests.

Table B-2 – Social class (%)

Base: All responses (303)

	Visitors	UK Population
AB – ‘upper middle class’ – higher/ intermediate managerial, administrative or professional	28	17
C1 – ‘lower middle class’ – supervisory or clerical, junior managerial, administrative or professional	36	26
C2 – ‘skilled working class’ – skilled manual workers	19	25
DE – ‘working class’ and unemployed – semi and unskilled manual workers, state pensioners, unemployed	17	32

Approximately two-thirds of those visiting Sherwood Pines were in the ABC1 socio-economic groupings, a higher proportion than amongst the UK population as a whole (64% and 42% respectively). Conversely, the proportions of visitors in the C2 and DE social classes were lower than amongst those resident in the UK overall (19% v 25% and 17% v 32% respectively).

Of those interviewed at Sherwood Pines, a high proportion of those on a short trip of between 2 and 3 hours from home were in the ABC1 socio-economic grouping (72%), as were all of those on a longer day trip (4 respondents). Due to the small sample sizes for these groups, these results should be treated with caution.

The social class profile of visitors to Sherwood Pines Forest contained a slightly lower proportion of ABC1s than the average recorded across the other sites included within this programme of research (64% compared to 68%). The profile at this forest was most alike that recorded at Hamsterley Forest.

² See Appendix 2 for full details of results obtained at other sites and overall benchmarking scores.

Origin

All visitors were asked to provide the postcode of their place of residence. The table below lists the areas of residence mentioned by 1% or more of visitors.

Table B-3 – Area of residence (%)

Base: All respondents (269)

	%		%
East Midlands	69	Yorkshire & Humberside	20
Nottingham	57	<i>Sheffield</i>	9
- <i>Mansfield/Mansfield Woodhouse (NG18/19)</i>	19	<i>Doncaster</i>	8
- <i>Nottingham City</i>	8	<i>Hull</i>	1
- <i>Edwinstowe/Rainworth (NG21)</i>	5	<i>Cleveland</i>	1
- <i>Hucknall</i>	3	<i>York</i>	1
- <i>Other in Nottingham area</i>	22		
<i>Derby</i>	4	East of England	2
<i>Lincoln</i>	4	South East England	2
<i>Leicester</i>	3	West Midlands	1
<i>Northampton</i>	1	North West England	1
		North East England	1
		Greater London	1

As Table B-3 shows, the majority of visitors to Sherwood Pines Forest were from the East Midlands (70%), with a large proportion of the total sample from the Nottingham area (58%). A fifth originated from the Yorkshire and Humberside region (20%), with 9% of visitors from Sheffield and a similar proportion (8%) originating from Doncaster. Small proportions were from elsewhere within England.

Season ticket ownership

A small proportion of visitors (6%) indicated that they owned a season ticket. As might be expected, visitors who came to the site at least once a month were the most likely to own a season ticket (21%) while none of the less frequent visitors or those on their first visit owned one. In terms of demographics, 21% of those over the age of 55 owned a season ticket, as did 18% of Empty Nesters while the activity group most likely to hold one was dog walkers (24%).

Visitors who stated that they had a season ticket were also asked how they rated the value for money they obtained from the ticket. The vast majority of visitors with a season ticket

(19 respondents in total) said that the value for money was ‘very good’ (95%), while the remaining 5% felt that it was ‘good’.

Trip profile

Visitors were also asked a number of questions about their current visit to Sherwood Pines in terms of the length of time spent away from home, time spent in the wood and activities undertaken.

Type of visit³

Approximately three-quarters of visitors were on a short trip of less than 1 hour from home (77%). 12% were on a short trip of between 1 and 2 hours from home, while 8% were on holiday away from home. Smaller proportions were on a longer day trip of over 3 hours from home (3%).

Compared to the average for all of the sites included in this programme of research a smaller proportion of visitors were on short trips of less than 3 hours from home (73% v 91% at Sherwood Pines) with a higher proportion on longer day trips from home (10% v 1%) or on holiday (17% v 8%). High proportions of visitors on a trip of less than 3 hours from home were also recorded at Whiston (100%), Delamere (96%) and Hamsterley (89%), while higher proportions of visitors at Grizedale and Nant Yr Arian were on holiday (63% and 48% respectively).

Table B-4 – Type of visit (%)

Base: All respondents (303)

	%
On a short trip of less than 1 hour from home	77
On a short trip of 1-2 hours from home	12
On a short trip of 2 to 3 hours from home	2
On a day out for more than 3 hours from home	1
On holiday away from home	8

Visitors most likely to be on a short trip of less than 1 hour from home included those who came to the site at least once a month (93%) and dog walkers (89%).

³ Please note that this question refers to the type of trip respondents were taking (short trip, day trip or holiday), with short and day trips further broken down by distance travelled from home. Times mentioned do not relate to time spent in the forest.

Frequency of visits

Slightly over two-thirds of all visitors (69%) had been to Sherwood Pines Forest before. In terms of frequency of visits, while 19% of repeat visitors who had been to the site before visited at least once a week, larger proportions visited 1 to 3 times a month (24%) or less often than once a month (57%).

Table B-5 – Frequency of visits to forest (%)

Base: Respondents who have been to Sherwood Pines Forest before (210)

	%
Every day	3
4 to 6 times per week	3
1 to 3 times a week	13
1 to 3 times a month	24
4 to 6 times a year	25
1 to 3 times a year	23
Less often	9

Compared to the averages recorded across all of the sites included in this programme of research, visitors to Sherwood Pines were more likely than the average across all sites covered to be on their first visit (31% v 23%). Other sites with similar proportions of first time visitors were Thetford (31%), Grizedale (31%) and Dalby (30%).

Length of visits

Visitors spent an average of 2 hours 47 minutes in Sherwood Pines Forest. The largest proportion of visitors stayed on the site for between 2 and 5 hours (66%), while a fifth stayed for between 1 and 2 hours (20%).

The average length of time spent varied between several visitor groups with those who were on holiday (3 hours 26 minutes), those who participated in cycling during their visit (3 hours 14 minutes) and 16-24 year olds (2 hours 25 minutes) spending longer, on average, than Young Independents (2 hours and 4 minutes) and less frequent or first time visitors (2 hours 1 minute).

Table B-6 – Length of visit (%)

Base: All respondents (303); All who walked (171); All who cycled (119)

	Total time on site %	Time spent on any walking %	Time spent cycling %
Up to 15 minutes	*	4	3
15 – 30 minutes	2	14	5
30 minutes – 1 hour	7	36	21
1 hour – 2 hours	20	30	30
2 hours – 3 hours	33	15	27
3 hours – 5 hours	33	1	13
More than 5 hours	3	-	-
<i>Average</i>	<i>2 hrs 47 mins</i>	<i>1 hr 12 mins</i>	<i>1 hrs 50 mins</i>
<i>Proportion of time on site</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>47%</i>	<i>57%</i>

- No responses * Less than 0.5%

Table B-6 also illustrates the amount of time spent walking or cycling by those visitors who took part in such activities. Overall, visitors who took part in walking spent an average of 1 hour and 12 minutes undertaking this activity, just under half of their time on site (47%). Visitors who took part in cycling spent an average of 1 hour and 50 minutes undertaking this activity, slightly more than half of their total time on site (57%).

Overall length of visit at Sherwood Pines was slightly longer than the average across all of the sites included in this programme of research (2 hours 33 minutes).

Activities undertaken

Visitors were asked what they did during their visit. As may be expected with the facilities available at Sherwood Pines, cycling was the most frequently mentioned activity, with 30% cycling on surfaced roads, 27% on un-surfaced roads or trails and 20% cycling off-road. The most frequently mentioned activity was walking without a dog (40%), slightly over a third of visitors stated that they had used the café (35%) while 27% had a picnic or barbeque.

Table B-7 – Activities undertaken during visit to forest (%)

Base: All respondents (303)

	%
Walking without a dog	40
Visiting the café	35
Cycling on surfaced roads	30
Cycling on un-surfaced roads/trails	27
Picnic or barbecue	27
Off-road cycling	20
Hill walking/ rambling	20
Dog walking	20
'Go Ape' course	19
Visiting the forest shop	14
Photography	9
Birdwatching	7
Other wildlife watching	7
Seeing something in the forest (e.g. sculpture/ ancient tree)	5
Climbing	3
Nature/ natural history visit	2
Running	2
Educational visit	2
Orienteering	1
Collecting mushrooms/chestnuts etc.*	1

* Specified by respondent as an 'other' activity as not included on list shown to respondents.

When asked, 72% of visitors who had taken part in walking or cycling during their visit to Sherwood Pines indicated that they had followed waymarked trails. Those who visited less than once a month or were on their first visit were more likely than those who visited more frequently to use a waymarked trail (77% v 64%).

Compared to the average across all of the sites included in this programme of research, visitors to Sherwood Pines were more likely to have a picnic or barbeque (20% v 27%) or to take part in children's activities (2% v 11%) but less likely to have visited to see something, for example, a sculpture, in the forest (9% v 5%).

It is useful to compare levels of participation in the main activities amongst different user groups:

- *Walking without a dog (40% overall)* – female visitors were more likely than males to take part in this activity (46% and 33% respectively). Likewise, a higher proportion of Empty Nesters participated in this activity than amongst Young Independents (48% v 23%).
- *Visiting the café (35% overall)* – those in the Family and Empty Nester lifecycles were more likely than Young Independents to use this facility during their visit (40%, 37% and 17% respectively). A higher proportion of visitors who walked during their visit used the café than amongst those who took part in any type of cycling (43% v 34%).
- *Cycling on surfaced roads (30% overall)* – men were more likely than women to participate in cycling on surfaced roads (34% v 25%). A higher proportion of ABC1s took part in this activity than amongst C2DEs (33% v 24%), with Young Independents and Families more likely than Empty Nesters to do so (30% and 38% v 18%).
- *Picnic or barbecue (27% overall)* – those in the Family lifecycle and women were more likely than the average to take part in a picnic or barbeque (38% and 36% respectively). Infrequent or first time visitors were more likely than those who visited at least once a month (small sample size) to take part in this activity (30% v 20%).

Children's play area

As well as asking about their own participation in different activities, visitors were asked whether they were accompanied by any children who would use the play area during their current visit.

Overall, 42% of respondents indicated that they were with children who would use the play area. As might be expected, this proportion was higher amongst those in the Family

lifecycle group (64%) but lower amongst Empty Nesters (34%) and Young Independents (2%).

Favourite aspects of forest

When visitors were asked what they liked most about Sherwood Pines, the most frequently provided responses were the peace and tranquillity (20%), the open spaces (19%), the convenience of the forest's location (11%), the cycling facilities and activities for children (10% each). The table below lists those mentioned by 2% or more of visitors.

Table B-10 – Most liked aspects of Sherwood Pines Forest (%)

Base: All frequent respondents and self completion respondents (153)

	%
Peace/tranquil	20
Open spaces	19
Convenient/ easy to get to	11
Cycling facilities/freedom to cycle	10
Activities for children	10
Variety/lots of things to do	8
Safe environment	7
Scenery/ beautiful/ views	5
Fresh air	5
Countryside near to the town	5
Nice walks	4
Variety of the trees	3
Good/well maintained pathways/trails	3
Wildlife	3
Easy access/more accessible	3
'Go Ape' course	3
Restaurants/catering/café/coffee shop	3
Good for walking dog	2
Others	2
Don't know/ not stated	10

Other responses related to the parking availability, the staff, that it is a nice place to visit and that it was an enjoyable place to stop off en route elsewhere.

Some of the specific answers provided were:

“Bigger and more accessible than most places I’ve been.”

“Local and yet like another world from the town where I live.”

“Solitude - being able to do as much or as little as you want - activities going on to interest most people and it gets you out in the fresh air.”

“Freedom to roam and fresh air.”

Use of café/restaurant

35% of visitors to Sherwood Pines Forest used or planned to use the café or restaurant. Those who did use these facilities were asked to rate these on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = poor and 5 = excellent. 36% of visitors to Sherwood Pines rated the value for money of the catering facilities as ‘good’, while a further 32% described them as ‘very good’ and 5% as ‘excellent’. A small proportion of visitors who used these facilities felt that the value for money was only ‘fair’ or ‘poor’ (8%). Overall, the value for money of catering facilities at Sherwood Pines received a ‘good’ average satisfaction score of 3.42.

Table B-11 – Value for money (%)

Base: All who used/plan to use Café/Restaurant/other catering (105)

	%
Excellent	5
Very good	32
Good	36
Fair	7
Poor	1
Don’t know/not stated	19
<i>Average score</i>	<i>3.42</i>

8 visitors who used the catering facilities rated them as ‘fair’ or ‘poor’ for the following reasons:

- *“Too expensive/could be cheaper”* - 7 respondents
- *“It’s ok/nothing special”* - 1 respondent

- *“Limited choice”* – 1 respondent

Respondents who used the café or restaurant were also asked to rate the quality of the food and drink served at Sherwood Pines using the same scale as applied to value for money. 4% of those who used these facilities rated them as ‘excellent’, while three in ten rated the food and drink as ‘very good’ and 40% as ‘good’. 4% of café or restaurant users rated the food and drink supplied as only ‘fair’ or ‘poor’. The average satisfaction score given quality was 3.43.

Table B-12 – Quality of food and drink (%)

Base: All who used/plan to use Café/Restaurant/other catering (105)

	%
Excellent	4
Very good	30
Good	40
Fair	4
Poor	-
Don't know/not stated	23
<i>Average score</i>	<i>3.43</i>

Again, those who rated the quality as ‘fair’ or ‘poor’ were asked to give reason why they felt that this was the case (4 respondents), these included:

- *“Nothing special/mediocre”* - 2 respondents
- *“Limited choice”* – 1 respondent
- *“Not as good as it was before”* – 1 respondent

Table B-13, overleaf, lists the types of food and drink that those using the catering facilities would like to see on offer and includes those mentioned by 5% of these respondents or more. The most frequently mentioned refreshments that visitors using the café or restaurant would like to see on sale included tea and coffee (24%), sandwiches, light snacks and cold drinks (21% each). 41% felt that the provision was ‘fine as it is’.

Table B-13 – Food and drink would like on sale (%)

Base: All who used/plan to use Café/Restaurant/other catering (105)

	%
Good range already/fine as it is	41
Tea/coffee	24
Sandwiches	21
Light snacks (unspecified)	21
Cold drinks	21
Hot drinks (unspecified)	16
Cakes/pastries	8
Healthier options	7
Jacket potatoes	6
Hot food (unspecified)	6
Ice-cream	5

Importance of Sherwood Pines Forest

To help determine the influence of Sherwood Pines Forest in the decision to visit the local area, visitors who did not live locally were asked to indicate how important the site had been in their decision to come to the area:

Table B-14 – Importance of site and its facilities in decision to visit area (%)

Base: All respondents living outside of Sherwood Pines Forest area (56)

	%
The only reason for coming	32
Very important	36
Quite important	13
Neither important nor unimportant	13
Not very important	-
Not at all important	4
Don't know	4

- No responses

Slightly over two-thirds of those who lived outside of the area stated that Sherwood Pines Forest was either 'very important' or their 'only reason' for visiting the area (68%). In contrast, only 4% stated that the site was 'not very' or 'not at all' important.

Information sources used to plan visit

When visitors were asked about the sources of information they had used to plan their visit to Sherwood Pines, 59% of visitors used previous experience or knowledge of the forest. Slightly more than a quarter cited word of mouth recommendations as an information source used (28%).

The other sources of information used by a tenth or more of visitors were information on the Internet (19%), road signs to the site (15%) and leaflets that they had picked up (13%).

Table B-15 – Information used to plan visit to Sherwood Pines Forest (%)

Base: All respondents (303)

	%
Previous experience/knowledge	59
Word of mouth recommendations	28
Information on the Internet	19
Road signs to the site	15
Leaflets picked up	13
Tourist board or other brochures	3
Leaflets or other information received in post	2
Maps	1
Newspaper advertisements	*
None of these sources of information	5

- No responses * Less than 0.5%

As might be expected, visitors who went to the site at least once a month were particularly likely to rely upon previous experience (82%). Conversely, those who visited less regularly or were on their first visit were more likely than frequent visitors to mention recommendations by word of mouth (33% and 16% respectively). As may be expected, visitors in the Young Independent lifecycle were more likely than Empty Nesters to have used the Internet as an information source (42% v 6%).

Other visitors

When asked which of a list of other users had been encountered during recent visits to Sherwood Pines, the vast majority had seen cyclists (96%), walkers and/or children (93% each). Approximately seven out of ten visitors stated that they had seen 'Go Ape' high wire customers (68%), while 34% had encountered horse riders. 24% had seen motorbikers/moto cross users, while two in ten encountered vehicles driving in the forest (20%).

Respondents who encountered other users were asked to indicate the level of impact this had 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'.

Table B-16 – Other visitors encountered (%) and impact on enjoyment (row %)

Base: All frequent visitors and self completion respondents (303)*

	%	Increased enjoyment a lot +2	Increased enjoyment a little +1	Made no difference 0	Decreased a little -1	Decreased a lot -2	Score
Cyclists	96	2	10	78	5	2	0.05
Walkers	93	4	11	83	1	-	0.18
Children	93	6	14	77	1	1	0.23
'Go Ape' high wire customers	68	8	13	76	1	-	0.28
Horse riders	34	2	12	77	2	2	0.10
Motorbikers/ moto cross	24	-	3	38	22	32	-0.89
Vehicles driving in the forest	20	-	10	61	11	10	-0.24

* Base for responses regarding impact of encounters with visitors is smaller and varies by user type.

As the table illustrates, while encounters with other walkers, children, cyclists, 'Go Ape' customers and horse riders usually had no impact or were predominantly positive, encounters with motorbikers and vehicles driving in the forest were more likely to be negative.

Motorbikes or motocross disrupted the enjoyment of 17 respondents. Their impact was mentioned by visitors in a variety of user groups with reasons for dissatisfaction including the noise generated, safety issues, that they used the wrong trails and that they make a mess of paths and trails.

4 respondents stated that vehicles in the forest disturbed their enjoyment. These respondents stated that vehicles were a hazard, that they damaged tracks and that they did not see the need for them to be there.

Further negative comments regarding other users included comments relating to cyclists and horse riders being inconsiderate to others, not sticking to paths and the difficulty of keeping dogs away from horses.

Disturbances to visit

Respondents were also presented with a list of potential negative disruptions and asked what impact, if any, each had on recent visits to Sherwood Pines. 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 dogs or dog dirt (decreased the enjoyment a lot amongst 24% of visitors), vandalised or missing signposts (14%) and litter or fly tipping (13%).

Table B-17 –Impact of potential disruptions on enjoyment (row %)

Base: All frequent visitors and self completion respondents (303)

	Didn't reduce enjoyment	Decreased a little	Decreased a lot	Don't know	Score
	0	-1	-2		
Muddy tracks	83	8	1	8	-0.11
Forest operations such as felling	82	5	1	13	-0.07
Noise from other users or motorised sports	76	7	3	14	-0.14
Vandalised, missing or damaged signposts	78	11	3	9	-0.15
Litter or fly tipping	72	12	1	16	-0.23
Dogs and dog dirt	67	16	8	9	-0.35

Respondents were asked to indicate what else, if anything had decreased their enjoyment. Encouragingly, approximately three-quarters could not think of anything or did not state any other issues (76%). However areas which were mentioned by small numbers of respondents included not enough shaded areas and/or seats, overcrowding, litter and paths in need of maintenance.

Expectations V Reality

Respondents to the self completion questionnaire (63 respondents), who were either on their first ever visit to the site or visited less than once a month, were asked to indicate how their overall visit had compared with expectations.

Slightly over a third of those answering this question stated that their visit was ‘much better’ than expected, while a further 17% felt that it was ‘a little better’. 43% found their visit ‘as expected’, with only a small proportion (4%) stating that it was ‘a little’ or ‘much’ worse than expected.

Table B-18 – Overall rating of visit to forest compared to expectations (%)

Base: All self-completion respondents (63)

	%
Much better (+2)	35
A little better (+1)	17
As expected (0)	43
A little worse (-1)	2
Much worse (-2)	2
Don't know/not stated	2

- No responses; Percentages equal more than 100% due to rounding

When scores were applied to responses from +2 (‘much better’) to -2 (‘much worse’), an overall positive score of 0.84 was obtained. This score is equal to the average obtained across all the sites surveyed to date (0.84).

When asked to state why they found the forest better than expected, responses mainly related to the peace and quiet, a lack of litter, good paths and not seeing any cars. The respondents who found that their visit did not match expectations did not state why this was the case.

Improvements

When asked what, if anything, needed to be improved at Sherwood Pines, almost half of the visitors either stated that nothing should be improved or that they ‘didn’t know’ what should be improved (46%).

The suggestions that were made are listed below. The most frequent suggestions related to the provision of dog bins (12%), more litter bins (10%) and improved signposting (7%).

Table B-19 – Suggested improvements (%)

Base: All frequent visitors and self completion respondents (153)

	%
Provide/improve dog bins	12
(More) litter bins	10
Improved signposting	7
More better/seats/picnic tables	5
Improve/better paths	4
Provide more facilities i.e. showers/changing areas etc.	3
Keep facilities open longer	3
More/ better toilets	3
Ban/reduce use of motorbikes/cyclists/horses	3
Improve children’s play area	2
Provide/improve café	2
More staff/security staff	2
Improve car park (any mentions)	1
More information/maps/leaflets	1
Safe and secure park for children	1
More/ better cycle tracks	1
Need variety of trees	1
Need covered area for shelter/changing/picnic area	1
More/improved disabled facilities	1
Nothing/fine as it is/don’t know	46

Some of the specific suggestions provided are listed below. Full listings of the responses to this question are appended.

“Could have more litter bins and dog litter bins on the paths around here.”

“Better signposting on the roads to get here.”

“Apart from dog waste bins not being here we just love it.”

Expenditure

To obtain an indication of the value of visitors to Sherwood Pines, respondents were asked to specify the amount they had personally spent during the day of their visit to the forest. Some 4% of all respondents stated that they did not spend anything during their visit. The table below presents the average expenditure per person for different elements of their visit based upon those who spent anything in each category (for example the average accommodation spend amongst those who stayed in commercial accommodation only, excluding day trippers and others who spent nothing on this area).

Table B-20 - Average expenditure per person per day (incl. day trip and overnight stay)

Base: All frequent visitors and self completion respondents (153)

	Average spend (Based on those who spent anything on each category)
Accommodation (incl. food and drink)	N/A
Food and drink (excl. at accommodation)	£9
Admission fees*	£7
Shopping (non-routine, souvenirs)*	£24
Transport (incl. petrol, taxis, public transport)	£8
Equipment (e.g. hire of boat, horse-riding)*	£18
Miscellaneous*	£15
Overall average spend	£24

*Small sample size

Overall, visitors to Sherwood Pines Forest spent an average of £24 per person per day. This figure is based on those who spent anything during their visit.

C. TRI*M Results

A key objective of this survey was to identify issues relating to the quality of visitor experiences at Sherwood Pines Forest and priorities for improvements. In addition to the standard analysis of the responses to questions regarding satisfaction, the information collected from visitors to Sherwood Pines has also been analysed using TRI*M.

The TRI*M system has been developed by TNS to measure, manage and monitor customer relationships with products and services and, for the purposes of this study, it has been possible to adapt it to the 'product' offered by Forestry Commission sites.

The following sections provide details of the responses provided to the questions asked regarding the claimed importance of different aspects of the forest in decisions to visit, levels of satisfaction with these same elements and the results of the TRI*M analysis.

Claimed importance of different aspects of visit

To identify the drivers of quality, it was useful to ask visitors to rate how important different aspects were in their decision to visit the site. Visitors 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.

It is important to note that these ratings are levels of *claimed* importance. The TRI*M analysis has also allowed the identification of which of these aspects have the greatest impact on overall levels of satisfaction, their real relevance to the overall quality of experience, as described later in this chapter.

Table C-1 – Importance of different aspects in decision to visit (mean score)

Base: All respondents (303)

	Importance score
Feeling safe in the forest	4.28
Clean toilets	4.33
Being able to enjoy scenery and views	4.01
Being able to spend time with family and friends	4.18
Feeling happy to leave your car in the car park	4.29
Being able to get fit and healthy	3.66
Being able to enjoy the wildlife	3.73
Value for money of your whole trip or day out	3.96
Litter bins	4.05
Enough car parking	4.06
Clear signposting on footpaths	3.73
Solitude, peace and quiet	3.56
Friendliness of staff	3.76
Choice of paths for walking	3.58
Dog waste bins	3.88
Printed information about the forest	3.21
Leaflets and maps to help you find your way around	3.39
A café	3.37
Picnic areas	3.47
A shop	2.96
Information provided by staff	3.17
Availability of staff at the site	3.27
Choice of trails for cycling	3.37
Choice of trails for other activities	2.94
'Go Ape' high rope course	2.70
Open grassy areas for ball games, sunbathing, etc.	3.25
Availability of cycle hire on site	2.68
Children's play equipment	3.26
Baby changing	2.43

This analysis suggests that the aspects claimed to be of most importance amongst most visitors were feeling safe in the forest, clean toilets, being able to enjoy the scenery and views, being able to spend time with family and friends and feeling happy to leave your car in the car park.

On the other hand, facilities claimed to be of less importance overall or only of importance to specific groups of visitors included open grassy areas (for ball games, sunbathing etc.), the availability of cycle hire on site, children's play equipment and baby changing facilities.

Respondents were also asked to specify in their own words what else, if anything, had influenced their decision to visit. The most frequently provided responses related to the

convenience of the forest's location (18%), the weather, the fresh air or a day out, that it is a good or safe place for children to play and that it is good for cycling or bike hire (10% each). The table below shows the influences mentioned by 2% of visitors or more.

Table C-2 – Other influences on decision to visit (%)

Base: All respondents (303)

	%
Close to home/convenient	18
The weather	10
Fresh air/just out for the day	10
Good/safe place for children playing	10
Good for cycling/bike hire	10
Spend time with friends/family	6
Visit 'Go Ape' course	6
Walk the dog	6
Been before	6
Cost/good value for money	6
Good facilities – open-air concerts/café/toilets etc.	4
Curiosity/to see what it was like	4
New place for walking	3
Exercise/keeping fit	2
Scenery	2
Peace and tranquillity	2
Open spaces	2
Plenty of/cheap parking	2
Recommended by family/friends	2

Some of the specific responses provided are listed below. The full verbatim comments provided to all of the open ended questions are appended.

“Accessibility, how close it was.”

“Let the kids have a good time, enjoy it and have some fresh air.”

“Availability of amenities for kids to run around and let off steam.”

“To be out of the city and take some fresh air- it's important for your health. Everybody should walk in the forest with nature.”

“Recommended that there were good mountain bike trails here.”

“A different place to come because we've done lots of other forests and we thought we should do this one.”

Performance of different aspects of visit

Visitors were provided with a list of different elements of the site and asked to rate how satisfied they had been with each during their 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. This analysis suggests that, overall, visitors were most likely to be satisfied with their visit as a whole, the 'Go Ape' high rope course, value for money on their whole trip or day out and being able to spend time with family and friends. Elements ranked the lowest included litter bins and dog waste bins.

Table C-13 – Satisfaction with different aspects at forest (mean score)

Base: All frequent respondents and self completion respondents (303)

	Satisfaction score
'Go Ape' High Rope course	4.18
Value for money of your whole trip or day out	4.15
Being able to spend time with family and friends	4.11
Feeling safe in the forest	4.04
Enough car parking	4.02
Being able to enjoy scenery and views	4.01
Being able to get fit and healthy	3.99
Information provided by staff	3.96
Feeling happy to leave your car in the car park	3.93
Solitude, peace and quiet	3.89
Children's play equipment	3.82
Open grassy areas for ball games, sunbathing, etc.	3.80
Choice of paths for walking	3.78
Choice of trails for cycling	3.75
Being able to enjoy the wildlife	3.72
Picnic areas	3.68
Clean toilets	3.63
Friendliness of staff	3.62
Choice of trails for other activities	3.53
A café	3.50
Clear signposting on footpaths	3.47
Baby changing	3.39
Printed information about the forest	3.30
A shop	3.23
Leaflets and maps to help you find your way around	3.17
Availability of staff at the site	2.98
Litter bins	2.71
Dog waste bins	2.56

When comparing these scores it is important to bear in mind that not all variations are statistically significant. This ranking should therefore be treated as providing an indication of what visitors are most and least satisfied with.

Compared to the average scores obtained across the other sites included in this programme of research, visitors to Sherwood Pines were generally more likely to be

satisfied with the children's play equipment, car parking availability, the information provided by staff, dog waste bins and open grassy areas.

Visitors who stated that they were dissatisfied with any aspects of their visit were asked to indicate why. Key reasons provided and the numbers of respondents providing each comment were as follows:

- No dog waste bins/not enough/none seen (28)
- Not enough/no litter bins (27)
- No staff seen (11)
- Not enough signs/signs not seen (5)
- Toilets could be cleaner (4)

TRI*M Index

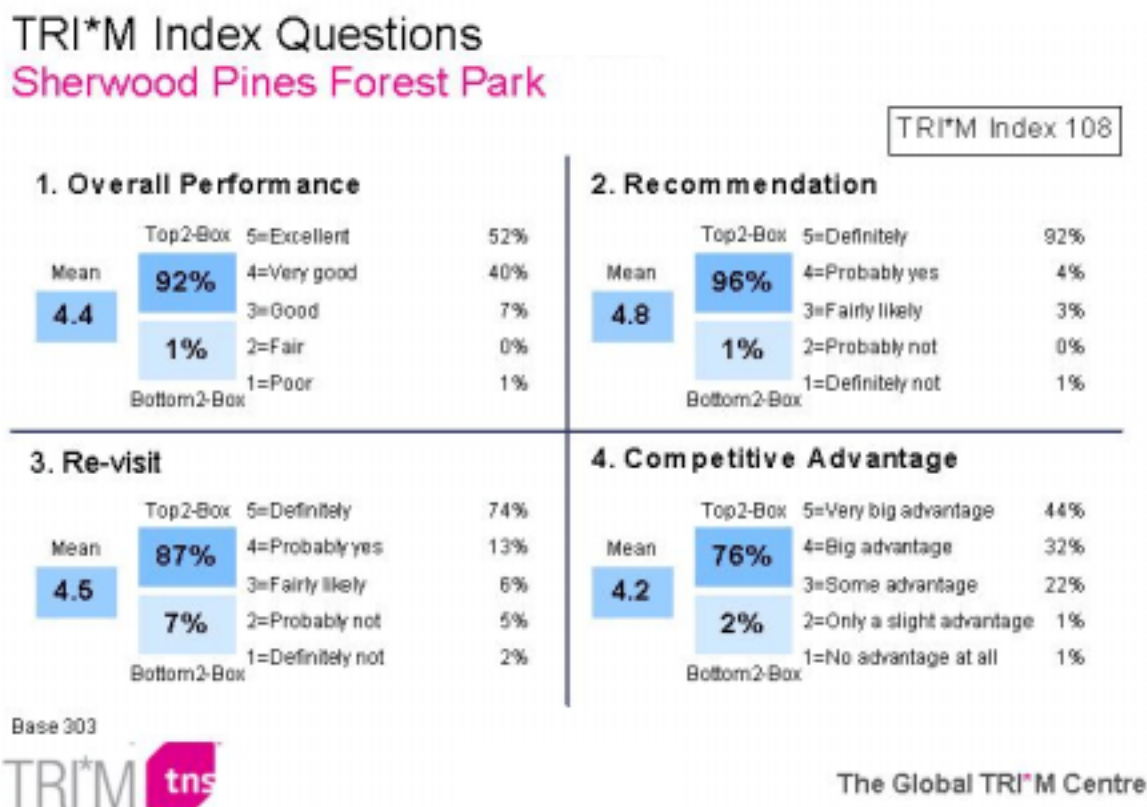
The TRI*M Index is a weighted calculation based on responses to the following four questions:

- How would you rate your visit to Sherwood Pines overall? (*Overall performance*)
- Based on your experience, would you recommend Sherwood Pines as a place to visit to a friend or relative? (*Recommendation*)
- Based on your experiences on this trip, would how likely are you to visit Sherwood Pines again in the next few months? (*Repurchase*)
- How would you rate Sherwood Pines as a place to visit compared to the other forests, parks or outdoor recreation sites you could have gone to today instead? (*Competitive advantage*)

These four questions provide the TRI*M index score for overall visitor satisfaction with Sherwood Pines Forest (and the context within which all of the detailed satisfaction ratings are placed). It has been used in this report to benchmark Sherwood Pines against other forest sites included in the 2006 survey programme and could also be used as a benchmark score for future comparison.

Figure 1 shows the overall results for each of these questions, as illustrated by the 4 quadrants in the diagram.

Figure C-1 – Overall satisfaction with Sherwood Pines Forest



The overall TRI*M index figure for Sherwood Pines Forest was **108**, a very high index that suggests overall satisfaction with visit to the forest was very high. By comparison, the TRI*M index figures obtained at the other sites included in the 2006 survey were as follows:

- Delamere Forest – 104
- Hamsterley - 106
- Nant yr Arian – 107
- Garwnant – 104

The overall satisfaction data shows that the majority of visitors rate their trip very highly, with approximately half (52%) claiming it was 'excellent' and 40% claiming that it was 'very good'. In addition to this high satisfaction with their trip, 92% of visitors stated that they would 'definitely' recommend a visit to Sherwood Pines Forest. This is a very good indicator

of enjoyment of a visit as word of mouth was an information source cited by 28% of visitors when planning to visit this location.

A high proportion of visitors would return to Sherwood Pines Forest for a repeat trip, with just under three-quarters of visitors indicating that they would 'definitely' return (74%). When asked how the forest compared to other outdoor recreation sites, most of the sample stated that Sherwood Pines does have an advantage over alternative sites, with over two-fifths claiming the site had a 'very big' advantage (44%) and 32% claiming that it had a 'big' advantage. A further 22% of the sample saw Sherwood Pines as having only 'some' advantage over other sites which could have been visited.

As with the other sites covered in 2006, all of the scores are very high which is encouraging and suggests that most people enjoy their visits to Sherwood Pines Forest, they would highly recommend it as a place to visit to friends and family, would return for another visit and are likely to perceive it as a better place to visit than other, alternative outdoor recreation sites.

TRI*M Typology

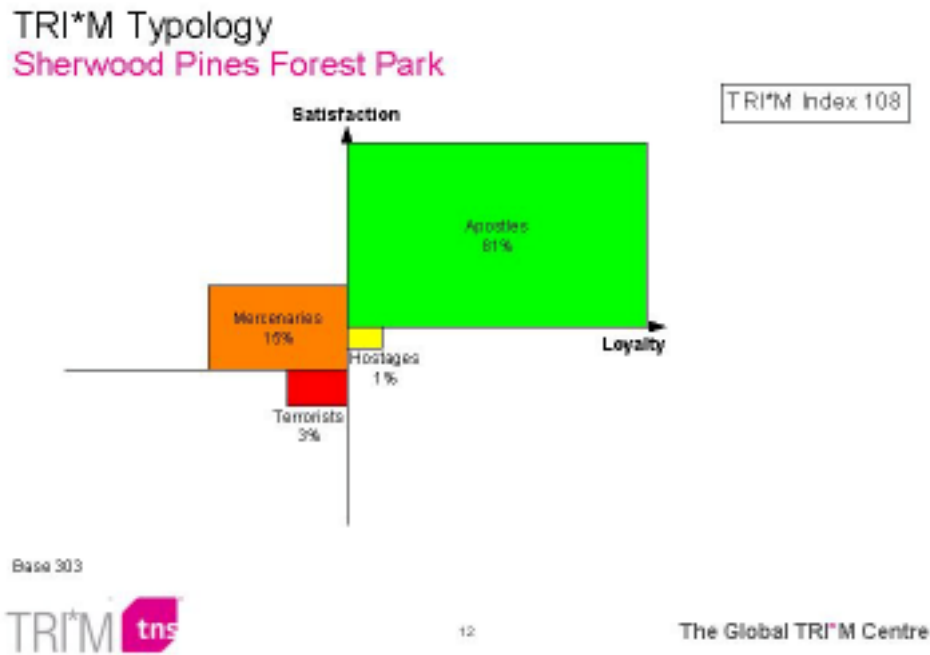
The next stage of the TRI*M analysis involved the categorisation of all respondents into four different groups. This categorisation is based upon responses to the four key questions as described previously with respondents classified by level of satisfaction, based upon their overall performance and recommendation responses, and levels of loyalty, based upon their repeat visit and competitive advantage responses.

The four groups are as follows:

- *Apostles* – visitors with high levels of satisfaction and loyalty. Visitors essential to the long term success of the site. The focus should be on how to retain these visitors.
- *Hostages* – visitors with low levels of satisfaction but high levels of loyalty. These visitors may be visiting the site due to a lack of alternatives or barriers to travel elsewhere. The focus should be on how to satisfy these visitors, to ‘move’ them to the Apostles group.
- *Mercenaries* – visitors with high levels of satisfaction but low levels of loyalty. Typically these types of visitors are always looking for better options and are likely to visit a range of different locations to take part in outdoor recreation. The focus for this type of visitors should be to identify what will engender loyalty.
- *Terrorists* – visitors with low levels of satisfaction and low levels of loyalty. These types of visitors are actively disruptive via negative word of mouth.

As Figure C-2 overleaf illustrates, the majority of visitors to Sherwood Pines Forest (81%) were categorised into the Apostles grouping i.e. both satisfied and loyal. Most of the remainder (15%) were classified as Mercenaries (satisfied but not loyal), with small proportions classified as Terrorists (neither satisfied nor loyal, 3%) and Hostages (not satisfied but loyal, 1%).

Figure C-2 – Visitors to Sherwood Pines Forest by TRI*M Typology



Visitors identified as Apostles (both satisfied and loyal) were significantly more likely than those classified as Mercenaries (satisfied but no loyal) to visit the site 1 to 3 times per month (44% v 9%). Conversely, Mercenaries were more likely to have visited between 1 and 3 times in the past year (64% v 9% Apostles).

TRI*M Grid

The third stage of the TRI*M analysis combined responses to the series of importance and satisfaction ratings (as detailed in Tables C-1 and C3) with the TRI*M index which was derived for each respondent on the basis of the four key questions described previously.

To produce each TRI*M grid each of the aspects of Sherwood Pines Forest was given a relative value in terms of the following three dimensions:

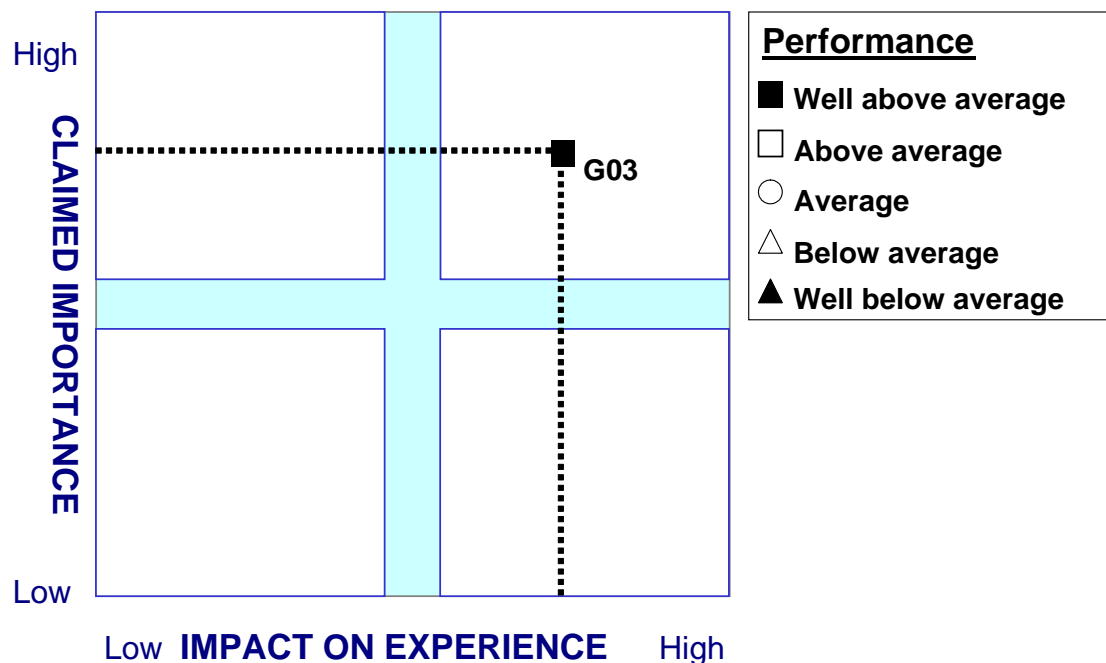
- *Levels of claimed importance* – as reported in Table C-1. This measurement provides an indication of the aspects that visitors believe to be most important in their decision to visit Sherwood Pines, those which should be reinforced in marketing communications.
- *Impact on experience* – this measurement is statistically derived from an analysis of the correlation of each aspect's performance (i.e. levels of satisfaction reported) with the TRI*M index. If there is a positive correlation between the TRI*M index and the performance of a particular aspect it is rated as having a high impact on quality of experience. Conversely if there is no correlation between the TRI*M index and the performance of an aspect, it is rated as having a low impact on quality of experience.
- *Levels of satisfaction* – as reported in Table C-3. This measurement provides an indication of the relative performance of each of the aspects which were rated. This measurement provides an indication of areas which require improvement.

In the following TRI*M grids, each of these three dimensions are plotted as follows:

Levels of claimed importance - this score is displayed on the vertical axis which runs along the left hand side of the grid. The closer to the top of the grid the higher the claimed importance and the closer to the bottom of the grid the lower the claimed importance.

Impact on experience - this measurement is displayed on the horizontal axis which runs along the bottom of the grid. The further to the right of the grid the higher the impact on the quality of experience, the further to the left of the grid the lower the impact on quality of experience.

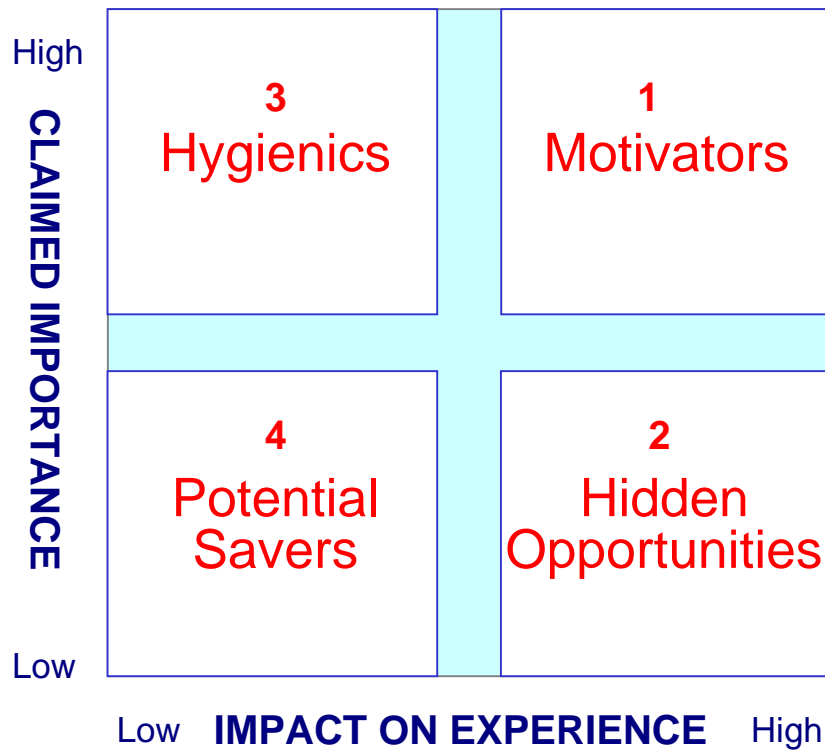
Levels of satisfaction – the previous two dimensions (claimed importance and impact on experience) tell us where on the grid each attribute falls. On the example below these are represented by the dotted lines. Where the two dotted lines cross is where on the grid the aspect of the forest is located. The third dimension is levels of satisfaction, the measurement of performance. The average satisfaction score respondents gave to each aspect is displayed by the shape plotted on the grid, for example the filled in square on the grid below. This tells us how well the forest is performing on each attribute. In the hypothetical example below the attribute **G03** has fairly high claimed importance (because it is near the top of the grid), a fairly high impact on experience (as it is to the right of the grid) and its performance is well above average (because it has a filled in square).



As illustrated in Tables C-1 and C-3, a total of 28 aspects of Sherwood Pines Forest have been rated by respondents. The results of the TRI*M Grid analysis can provide an insight into which ones should be priorities for improvement or marketing. Each aspect's impact on experience rating should be considered to be a higher priority than claimed importance rating as this measure has a direct relationship to overall levels of satisfaction. As such, aspects that are further to the right on the grid should be considered as higher priorities. However, claimed importance also has some bearing so things that are towards the top of the grid also have some priority. To help identify which aspects to prioritise each of the four quadrants has been given a name indicating its relative priority.

The top priorities should be those that fall into the Motivators quadrant (top right hand corner of the grid) because these have both a high impact on experience and high claimed

importance. Second priority should be any aspects in the Hidden Opportunities quadrant (bottom right hand corner) because these also have a high impact on experience. Third priority is aspects in the Hygienics quadrant (top left hand corner) because although these have high claimed importance they are less motivating and therefore have less influence on the quality of experience. The last priority is the Potential Savers quadrant (bottom left hand corner) where aspects have both a low impact on experience and low claimed importance.



*TRI*M Grids for Sherwood Pines Forest*

Over the following pages the strengths and priorities for Sherwood Pines have been identified. Strengths and priorities are defined as those aspects which fall in or on the boundaries of the Motivators quadrant. The crossbars on the grid are there to remind us that there are no hard and fast dividing lines between quadrants. Each aspect must be interpreted in relation to the position of the other aspects in order to determine its relative priority in the overall assessment of quality of experience.

The TRI*M grids illustrating the results obtain across all visitors to Sherwood Pines Forest are presented on page 38. For clarity the results are presented across 4 grids but all of these findings should be considered together.

Strengths - strengths are classified as attributes in or on the boundaries of the Motivators quadrant (in the top right hand corner of the grids) that are represented by squares. An unfilled square denotes above average performance and a filled square means well above average performance.

At this overall level, 4 of the 28 attributes were considered as strengths for Sherwood Pines Forest. Of these, those with the greatest impact on experience (i.e. furthest to the right of the grids) were the value for money of the whole trip or day out (G05), being able to get fit and healthy (G06) and being able to enjoy the scenery and views (G03). The other aspect which should be considered as secondary strength as it had less impact on overall experience was feeling safe in the forest.

Priorities - priorities, like strengths, are also found in or on the boundaries of the Motivators quadrant. They are indicated by triangles (below average performance) and circles (average performance). Being able to enjoy the wildlife and the friendliness of staff were identified as a priority for Sherwood Pines Forest at the overall market level.

Hidden Opportunities - hidden opportunities are indicated by any aspect that appears in or on the borders of the quadrant in the bottom right of the grid. These attributes have a high impact on quality of experience but have lower claimed importance than attributes in the Motivators quadrant. 7 of the 28 aspects are in this quadrant – leaflets, maps and interpretation panels (F07), the café or restaurant (F15), children's play equipment (F06), the availability of staff on-site (F11), open grassy areas (F18), information provided by staff (F13), the choice of trails for activities other than walking or cycling (F10) and a shop (F03). Of these aspects only one (the children's play equipment) is performing above average. Improving the quality of the other aspects in this quadrant could be the driver for further improving overall levels of quality of experience at Sherwood Pines.

Hygenics – while the performance of aspects in this quadrant are important to the viability of the site, high levels of satisfaction will not improve retention in themselves. Aspects included in this quadrant or close to boundaries are clean toilets (F04), enough car parking (F01), dog waste bins (F19), clear signposting on footpaths (F02), litter bins (F20), feeling happy to leave your car in the car park (A02), being able to spend time with family and friends (G02) and solitude, peace and quiet (G01). Notably two of these aspects are performing well below average – dog waste bins and litter bins.

Potential savers - aspects in this quadrant receive lower than average levels of claimed importance and have a lower than average impact upon the quality of experience. These aspects may be considered as lower priorities at the ‘all visitors’ level, although they may be of more importance to smaller groups of visitors⁴. Aspects included in this quadrant are picnic areas (F17), choice of trails for cycling (F09), printed information about the forest (F16), the availability of cycle hire on-site (F14), baby changing facilities (F05) and the ‘Go Ape’ course (F21).

⁴ For example while Go-Ape receives a lower than average importance score across *all visitors* when results are combined, these facilities were rated as ‘extremely’ or ‘very important’ amongst 90% of those who used this facility.

FACILITIES IN DECISION TO VISIT SITE

- F01 Enough car parking
- F02 Clear signposting on footpaths
- F03 A Shop
- F04 Clean toilets
- F05 Baby changing facilities
- F06 Children's play equipment
- F07 Leaflets, maps and interpretation panels to help you find your way around
- F08 Choice of paths for walking
- F09 Choice of trails for cycling
- F10 Choice of trails for other activities (e.g. horse riding)
- F11 Availability of staff at the site (e.g. rangers)
- F12 Friendliness of staff
- F13 Information provided by staff
- F14 Availability of cycle hire on-site
- F15 Cafe or restaurant
- F16 Printed information about the forest
- F17 Picnic areas
- F18 Open grassy areas for ball games, sunbathing, etc
- F19 Dog waste bins

Base 303

FACILITIES IN DECISION TO VISIT SITE

- F20 Litter bins
- F21 Go Ape course
- F22 A forest drive *
- F23 Bike wash *
- F24 Showers *
- F25 Red kite hide *

*Not available at this site

Base 303

ASPECTS OF PERSONAL SAFETY AND SECURITY IN DECISION TO VISIT

- A01 Feeling safe in the forest
- A02 Feeling happy to leave your car in the car park

Base 303

GENERAL ASPECTS IN DECISION TO VISIT

- G01 Solitude, peace and quiet
- G02 Being able to spend time with family and friends
- G03 Being able to enjoy scenery and views
- G04 Being able to enjoy the wildlife
- G05 Value for money of your whole trip or day out
- G06 Being able to get fit and healthy

Base 303



Summary of key TRI*M Grid findings

The TRI*M Grid analysis for Sherwood Pines Forest has highlighted the following key drivers of quality of experience and potential areas for improvement:

Strengths – these are the attributes of the site which are considered as important amongst most visitors, are proven to have a high impact on overall levels of satisfaction and are currently performing well. At Sherwood Pines the main strengths are the value for money of the whole trip or day out, being able to get fit and healthy, being able to enjoy the scenery and views and feeling safe in the forest.

.It is vital that these strengths are maintained and communicated in promotional materials.

Immediate, top priority issues – these are attributes of the site which are considered to be important amongst most visitors, have an impact on overall levels of satisfaction but are currently performing below average. At Sherwood Pines being able to enjoy wildlife and the friendliness of staff both received an ‘average’ performance rating – increasing satisfaction in these areas should therefore be considered a priority in the site’s management and maintaining current levels of satisfaction.

Second priority issues – there are a number of attributes at this site which, although most visitors rated them as important, were found to have less impact on overall levels of satisfaction. Of these attributes, two were found to be performing below average – the provision of dog waste and litter bins. This should be considered as second priorities in maintaining levels of satisfaction at Sherwood Pines.

Future opportunities – these are attributes which, although most visitors do not perceive them as important in their decision to visit, have been proven to have an impact on the overall quality of experience of those who rated them. At Sherwood Pines the aspects included in this category are leaflets, maps and interpretation panels , the café or restaurant, children’s play equipment, the availability of staff on-site, open grassy areas, information provided by staff, the choice of trails for activities other than walking or cycling and the shop.

Investing and improving these facilities in the future will provide opportunities to develop levels of satisfaction beyond those currently achieved.

D. Appendices

Questionnaires

Results obtained at other Forestry Commission sites

Responses to open-ended questions

What else influenced your decision to visit today?

A company day out.
A different place to come because we've done lots of other forests and we thought we should do this one.
A good place to meet friends.
A nice, fine day.
Ability to go on short walks as one of party is partially disabled.
Accessibility, how close it was.
Activities that are aimed at children - cheap wholesome day out.
Activities, we have come for bike riding. Time trialing.
All round good value for money always, have a nice time.
All the facilities you need.
Any sort of weather other than a downpour. A place where you can spend the day.
Archery.
As long as it's not chucking it down with rain.
Availability of amenities for kids to run around and let off steam.
Bank holiday.
Because its fine and we're not going to get wet through and we haven't bee for a while.
Because local and I feel comfortable coming here.
Because we are on a caravan rally on the site we're on.
Because we booked for Go-Ape.
Bike riding, exercise, and it's my and the kids weekend off.
Bit of everything, routes are long but not really difficult.
Booked Go Ape and fact that it's one of children's' birthday.
Booked on Go Ape - fresh air.
Booked on Go Ape course.
Bringing the children to play, they love it.
Burn the kids out - would have stopped longer but cafe not open - should be open till 4 p.m. - came at 2 p.m. Not open.
Business trip.
Came out in car and saw where it took us. Found we were here.
Chance to get out into fresh air. Not having to pay to get in. Nice - cool and shady on a hot day.
Cheaper than elsewhere.
Children's enjoyment.
Choice of cycle routes away from traffic.
Climber Park was closer.
Climber was closed and Sherwood Forest was recommended.
Close and a bank h holiday
Close and warm dry weather. Value.
Close proximity.
Close proximity to where I live. Lots of different cycle tracks.
Close to home.
Close to home - reason we started to come was only place we could visit with dog when foot and mouth was on.
Close by to where we are staying.
Closeness to home.
Come most weeks - it's handy - let dog off and have a walk - we come in all weathers.
Coming chestnutting love the outdoors and we can all do it together including 18 month old. Short distance from centre, there are paths where you don't see anyone.
Convenience and surrounding woods.
Convenience, ease of access, value for money.

Convenient place to walk the dog without car fumes.
Convenient to come here for dog.
Could hire bikes and no cars on trails.
Couldn't cope with another day with children indoors.
Curiosity and would be shady.
Daily visit.
Daughters class come on visit on Wednesday last week. She was ill and I missed it so we've brought her.
Day out for dog.
Different venue to normal place.
Ease of parking-weather- It's sheltered here even if it rains as forecast.
Enjoyable experience
Facilities are really good. Accessibility of it. Way it caters for everybody
Fact I can walk and enjoy the countryside while my husband cycles.
Fact we hadn't been for a while.
Fine and not too hot - and not raining.
Fine but not too hot.
For us it's convenient.
Forest cycle trails and also near where we are staying.
Fresh air. Scenery and views. Established a nice circular walk.
Friends.
Full day out at a reasonable cost for all the family.
Fun we are going to Go Ape.
Go ape course and everyone wanted to come.
Good downhill cycle route (rest of party).
Good for the grandchildren - daughters have brought them up from York and Norfolk.
Good weather - close to where we are staying.
Good weather. Not too expensive and close to home.
Had just bought a new bike and this was a good place to try it out.
Handy and not too far away from us and good feedback.
Have a couple of hours to spare and not much else to do.
Having my family over.
I come here everyday. Great for dog walking and good for keeping fit walking because I'm 86.
I enjoy it that's all it's nice to get out.
I enjoy the place for self and children.
I was told I was coming I'm visiting with friends.
Ideal place to bring the kids and safe.
I'm on holiday and wanted something to do.
I'm running in the worksop half marathon next week, this is my last major practice.
In the area so we came here.
Interesting cycle routes & good food.
It had stopped raining and we live close by.
It looked like it would be a reasonable day. Also a variety of pine trees.
It was a birthday treat.
It was a change because we had already been to other forests.
It was mostly because of the Go Ape. Our menfolk wanted to try it.
It was relatively close by.
It was somewhere where we could bring the grandchildren and know that they were safe.
It wasn't raining. It's a nice place to get away to.
It's a picturesque area with a range of good facilities which are well managed.
Its a return visit - we enjoyed it last year.
It's close and convenient.
It's close to home.
It's convenient for dog walking.

It's free for 9 of us and we've got bikes.
It's good value for money and I live close enough to nip home and come back.
It's local.
It's local and plenty of room for the kids to play.
It's local and scenic. Good open spaces. Could have a great day out.
It's local for me and because of season ticket.
It's near and it has a bike shop.
It's nice to have a walk out in a nice place on a nice day.
It's not too commercialized. Plenty of open space.
It's our grandson's birthday he wanted to go on the Go Ape course.
It's quite local for me. Only ever see it kept getting better and better.
It's relaxing and peaceful. Big park. Plenty of shade on a hot day.
It's someone's birthday and they have gone on Go Ape.
Just a lovely place to come to especially to bring friends
Just a nice place, we enjoy coming and dogs enjoy it.
Just came for Go Ape team building company exercise.
Just decided to come.
Just family bike ride. Came last year. Enjoyed it so do it again.
Just having been before and enjoyed it. A cheap day out in safety.
Just like it here.
Just like it here. Not over developed. The natural aspect of everything.
Just like the place - interest is a bit of exercise to keep us going.
Just the coming which we do in all weathers.
Just the running.
Just to be able to relax in the fresh air. Somewhere for the children to play.
Just to come for a cheap day out. Facilities here - can bring your own food if you want.
Just to leave the city.
Just walking dog.
Just wanted to find out about it and passed entrance on way back from Sherwood Forest.
Kids treat. Birthday treat for niece. Kids had been here before and enjoyed it.
Knowing about it and wanting to bring grandchildren.
Let the kids have a good time, enjoy it and have some fresh air.
Let the kids have a run around and the dog to get some exercise.
Like the layout and facilities here. Think they've got it right. Makes it worthwhile to come.
Liked the look of it on internet.
Lined up for mountain bikes. Place is making a good effort to do something for sport instead of putting it down.
Local.
Local - nice area to come to and walk dog.
Local and free.
Local and good for walking dog - pleasant scenery.
Local, best thing like this is that it is near to me. Fairly dedicated to cyclists.
Locality.
Locality - good service and bike shop.
Locality and handy and it's a nice place.
Localness.
Location.
Meeting up with friends I don't see so regularly.
Midway point for meeting friends.
Mountain bike shops.
My sons fault he wanted to go on the Go Ape.
My son's interest in mountain biking.
Nice day out.
Nice sunny weather and to meet a friend.

Nice to come here in sunny weather. Not too far from home.
Not windy or raining. Pleasant. Cost.
Nothing else purely cycling.
Nothing really apart from bringing dog out.
Nothing really. We come here often. Pushchair friendly.
Nothing. Just a day's holiday.
Off road cycling.
Off road. Dog walking. Quiet and in the country.
On a preplanned trip with a whole group of people if it didn't rain.
Only place we know that's got this many facilities and kids have been before and like it and have had a good time.
Open spaces. Value for money. Family visiting place.
Organised activity.
Other facilities near by.
Past experience. Like it here.
Peace and quiet. Away from traffic. I've been here before.
Peace of mind. Scenery and kids are at school.
Places to recycle things instead of just litter bins.
Previous experience as has been positive-place close to us, to walk in country.
Proximity, free and extensive facilities, and the weather forecast and I am in training for a ride through the Cairngorms (cycle) in October.
Raining when we started so decided on forest walk instead of a hill walk.
Recommendation.
Recommended that there were good mountain bike trails here.
Respect to my late wife.
Robin hood.
Robin hood festival was on in Sherwood forest and no car parking. Dog would enjoy walk here and promise of bacon sarnie. Car parking is more secure - more people around.
Routine.
Safe area to bring the children - knowing what they are doing and that its clean.
Safety and suitability for children (better signposting in Mansfield would have been appreciated).
Came out with daughter, she recommended it.
Saw whilst bike riding and came back.
School holidays.
School holidays and fairly reasonable priced outing.
Scott cycle team here today.
See area and forest have nice walks.
Seeing my friend. Fresh air. To get out and about.
Sister recommended it.
So close and cheap - went to Thetford forest yesterday and it was more expensive to park car.
Somewhere we found to park and have a meeting.
Something different and fun to be out. A change from city life.
Something different for a birthday treat.
Something to do.
Something to do with the kids and proximity to where we are staying. We have visited another site in Cumbria and know the facility suits us.
Somewhere different.
Somewhere nice to come and that it is safe.
Somewhere to go and fresh air.
Somewhere to go for a bike ride- somewhere cheap.
Somewhere we haven't been before.
Somewhere we'd not been, husband doing heart foundation bike ride and wanted to check trails.
Space, friendly area to walk and nice scenery.
Spur of the moment.

Spur of the moment.
Such a nice area to be out on bikes and out in fresh air.
Taking the kids out somewhere.

The actual area itself, we're here mainly for the trails and the bike riding and they're very very good.
The chance to see all the family - children and grandchildren away from the city.
The child wanted to visit - he has been on school trip.
The dog loves it here.
The exercise.
The fact that it was fine and sunny.
The Go Ape course.
The Go Ape course.
The Go Ape site.
The Go-Ape thing.
The granddaughter and friend asked if they could come here.
The grandchildren, somewhere for them to run around.
The history of it.
The kids wanted to go on the Go Ape course.
The proximity - being somewhere different and something children will enjoy.

The proximity and the amount of facilities.
The quietness and the trees. Good for my daughter who is disabled.
The weather - travelling distance - easy access and adequate parking.
The weather and knowing we can relax and bring children and safe, close to picnickers, play area.
The weather because it was not raining.
The weather so long as it's dry.
The weather. Fine day.
The weather. It has now become warm.
The weather/it was raining but you can stay dry under the trees.
There are good orienteering maps or the forest.
There is something for everybody and every age.
This area is used more by our party than rougher park.
This area is used more by our party than rougher park.
Thought I found Sherwood forest which I've been looking for 30 years.
Thought we would try something different.
Time and weather – locality.
Time of the year - having free time.
To be out of the city and take some fresh air- it's important for your health. Everybody should walk in the forest with nature.
To do something different.
To give my son a chance to get used to his new bike.
To go cycling with a blind friend on a tandem.
To have a day out with friend.
To meet friends and hoping weather would be nicer.
To walk the dog and keep fit.
To walk the dog as we do every day.
Today because Climber Park is shut but we come here regularly.
Very convenient to home.
Very strong recommendation.
Walks in the woods and bird watching.
Wanted a day out with play areas and possibility of going for a walk and have a nice picnic.
Wanted to find a track where we could go off road. Nothing local for us.
Wanted to go on Go Ape. Cheap day out.
Wanted to try the Go Ape.

We are regular visitors. Ease of access.
We had cycling available here.
We have been somewhere else and this was a nice place to stop for a picnic.
We like it here. Been here before.
We like the fresh air and it's good for walking.
We were booked for the Go Ape course.
We were booked on the Go Ape course.
We were out this way so we decided to come.
We were recommended to visit but they want more advertising. We would have come more if we had known about it.
Weather forecast for Cleethorpes was rain. This is close enough to visit and go home if it rains.
Weather ok.
Weather. Weather would be good in morning.
Were at Climber park. Looked sunnier and drier in this direction and it was.

Were going to go to Derbyshire but weather was too poor - came here 'cos only 10 minutes away.
We're local.
We've covered everything that's important to influencing decisions.

Suggestions for improvements

Tarmac surfaces in picnic area.
A bit more maintenance on cycle tracks and more signposts on waymarked trails.
A cycle wash – definitely - absolutely paramount - that would make it absolutely top drawer.
A shower facility available.
Actually already doing it. Improving trails and making jumps. We've put our names down to come and help.
Address problems with motor cyclists.
Adventure park for teenagers - less expensive than Go-Ape.
Alright as it is.
Apart from dog waste bins not being here we just love it.
As before.
Barbeque, more bins.
Barbeque area needs somewhere to put used disposable barbecues.
Barbecue area should be somewhere to safely put your barbecue out instead of having to wait for it to cool. Could be a little patrol occasionally of play areas.
Better bike wash facilities. Showers. Longer opening hours for more cycling.
Better disabled car parking facilities especially for those in wheel chairs it is bumpy.
Better signposting on the roads to get here.
Better water facilities.
Can't improve it. Got a free range. Can do things in your own time.
Can't think of anything.
Can't think of anything.
Child friendly litter bins. Responsible dog owners.
Could have more litter bins and dog litter bins on the paths around here. Longer opening hours. In winter.
Dog bins.
Dog litter bins. More of them.
Dog poo bins - litter bins - baby changing signs.
Don't expect more than we already get.
Extended picnic area.
Facility for hire of disability scooters.
Fine.
Happy.

High visibility of rangers.
 I just think that something more detailed about wildlife and the motorbikes kept out.
 I would like to see healthy options in the cafe on a healthy day out.
 Improving the cafe facilities. High wire thing is very expensive.
 Increase number of picnic tables to number there used to be.
 Leave it as it is.
 Leave it as it is.
 Litter and dog dirt bins.
 Litter bins and dog bins have to carry dog mess around for 1 hour or more.
 Litter bins and dog waste bins and dogs on leads near children's play areas.
 More bins - litter and dog waste.
 More deciduous or native trees introduced after felling operations.
 More dog bins.
 More dog bins and litter bins.
 More dog bins. Section of the forest not so much commercialised where you can go camping.
 More dog dirt bins.
 More letter bins and dog letter bins.
 More litter bins.
 More litter bins in car park and signed dog waste bins.
 More litter bins on trails and paths.
 More paths for walkers only.
 More picnic tables.
 More picnic tables - bigger Go-Ape - more dog bins - free car parking.
 More rangers in the forest.
 More staff later in evening and cafe open later.
 More waymarked cycle trails.
 Not a lot really. It's all pretty good. Keep it as it is.
 Not enough toilets or facilities in the toilets.
 Not much. More bins.
 Nothing - I like it as it is
 Nothing really. It's got better now.
 Nothing. Everything is fine.
 Nothing. Leave it as it is. Bigger disabled toilet.
 Ok - more picnic tables.
 Plant more broad leaf and deciduous trees to increase wildlife.
 Rallies cut up trails and make them unrideable, reinstatement takes too long.
 Re positioning of jumps on the cycle traps.
 Reduced the amount of bikes (motorbikes) at weekends.
 Signposts as mentioned -toilets at outer reaches.
 Some form of outdoor shelter other than cafe if it rains.
 Some of the trails looked after slightly better - i.e. Trimming back – drainage.
 Toilets modernised and checked regularly. Sliding price scale on car park - say 50p an hour.

What do you like most about the forest?

Access. Inexpensive.
 Accessibility.
 Away from it all.
 Beauty - countryside – wildlife.
 Being outside and having a laugh and getting fit.
 Bigger and more accessible than most places I've been.
 Bike trail shop - cafe - being out in the lovely outdoor space for everybody.
 Cheap day out in the countryside and that the kids are safe.
 Close to where we live and peaceful.
 Convenience.

Convenience with living at Edminstone.
Easy access - plenty of cycling and walking trails.
Easy to get to.
Easy to get to it's on my door step it's cheap especially with season ticket which is excellent value for money.
Freedom to roam and fresh air.
Forest is immaculate. It's convenient as well.
Freedom.
Freedom for the children and knowing they are safe.
Freedom. No litter.
Freedom. To go any way you want.
Fresh air/Scenery/Peace and quiet.
Good and safe for kids.
Good fun nothing to serious good fun.
How close and the café.
I can walk the dog and a small child with a pushchair.
It's close. A good set up and good value for money.
It's convenient and ideal for me.
It's convenient. Peaceful, solitude. Not claustrophobic.
It's generally unspoiled. Open air concerts are good here.
It's good for mountain biking. Some very good trails.
It's great for the grandchildren.
It's local and available.
Its local you feel you are in the forest.
It's natural.
It's nice and peaceful to walk or cycle.
Just getting away from traffic for running.
Just the trails really.
Local and yet like another world from the town where I live.
Local quite a few things you can do here. It's cheap.
Location cycle trails good clean toilet facilities.
Lots of space.
My children range in age from 3-19 and they and I and my mum can all find something to interest us.
Nice and friendly - no traffic safe for children.
Nobody bothers you. Staff know me - I'm regular.
Not long before you're in the woods and away from people. Good food.
Not over-used - quieter than climber dedicated paths for specific uses.
Off road trails/scenery.
On doorstep and pleasant walks - natural and peaceful and away from the busyness of life.
Peace & quiet and convenience near to home.
Peace and quiet. Children's play area. Open access to tracks.
Peace and tranquility.
Peaceful and quiet you just don't see anybody once your in the forest.
Peacefulness.
Quality of the cycle tracks and its sheer size of it.
Quiet - peaceful out in the country. Somewhere to come with plenty to do.
Quiet and peaceful. Not polluted or messy.
Quiet and relaxing.
Quiet. Decent walks away from being at work.
Range of facilities.
Scenery.
Scenery off road cycling.
Size and fresh air.
So open and so much to do for everybody.

Solitude - being able to do as much or as little as you want - activities going on to interest most people and it gets you out in the fresh air.

Space and the fact that there is something for every age. It's really safe for children to go off and explore.

The countryside and being able to park here and enjoy it.

The cycle tracks.

The forest - the smells as you walk through it.

The freedom to explore.

The freedom to go on your bikes in specific areas for bikes knowing your not going to come across little kiddies etc.

The mountain bike trails.

The nature- interesting bugs.

The quietness - space and fresh air.

The space.

The space freedom and mixture of trees.

The walks - being able to walk with the dog.

The walks and the chestnuts kids enjoy the play area.

Tranquility of it all. Always something to do and you can bring the kids for their fun and enjoyment.

Tranquility. I like the trails and forests.

Variety of activities.

Variety of activities to do with my daughter. It's very near to home.

Walking.

Walking - the paths.

Wildlife.

Wild-open space-peace and wildlife.

You can cycle down to it and you can feel miles from anywhere.

You can get out and enjoy yourself.

You're in the countryside.
