

User preferences in woodland design

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During the summer, we randomly selected 152 people to fill in a questionnaire with the aim of understanding peoples preferences in:

- facilities provided
- distribution of facilities
- site management practices

Here is a summary of the main results...



SITE USERS: WHO ARE THEY?

More than half of those interviewed were aged 26-44, visit the site only once a year and live more than 7 miles away. Just 8% of people were local users living <2 miles away and visiting the site several times a week.

PREFERENCES OVER DIFFERENT STYLES OF DESIGN



36% of respondents ranked the wooden bench (LEFT) as their first choice because of its rustic design. 54% ranked the recycled plastic bench (RIGHT) as their least favourite.



39% of respondents chose the sandy play area as their first choice (LEFT). 64% of respondents agreed that their least favourite play area was the imaginary game (RIGHT), primarily because of perceived safety concerns.



PREFERENCES OVER DISTRIBUTION

51% of people interviewed thought that signage has to be both along pathways and at junctions. 45% thought instead that it would have been enough to see signage at junctions only.



53% of respondents chose the sheltered BBQ (LEFT) as their first option, whilst the simple BBQ (RIGHT) was least preferred by 63% of respondents.



49% of respondents preferred a high frequency of widely distributed benches. 45% thought that there shouldn't be as many picnic tables as benches and they should be in dedicated areas.

Users were almost unanimous that there should be at least some benches and picnic tables: with 90% of users ranking the "zero benches" option as their least favourite.

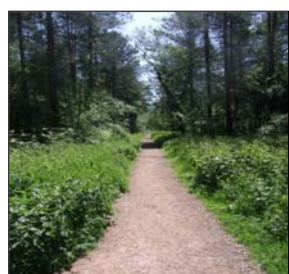


50% of respondents chose the directional sign illustrated on the left as their favourite option. 56% of respondents ranked the very descriptive sign (RIGHT) as their least favourite because it was too cluttered and hard to understand at a glance.



67% of respondents stated that they preferred having a picnic on a table rather than having it on a blanket.

62% of respondents would like to see constructed shelters on site. 94% would like to see interpretations signs and 64% of them would like to find them at points of cultural interest.



The pathway illustrated on the left, was ranked by 40% of respondents as their favourite choice.

64% of interviewee ranked the paved pathway as their last choice (RIGHT).



PREFERENCES OVER MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

In hypothetical scenarios to save money in site management practices, 34% of respondents would cut the grass less often. In terms of investment, 40% of respondents would spend more money on providing extra facilities such as toilets.