UK PUBLIC OPINION OF FORESTRY 2003

Summary results of the 2003 UK Survey of Public Opinion of Forestry, carried out on behalf of the Forestry Commission and Forest Service.

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Executive Summary

Changes to the 2003 survey

The Forestry Commission has conducted similar biennial surveys of public attitudes to forestry and forestry-related issues since 1995. In the initial surveys a representative sample of 2,000 adults across Great Britain was surveyed. In 2003 the scope of the survey has been substantially increased with the use of three separate surveys:

- A representative sample of 4,120 adults across the UK
- A representative sample of 1,000 adults across Scotland
- A representative sample of 1,000 adults across Wales

This report summarises the results of the main UK survey, and highlights any changes over time by comparing the 2003 results with previous surveys. Separate reports will give more detailed results for England, Scotland and Wales.

UK forests, woodlands and trees in the media

48 % of UK adults had seen or read about forests, woodlands or trees in the last twelve months on the television, radio or in the newspapers. As in previous years, the topics most widely seen were ‘birds or other animals in woodlands’, ‘tree planting’ and ‘protests about roads or other developments on woodlands’.

25 % of UK adults were aware of the ‘National Tree Week’ promotion. 11 % had heard of ‘Heritage Trees’, and 10 % had heard of ‘Walk in the Woods’.

UK forest management

90 % of UK adults selected at least one public benefit as a good reason to support forestry with public money. As in previous years the four top reasons to support forestry were to provide places for wildlife to live, to provide places to visit and walk in, to improve the countryside landscape and to help prevent the ‘greenhouse effect’ and global warming. Helping rural tourism increased in rank from ninth to sixth most common reason between 2001 and 2003.

‘Providing opportunities for walking’ and ‘providing homes for birds and other animals’ were the functions of UK forestry rated most highly for performance in 2003.

Changes to woodland

16 % of UK adults perceive the UK woodland area has increased over the last twenty years. 61 % think that it is decreasing, and 13 % that it is staying about the same.

67 % of UK adults would like to see more woodland in their part of the UK. 29 % would like neither more nor less. The proportion of adults wanting more woodland has decreased between 2001 and 2003.

6 % of UK adults have been consulted about plans for creating, managing or using woodlands. 43 % would like to be consulted in future.

Awareness of 'certified symbols' on wood products

47 % of UK adults had been shopping for wood products in the last few years. Of these respondents, 31 % recognised the FSC symbol and 8 % recognised the PEFC symbol.

Forestry Commission, Forest Service and other organisations

63 % of GB adults had heard of the Forestry Commission, and 61 % of NI adults had heard of the Forest Service. Only the National Trust received higher recognition (82 % of UK adults).

60 % of UK adults who had heard of the Forestry Commission (GB)/ Forest Service (NI) thought that they were government departments or agencies. 83 % of GB adults think that the Forestry Commission operates in England, 69 % Scotland, and 64 % Wales. 91 % of NI adults said that the Forest Service operates in Northern Ireland.

Over 80 % of UK adults who had heard of the Forestry Commission (GB)/ Forest Service (NI) are aware that these organisations improve woodland habitats for wildlife, let the public walk in their woods and forests and provide trails for cycling and horse-riding. Fewer were aware that they run cabins and campsites for forest holidays (49 %) or give grants to private woodland owners (38 %).

Woodland recreation

41 % of UK adults have woodland which they can get to easily without using a car or other transport.

67 % of UK adults have visited a woodland or forest in the last few years. 82 % of these adults have visited woodlands in the countryside, and 50 % have visited woodlands in and around towns.

62 % of woodland visitors had been to a woodland or forest at least once a month in the summer of 2002. 29 % visited once a month in the winter of 2002/03.

42 % of woodland visitors thought they had visited a National Trust/ National Trust for Scotland woodland, 40 % a Forestry Commission/Forest Enterprise (GB)/ Forest Service (NI) woodland, and 33 % a local authority woodland.

39 % of UK adults would use a Tourist Information Centre to find out about a woodland they had not been to before. 31 % would ask friends or relatives, 30 % would use a guide book or map, and 22 % would use the internet. Use of the internet for information has increased from 1997 to 2003.

65 % of UK adults interested in visiting woodland say that peace and quiet and wildlife are important factors in choosing to visit a woodland. Attractive scenery (62 %), and a safe environment (57 %) were also important.

When visiting woodland for a day out, the facilities that UK adults would most like to see are toilets (70 %), a car park (57 %), nature trails (54 %) and picnic areas (53 %).

1. Introduction

The Forestry Commission has conducted similar biennial surveys of public attitudes to forestry and forestry-related issues since 1995. In the initial surveys, a representative sample of 2,000 adults across Great Britain (GB) was surveyed. In 2001, with interest in country-level results (England, Scotland and Wales) within GB, a restricted set of questions were asked of a representative sample of 1,000 adults across Scotland and 1,000 adults across Wales, to gather information on some important issues.

In order to balance the increased interest in country-level and regional information with the requirement for continued high-quality coherent information for the UK as a whole, the scope of the survey has been substantially increased in 2003 with the use of 3 separate surveys.

- A representative sample of 4,120 adults across the UK
- A representative sample of 1,000 adults across Scotland
- A representative sample of 1,000 adults across Wales

A 'core' set of questions was asked in all 3 surveys, other questions were survey-specific.

This report summarises the results of the main UK survey, and highlights any changes over time by comparing the 2003 results with previous surveys[1].

Separate reports will be published for England, Scotland and Wales, giving more in-depth information on the specific questions asked in each country, including breakdowns by geographic regions and respondent profile (e.g. gender, age, ethnicity, health, social class).

The UK information presented in this report is taken from the RSGB General Omnibus survey carried out from 26th February – 9th March 2003 by Taylor Nelson Sofres on behalf of the Forestry Commission. The survey was based on a representative sample of 4,120 adults (aged 16 or over) across the UK. They were selected from a minimum of 270 sampling points by a random location method. More details of the sample method are given in Appendix 1.

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[2] take into account the effect of clustering, weighting and stratification in the survey design (see Appendix 1).

- For questions asked to the whole sample of 4,120, the range of uncertainty around any figure should be no more than +/-2.3 %.
- For questions asked of a sample of 2,000 in previous surveys, the range of uncertainty should be no more than +/- 3.3 %.

[1] This report compares UK results for 2003 with GB results from previous surveys. This comparison is reasonable, as all GB results for 2003 (excluding Northern Ireland) are within 1 percentage point of the UK figures

[2] In previous surveys we did not have an estimate of the survey design effects of clustering, weighting and stratification when calculating confidence intervals. Therefore confidence intervals shown in previous reports are smaller than those shown here.

- Therefore any differences of more than 4.0 % between 2003 and previous years are statistically significant. Differences of 4.7 % between two years with sample sizes of 2,000 (1995-2001) are statistically significant.

Results are shown as percentages. These have been individually rounded so may not always total to exactly 100.

2. UK forests, woodlands and trees 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. As in 2001, the topics most heard about were ‘birds and other animals in woodlands’, ‘tree planting’ and ‘protests about roads or other developments on woodlands’ (Table 1).

In general, there was a significant decrease in the proportion of adults who had seen or read about most of the topics; the proportion of adults who had not seen or read about any topics increased from 38 % in 2001 to 52 % in 2003. It should be noted that the timing of the survey was approximately two weeks before the start of war in Iraq, and the media at the time was dominated by reporting on this topic. This may have had an effect on the recall of other subjects seen or read about in the last twelve months.

Table 1: Whether respondent has seen or read about UK forests, woods or trees in the last 12 months

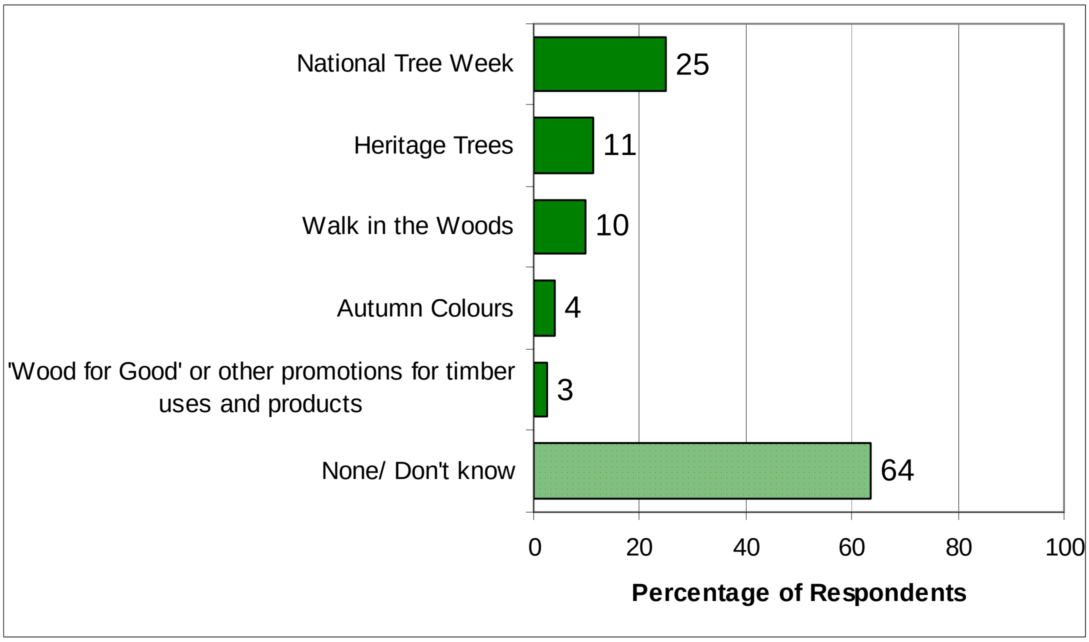
	2003	2001	1999	1997	1995
Birds and other animals in woodlands	22	33*	33	44	45
Tree planting	22	28	31	28	38
Protests about roads or other developments on woodlands	21	33*	37	--	--
Public rights of access to woodlands	19	27	32	31	33
Forest and woodlands as places to visit	19	22*	20	25	19
Loss of ancient or native woodland	15	21	23	34	35
Flowers and other plants in woodland	15	20	--	--	--
Restoration of ancient or native woodland	12	16	17	--	--
Creation of new native woodlands	11	14	--	--	--
Community woodlands / new local woodlands	10	13	13	12	12
Tree pests and diseases	9	14	14	11	14
Selling public woodlands	9	11*	12	19	20
Wood for fuel / (short rotation coppice)	8	9	7	6	11
Labelling / certification of wood products	7	6	5	4	--
Timber transport	6	--	--	--	--
None seen / Don't know	52	38	36	29	27

Base: UK (4,120) in 2003, GB (2,000) in previous years
* The wording of these responses changed in the year indicated

2.2 Promotions of forests, woodlands, trees and wood products

A number of national promotions are aimed at enhancing public understanding and awareness of woodlands, wood products and related issues. A further media-related question asked respondents about their awareness of five such promotions. Figure 1 shows that a quarter of adults in the UK had heard of 'National Tree Week', 11 % had heard of 'Heritage Trees' and 10 % 'Walk in the Woods'. 'Autumn Colours' and 'Wood for Good' were less well known.

Figure 1: Whether respondent has heard of various promotions



Base: UK (4,120) for National Tree Week and Wood for Good, GB (4,000) for others

3. UK forest management

3.1 Benefits of forestry

The UK government and the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (NI) support forestry in many ways. Respondents were asked to select (from a list of possible public benefits) good reasons to support UK forestry with public money. 90 % of respondents selected at least one benefit.

As in previous years, the top four good reasons to support forestry were to provide places for wildlife to live, to provide places to visit and walk in, to improve the countryside landscape, and to help prevent the 'greenhouse effect' and global warming.

The 2003 survey also asked whether providing places to cycle or ride horses was a good reason to support UK forestry with government money, to which 40 % of adults agreed.

Table 2: Whether respondent believes public benefits are good reasons to support UK forestry with public money

	2003	2001	1999	1997	1995
To provide good places for wildlife to live	72	70	66	75	72
To provide good places to visit and walk in	62	58*	49	47	47
To improve the countryside landscape	58	55	55	48	48
To help prevent the 'greenhouse effect' and global warming	57	58	57	60	61
To support the economy in rural areas	46*	52*	52	48	52
To help rural tourism	42	35	--	--	--
To create pleasant settings for developments around towns	41	40	37	--	--
To make woods more accessible to all in the community	40	41	--	--	--
To provide places to cycle or ride horses	40	--	--	--	--
To restore former industrial land	35	37	34	--	--
So the UK can buy less wood products from abroad	33*	33*	29	34	32
To provide wood as a renewable fuel	32	31*	20	--	--
To provide timber for sawmills and wood processing	28	29*	21	24	20
None / Don't know	10	8	11	4	4

Base: UK (4,120) in 2003, GB (2,000) in previous years
* The wording of these responses changed in the year indicated

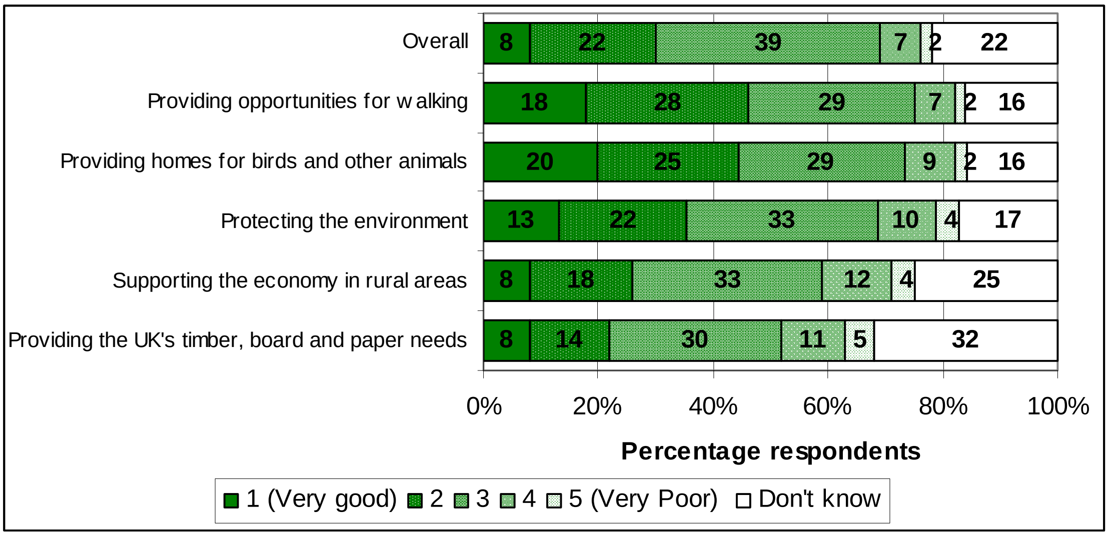
‘Helping rural tourism’ was seen as a good reason to support forestry by 42 % of adults. It has increased in popularity from 35 % in 2001, and increased in rank from ninth to sixth most common reason. Rural issues, including rural tourism, have received increased publicity since the Foot and Mouth outbreak, which was at its peak at the time of the last survey. Support for UK forestry in order to improve the countryside landscape continued to increase from 48 % in 1995 to 58 % in 2003.

3.2 Ratings of UK forestry

Respondents were asked to rate the performance of UK forestry on a number of aspects. Ratings were given on a scale of 1-5, 1 being ‘very good’ and 5 being ‘very poor’. Those rated most highly were ‘Providing opportunities for walking’ and ‘providing homes for birds and other animals’ (Figure 2). These two highest-rated aspects of UK forestry are also considered the best reasons to support forestry with public money (see Table 2).

It should be noted that in some cases a large proportion of respondents said that they could not give a rating as they didn’t know enough about particular aspects of forestry. This was especially so when asking about ‘UK forestry supporting the economy in rural areas’, and ‘UK forestry providing the UK’s timber, board and paper needs’ (25 % and 32 % respectively said that they did not know).

Figure 2: Performance rating of various functions of UK forestry



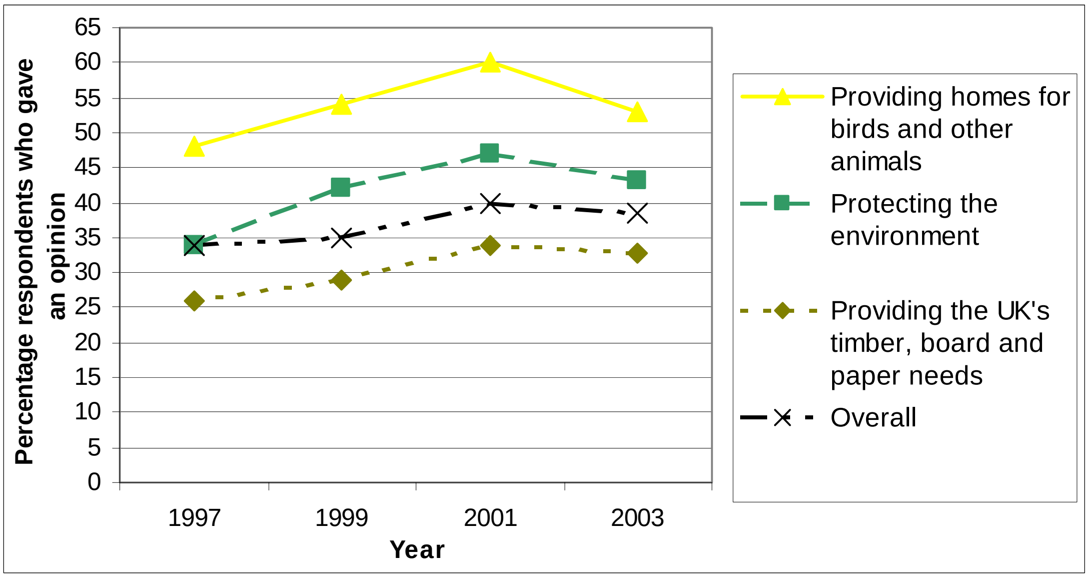
Base: UK (4,120)

Comparison with previous surveys

Figure 3 shows the percentage of respondents rating particular aspects of forestry as ‘1 (Very good)’ or ‘2’ from 1997 to 2003, expressed as a percentage of those who provided a rating. ‘Providing homes for birds and other animals’ was rated significanly lower in 2003 than in 2001 (53% and 60 % respectively giving a rating of 1 or 2). However, it is still rated higher than it was in 1997, when 48 % gave a rating of 1 or 2. Ratings for ‘protecting the environment’ have shown a similar pattern.

There is little change between 2001 and 2003 in the rating of UK forestry for providing for the UK’s timber, board and paper needs, although this had been increasing slowly between previous surveys. The overall ratings of UK forestry have shown a similar pattern.

Figure 3: Adults rating various functions of forestry as ‘1 (Very good)’ or ‘2’[1].



Base: UK (4,120) in 2003, GB (2,000) in previous years, excluding those who did not express an opinion

[1] Excludes adults who said they did not know

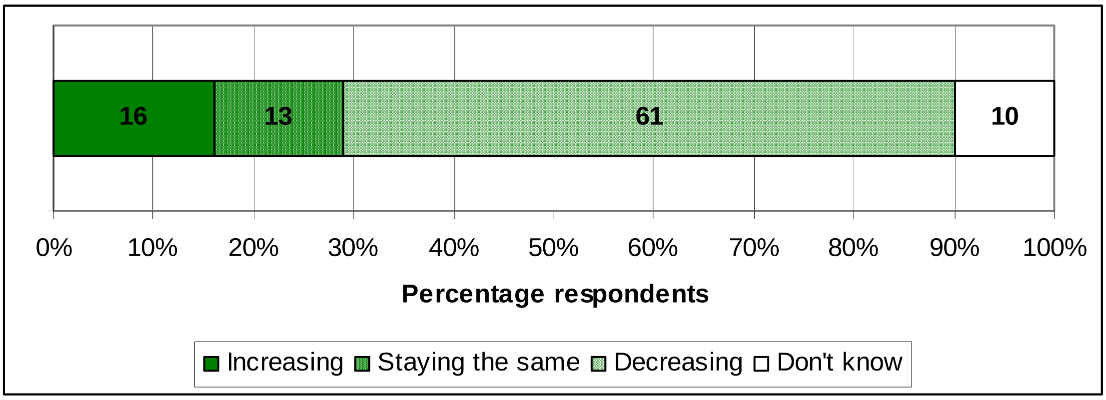
4. Changes to woodland

4.1 Perception of change in woodland area

Over the last few decades, the area of woodland in the UK has been steadily increasing, from 2.2 million hectares in 1980, to 2.8 million hectares in 2002[1].

Respondents were asked whether they thought the area of woodland in the UK had been increasing or decreasing over the last twenty years. 16 % of adults correctly said that woodland area had increased. 13 % thought that it had stayed about the same, and 61 % thought that woodland area had decreased. A further 10 % did not know.

Figure 4: Perception of change in woodland area over last 20 years



Base: UK (4,120)

Comparison with previous surveys
Previous surveys asked separately whether respondents thought the area of broadleaved and conifer woodland was increasing or decreasing. Therefore results are not directly comparable with the 2003 survey. There was no clear trend over time, however, previous surveys indicated that 35-40 % of adults thought that the area of conifer woodland was increasing and 32-39 % thought it was decreasing. Only 11-12 % thought that the amount of broadleaved woodland was increasing, and 52-63 % thought it was decreasing.

Respondents' views of the change in woodland area as a whole are similar to their views of the change in broadleaved area in previous surveys.

[1] FC(2002): *Forestry statistics 2002*, Forestry Commission, Edinburgh

4.2 Desire for change in woodland area

Respondents were then asked whether or not they would like more woodland in their part of the country. Around two-thirds of respondents would like more woodland, whereas 2 % of respondents would like less.

The 67 % of respondents who wanted more woodland in their part of the country were asked how much more they would like to see. Similar to previous years, around a third of adults said that they would like a little more, a third would like half as much again, and a third would like more woodland than this.

Table 3: Desire for more woodland in respondent's part of the country

	2003	**2001**	**1999**	**1997**	**1995**
More than half as much again	20	24	--	--	--
About twice as much	--	--	28	34	--
About half as much again	24	30	25	--	--
Much more	--	--	--	--	49
A little more	22	21	30	48	29
More	*67*	*75*	*83*	*82*	*78*
Neither more nor less	29	20	12	15	16
Less	2	2	1	1	1
Don't know	3	3	4	2	4

Base: UK (4,120) in 2003, GB (2,000) in previous years
Note: The response options differed before 2001

Comparison with previous surveys
There has been a significant decrease in the proportion of adults who would like more woodland in their part of the country in 2003. There has been a consequent significant increase in the proportion wanting neither more nor less woodland.

4.3 Public consultations over woodland change and use[1]

The UK forestry standard[2] encourages woodland owners to involve local communities when making decisions about changing the look or use of woodlands. Respondents were asked if they had ever been consulted about plans for creating, managing or using woodlands in their area. 6 % of respondents said they had.

Respondents were then asked if they would like to be consulted (again) about plans for creating, managing or using woodlands in their area. A total of 43 % of adults (79 % of those who had previously been consulted and 41 % of those who had not), would like to be consulted in the future.

5. Awareness of 'certified symbols' on wood products[1]

Almost 40 % of all woodland in the UK is certified as being sustainably managed[3]. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Pan-European Forest Certification (PEFC) are global and European schemes respectively, which certify woodlands as well as wood and wood products originating from sustainably managed woodland. Each scheme has a logo, which is displayed on all certified products.

Respondents were first asked if they had been shopping for wood products in the last few years. Almost half (47 %) said that this was the case. These respondents were asked if they recognised either the FSC or the PEFC symbols (Table 4). 31 % of adults who had been shopping for wood products in the last few years said that they recognised the FSC symbol, and 8 % said that they recognised the PEFC symbol. 61 % did not recollect having seen either symbol.

Table 4: Respondents who had seen the FSC or PEFC logos on wood products

	2003
FSC logo	31
PEFC logo	8
None	61
Don't know	4

Base: UK Adults who had been shopping for wood products: 1,930

[1] These were new topics in the 2003 survey
[2] FC (1998): *The UK forestry standard; The government's approach to sustainable forestry*, Forestry Commission, Edinburgh
[3] FC(2002): *UK indicators of sustainable forestry*, Forestry Commission, Edinburgh

6. Forestry Commission, Forest Service and other organisations

6.1 Awareness of organisations

Almost two-thirds of respondents had heard of the Forestry Commission (in GB) or the Forest Service (in NI), with only the National Trust achieving higher recognition. 60 % had heard of the Environment Agency, and around half recognised the name Woodland Trust.

Forest Enterprise, which manages state woodlands, and Forest Research, which conducts forest and tree-related research, officially became agencies of the Forestry Commission in 1996 and 1997 respectively, although the names had been used before these dates. Forest Enterprise and Forest Research were only recognised by 10 % and 9 % respectively.

Although there is no change in the relative ranking of the various organisations, there has been a significant decrease since 2001 in the proportion of adults who recognise the National Trust, the Forestry Commission and the National Forest. However there is a significant increase in the proportion of adults who recognise the Countryside Agency.

Table 5: Respondents who had heard of various organisations[1]

	2003	2001	1999	1997	1995
National Trust (UK)	82	88	88	93	92
Forestry Commission (GB)	63	72	72	77	76
Forest Service (NI)	61	--	--	--	--
Environment Agency (GB)	60	--	--	--	--
Woodland Trust (UK)	49	50	54	56	48
National Forest (GB)	32	41+	20	20	--
English Nature (GB)	30	28	31	28	22
Countryside Agency (GB)	30	23+	41	40	40
Community Forests (GB)	10	11	--	--	--
Forest Enterprise (GB)	10	9	9	8	10
Forest Research (GB)	9	--	--	--	--
None/ Don't know (UK)	7	6	4	3	2

Base: Country in brackets indicates base in 2003; UK (4,120), GB (4,000) or NI (120). Base was GB (2,000) in previous years

+The wording of these responses changed in the year indicated

[1] It should be noted that the level of awareness may be overstated, as some respondents may think they recognised a similar name (e.g. National Forest is similar to 'National Trust' or 'national forest estate')

6.2 Forestry Commission (GB) and Forest Service (NI)

The Forestry Commission is the government department responsible for forestry in Great Britain and the Forest Service is an agency of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in NI.

60 % of respondents correctly identified the Forestry Commission (in GB) and Forest Service (in NI) as a government department or agency (Table 6). Around a quarter thought that it was an independent body, and 12 % said that they did not know of its status.

There is little change in the perception of the Forestry Commission between 1997 and 2003. The question was worded slightly differently before this date.

Table 6: Perception of status of Forestry Commission (GB)/ Forest Service (NI)

	2003	**2001**	**1999**	**1997**	**1995**
Government department or agency	60	62	62	61*	47
Independent body	23	23	21	20	34
Body representing woodland owners	2	2	3	7	7
Private company	3	3	3	--	--
Don't know	12	10	11	12	12

Base: UK adults who were aware of the Forestry Commission/ Forest Service (2,599 in 2003)
* The wording of these responses changed in the year indicated

Respondents who had heard of the Forestry Commission (in GB) or the Forest Service (in NI) were asked where they thought it operated.

The Forestry Commission in GB
Table 7 shows the GB perception of where the Forestry Commission operates. 83 % of adults in GB correctly stated that the Forestry Commission operates in England, 69 % Scotland and 64 % Wales. 44 % incorrectly perceived that the Forestry Commission also operated in NI.

Between 1999 and 2003 there has been increasing awareness that the Forestry Commission operates in Scotland and Wales. There has also been a significant increase in the proportion who incorrectly perceive that it operates in NI.

Table 7: Perception of where Forestry Commission operate (GB only)

Forestry Commission (GB)	**2003**	**2001**	**1999**
England	83	85	83
Scotland	69	67	61
Wales	64	62	59
Northern Ireland	44	44	39
Don’t know	9	6	10

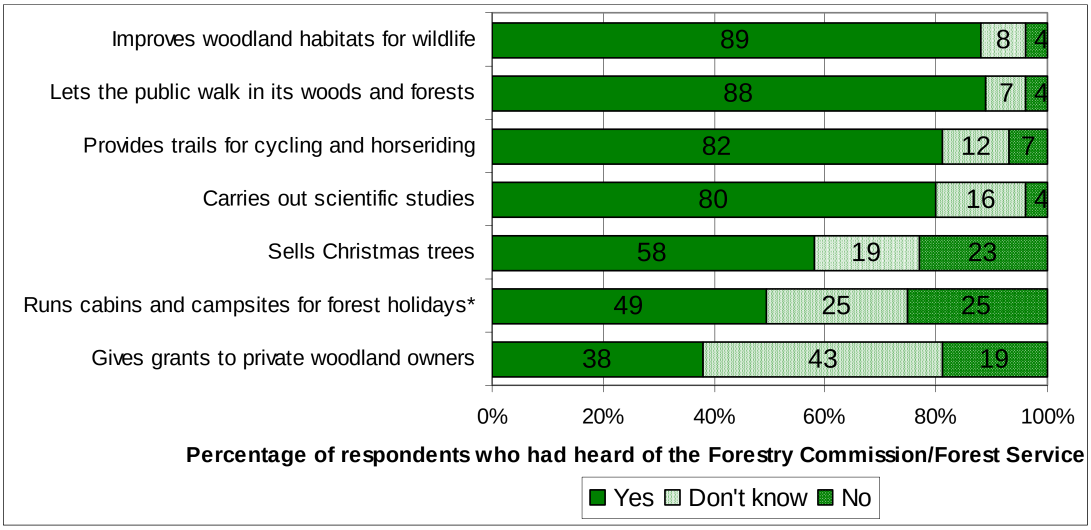
Base: GB respondents who had heard of the Forestry Commission: (2,527 in 2003)

The Forest Service in Northern Ireland
91 % of respondents in NI correctly stated that the Forest Service operates in NI. Around three-quarters of respondents thought that it also operated in England and Scotland and two-thirds thought that it operated in Wales.

6.3 Forestry Commission (GB) and Forest Service (NI) activities

Most respondents showed a fairly good awareness of the range of the Forestry Commission (GB)/ Forest Service (NI) activities[1]. Highest proportions of adults were aware that the Forestry Commission/ Forest Service improve woodland habitats for wildlife (89 %) and let the public walk in their woodlands (88 %). Relatively few adults were aware that the Forestry Commission/ Forest Service give grants to private woodland owners (19 % said 'No'; and 43 % did not know) and run cabins and campsites for forest holidays (25 % said 'No' and 25 % did not know).

Figure 5: Perception of activities carried out by the Forestry Commission (GB) / Forest Service (NI)



Base: Adults who had heard of the Forestry Commission (GB) / Forest Service (NI): 2,599
* In NI the wording was 'Runs campsites and caravan parks'

Comparison with previous surveys
Six of the seven activities were included in previous surveys. Between 1999 and 2003 the proportion of adults who think the Forestry Commission improve woodland habitats for wildlife has increased from 83 % to 89 %. Although there have been significant survey-to-survey changes in the proportion of adults who think the Forestry Commission undertake the various other activities, there is no discernible trend from 1995 to 2003.

[1] It should be noted that the level of awareness may be overstated, as some respondents may have guessed that the 'correct' response to every activity listed was "yes".

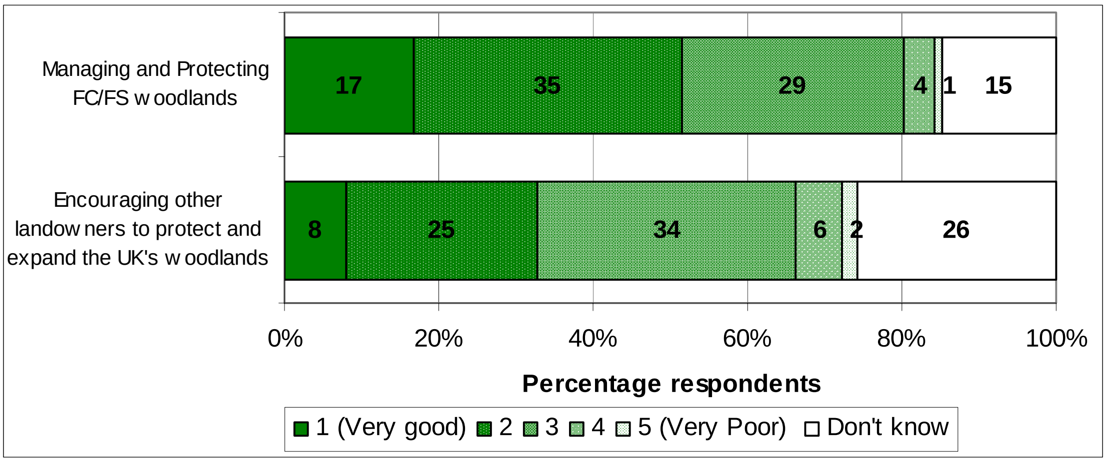
6.4 *Performance of the Forestry Commission (GB) and Forest Service (NI)*

Respondents were also asked to rate the performance of the Forestry Commission (GB)/ Forest Service (NI) in pursuing their main two aims; in managing and protecting Forestry Commission/ Forest Service woodland and in encouraging other landowners to protect and expand the UK's woodlands.

More than half of respondents who were aware of the Forestry Commission/Forest Service gave their performance in managing and protecting their own woodlands a rating of 1 or 2.

However, only a third (33 %) gave ratings of 1 or 2 for the Forestry Commission/ Forest Service's work with other landowners. Over a quarter of respondents said that they could not rate the Forestry Commission on this activity which may imply that fewer people were aware of this role.

Figure 6: Rating of the Forestry Commission (GB)/ Forest Service (NI) for core activities



Base: Adults who had heard of the Forestry Commission (GB) / Forest Service (NI): 2,599

Comparison with previous surveys

There are no significant changes over time in the ratings given for the Forestry Commission performing these activities.

7. Woodland recreation

The UK forestry standard[1] encourages the creation and improvement of public access to woodlands for recreation.

7.1 Access to woodland[2]

Respondents were asked if there was a woodland which they could get to easily without using a car or other transport. 41 % said that they had an accessible woodland, 56 % said that they did not, and 4 % did not know.

7.2 Visits to woodland

Around two-thirds of respondents said that they had visited woodlands for walks, picnics or other recreation in the last few years (Table 8). Although there are significant changes from survey to survey, there is no trend over time in the proportion of respondents who have visited woodland.

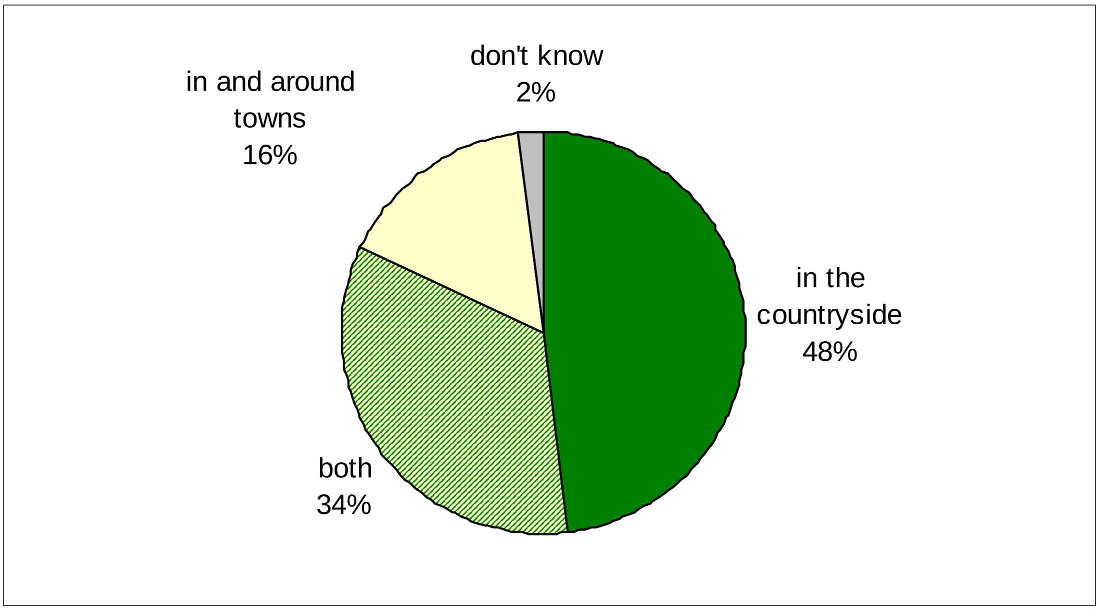
Table 8: Visited woodland in last few years

	2003	2001	1999	1997	1995
Visited woodland in last few years	67	72	67	75	71

Base: UK (4,120) in 2003, GB (2,000) in previous years

A large proportion of woodland visitors said that they had visited woodlands in the countryside (82 % in total) and half said that they had visited woodlands in and around towns (50 % in total). Figure 7 shows that half of woodland visitors have only visited woodlands in the countryside, and 16 % have only visited woodlands in and around towns. Around a third have visited both rural and urban woodlands.

Figure 7: Type of woodland visited (urban/ rural)[2]

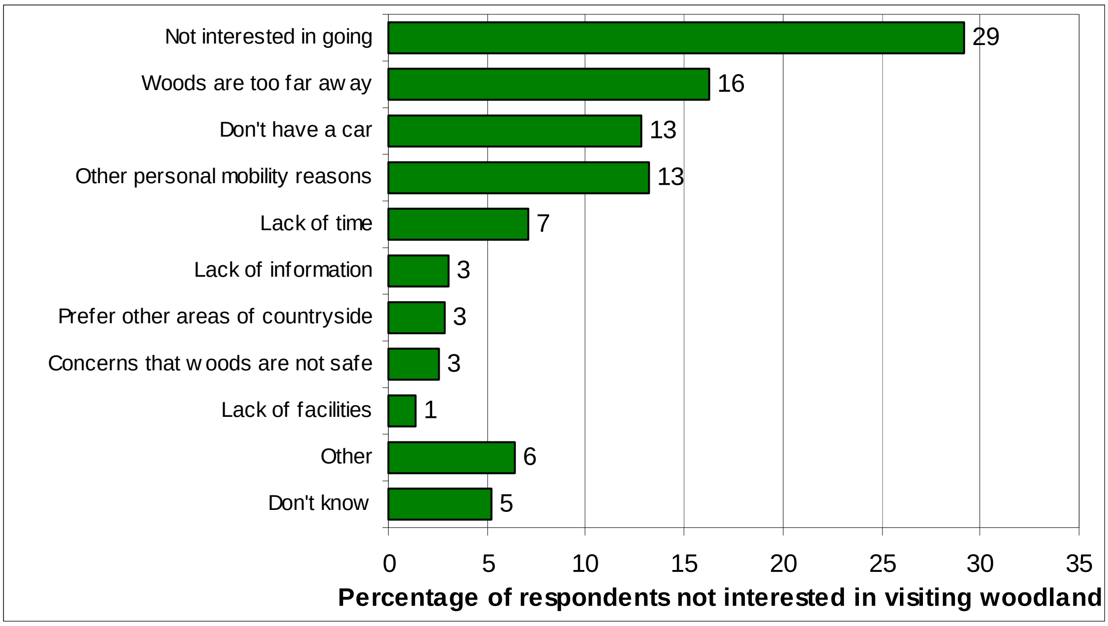


Base: UK adults who had visited woodland in the last few years: 2,781

[1] FC (1998): *The UK forestry standard*, Forestry Commission, Edinburgh
[2] These were new topics in the 2003 survey

Respondents who had not visited woodland in the last few years were asked about the main reason for not visiting (Figure 8). As in previous years, the main reasons for not visiting a forest or woodland were that the respondent was 'not interested in going' (29 % of those who had not visited), that the woods were too far away (16 %), the lack of a car or other personal mobility reasons (13 % each).

Figure 8: Main reason for not visiting forest/woodland in last few years



Base: Adults who had not visited woodland in last few years: 1,339

Comparison with previous surveys

Table 9 shows these results as percentages of all respondents: 33 % of UK adults had not visited woodland in the last few years, 10 % of UK adults said they weren't interested in going to a woodland, 5 % thought that woods were too far from their home, 4 % didn't have a car and 4 % had other personal mobility issues or illness. There is a significant increase in the proportion of UK adults who say they are not interested in going to a woodland (6 % in 1995 to 10 % in 2003).

Table 9: Main reason for not visiting forest/ woodland in last few years – change over time

	2003	2001	1999	1997	1995
Not interested in going	10	7	6	--	6
Woods are too far away	5	4	3	--	6
Don't have a car	4	4	4	--	5
Other personal mobility/illness	4	4	6	--	4
Other	11	7	10	--	8
Total	**33**	**27**	**31**	**--**	**29**

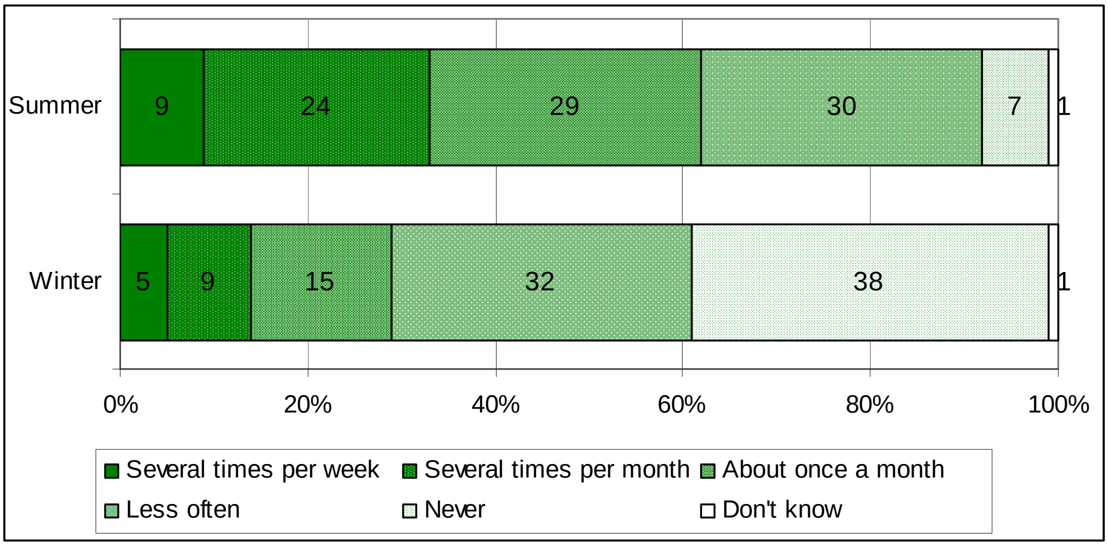
Base: UK (4,120) in 2003, GB (2,000) in previous years
Note: This question was not asked in the 1997 survey

7.3 Frequency of woodland visits

Of the respondents who had visited woodland in the last few years, 62 % of visitors said that they visited at least once a month in the summer of 2002 (Figure 9). Around half as many (29 %) said that they visited at least once a month in the winter of 2002/3.

Around a third of those who had visited woodland in the last few years said that they did not visit during the most recent winter. Only 7 % said that they did not visit during the most recent summer.

Figure 9: Frequency of visit in summer 2002 and winter 2002/3



Base: UK adults who had visited woodland in the last few years: 2,781

By combining the information about those who had visited forests with the frequency of visit information for the last year, it is possible to estimate the proportion of adults who have visited woodland in the last year. 63 % of adults say they visited woodland in the last year, 62 % in the summer of 2002, and 41 % in the winter of 2002/2003.

Comparison with previous surveys

Table 10 shows the frequency of visit in the most recent summer and winter in the 2003 and previous surveys. Overall there is very little change in pattern of visit frequency from 1995 to 2003.

Table 10: Frequency of visit in summer and winter - change over time

Summer						Winter				
2003	2001	1999	1997	1995		2003	2001	1999	1997	1995
9	9	7	8	8	Several times a week	5	5	3	3	4
24	23	22	24	28	Several times a month	9	9	8	7	9
29	27	30	28	29	About once a month	15	13	15	17	14
30	33	34	35	31	Less often	32	33	34	33	36
7	7	6	6	4	Never	38	39	39	40	36

Base: UK adults who had visited woodland in the last few years: 2,781 in 2003

7.4 Total number of woodland visits by adults in the UK

Taking “several times” to mean an average of 2.5 times, and ‘less often’ to mean 2.5 times per year on average, these responses would suggest a total of around 375 million visits in the summer and around 195 million in the winter, a total of 570 million visits to woodland by UK adults aged 16 or over in 2002/2003.

These totals are rather higher than the 1996 and 1998 Day Visits Surveys[1], which reported around 350 million leisure day trips a year from home by GB adults aged 16 or over, but excluded trips from holiday bases.

7.4 Owners of woodlands visited

Woods and forests managed by the National Trust/ National Trust for Scotland and the Forestry Commission/Forest Enterprise (in GB)/ Forest Service (in NI) have been visited by the largest proportion of the respondents (42 % and 40 % respectively of the adults who had visited a woodland in the last few years). Local authority woodlands have also been visited by a third (33 %) of the woodland visitors.

Table 11: Ownership of woodlands visited in last few years

	2003	2001	1999	1997
Forestry Commission / Forest Enterprise (GB) or Forest Service (NI)	40	41	46	51
National Trust/ National Trust for Scotland	*42*	--	--	--
Woodland Trust	*16*	--	--	--
Other voluntary body	*4*	--	--	--
Total any voluntary bodies*	50	41	39	45
Local authorities	33	37	36	34
Private owners	18	20	18	17
None / Don't know	17	11	11	9

Base: UK adults who had visited woodland in the last few years: 2,781
*In previous years only one voluntary category existed for voluntary bodies; ‘Voluntary bodies (e.g. National Trust, Woodland Trust)’

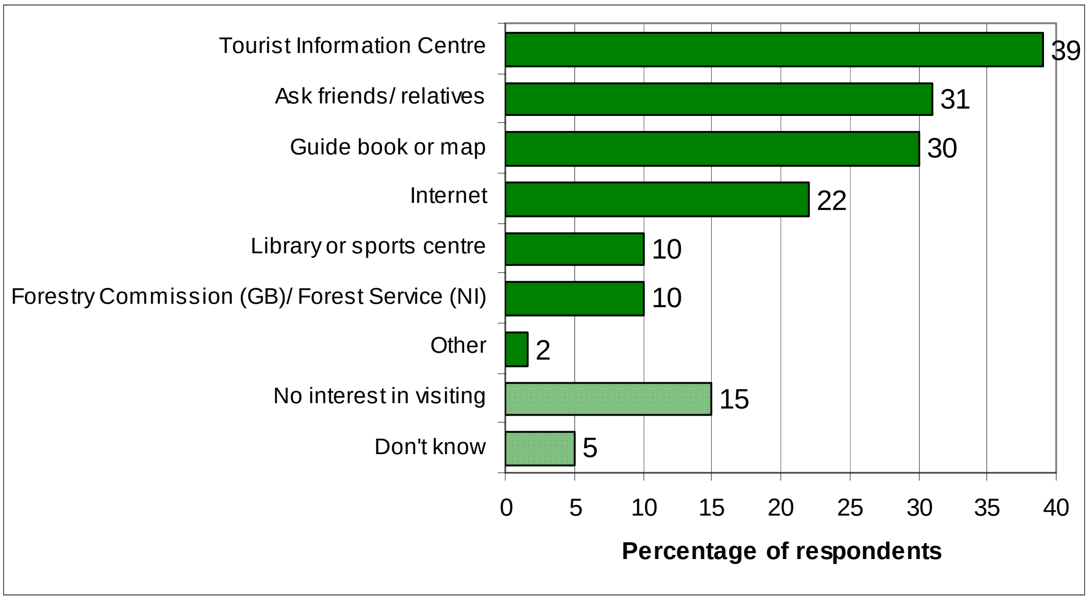
Between 1997 and 2003 there has been a decrease in the proportion of woodland visitors who say they have been to a Forestry Commission/ Forest Enterprise site (51 % in 1997 to 40 % in 2003). In 2003, there also appears to be an increase in the proportion of woodland visitors who say they have visited woodland owned by voluntary bodies (compared with previous surveys). However, it should be noted that the wording of the ‘voluntary body’ response changed between 2001 and 2003.

[1] NCSR (1999), *Leisure day visits, report of the 1998 UK day visits survey*, National Centre for Social Research, London

7.5 Information about woodlands to visit

Tourist Information Centres (39 %), asking friends or relatives (31 %) or a guide book or map (30 %) are the sources of information most likely to be used to find out about a woodland not previously visited (Figure 10). The internet followed as the next most popular source of information (22 %).

Figure 10: Sources of information normally used for woodlands not previously visited



Base: UK (4,120)

Table 12: Sources of information used to find out about a new woodland

	2003	**2001**	**1999**	**1997**
	Normal sources	Main source + other sources		
Tourist Information Centre	39	50	54	60
Ask friends / relatives	31	36	39	45
Guide book or map	30	41	45	51
Internet	22	17	8	3
Library or sports centre	10	17	18	21
Forestry Commission	10	14	17	18
Other	2	3	3	2
No interest in visiting	15	12	13	2
None / Don't know	5	3	4	4

Base: UK (4,120) in 2003, GB (2,000) in previous years. In 1997, this question was only asked to those who had visited woodlands in the last few years

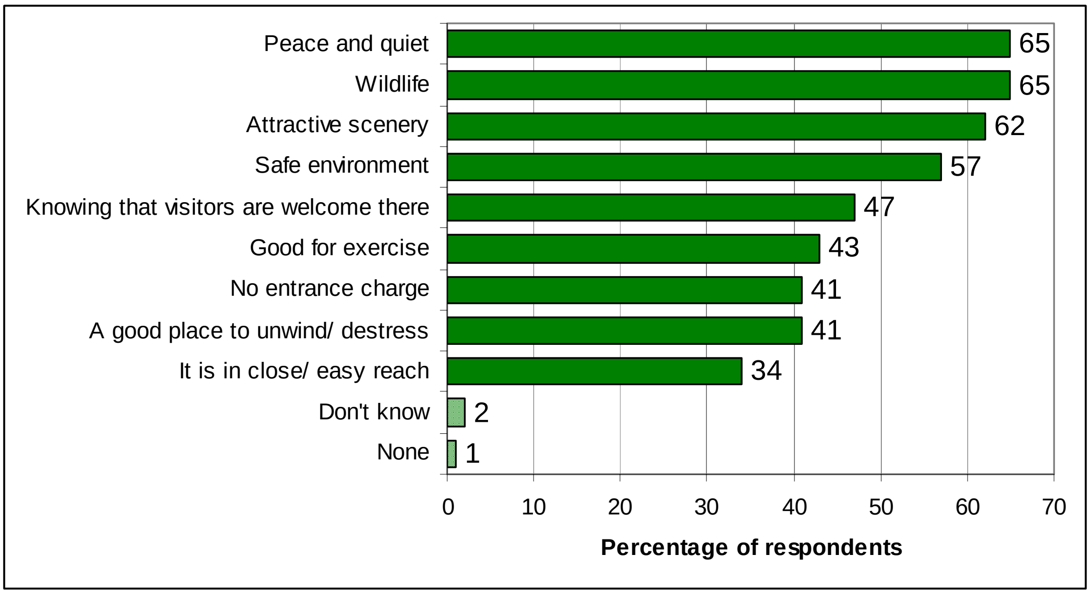
Comparison with previous surveys
In previous surveys the respondent was asked about one main source of information they would use and then about any other sources that they might use. Therefore results from the 2003 survey are not directly comparable with previous surveys (Table 12).

However, it is interesting to note that whilst the top three ranked sources of information have remained the same between 1997 and 2003, the internet has increased from sixth place in 1997 (only 3 % saying they would use the internet) to fourth in 2003 (22 % saying that they would use it).

7.6 Reasons for choosing to visit a woodland[1]

Respondents were asked to identify (from a list) the factors that were important to them when choosing to visit a woodland. Peace and quiet (65 %), wildlife (65 %), attractive scenery (62 %) and a safe environment (57 %) were the most frequently stated reasons.

Figure 11: Factors important when choosing to visit a woodland



Base: All UK adults interested in visiting woodland: 3,057

[1] This was a new topic in the 2003 survey

7.7 Woodland recreation facilities

When visiting woodland for a day out, the facilities that respondents would most like to see are toilets (70 %), a car park (57 %), nature trails (54 %) and picnic areas (53 %).

Between 1999 and 2003 there has been a significant increase in the proportion of respondents who would like to see long walks (from 21 % in 1999 to 31/30 % in 2001/ 2003). There has also been a significant decrease in the proportion of respondents who would like to see signposted walks for all abilities (63 % in 1999 to 51 % in 2003) or information about the woodland (51 % in 1999 to 42 % in 2003).

Table 13: Facilities that respondents would most like to see when visiting a woodland for a day out

	2003	2001	1999
Toilets	70	76	73
Car park	57	59	62
Nature trails	54	57	56
Picnic areas	53	54	58
Signposted walks suitable for all abilities	51	62	63
Information about the woodland	42	45	51
Children's play area	37	39	38
Cafe / restaurant / kiosk	35	39	37
Long walks (min. 2 miles)	30	31	21
Cycle trails	29	28	--
Minimum facilities to ensure peace and quiet	28	27	28
Accessible local staff	19	20	21
Shop with gifts and souvenirs	14	16	15
None / Don't know	8	2	4

Base: UK (4,120) in 2003, GB (2,000) with the exception of those not interested in visiting woodland

Appendix 1: RSGB Random location sampling method

A unique sampling system has been developed by Taylor Nelson Sofres for its own use. Utilising 1991 UK Census small area statistics and the post code address file, GB south of the Caledonian Canal has been divided into 600 areas of equal population. From these 600 areas a master sampling frame of 300 points has been selected to reflect the country's geographical and socio-economic profile. The areas within each Standard Region were stratified into population density bands, and within band in descending order by percentage of population in socio-economic groups I and II.

To maximise the statistical accuracy of Omnibus sampling, sequential waves of fieldwork are allocated systematically across the sampling frame so as to ensure maximum geographical dispersion. The 300 primary sampling units are allocated to 12 sub-samples of 25 points each; with each sub-sample in itself being a representative drawing from the frame. For each wave of Omnibus fieldwork, a set of sub-samples is selected so as to provide the number of sample points required (typically c. 139 for 2,000 interviews). Across sequential waves of fieldwork all sub-samples are systematically worked, thereby reducing the clustering effects on questionnaires asked for two or more consecutive weeks.

Each primary sampling unit is divided into two geographically distinct segments, each containing, as far as possible, equal populations. The segments comprise aggregations of complete postcode sectors. Within each half (known as the A and B halves) postcode sectors have been sorted by the percentage of the population in socio-economic groups II and I. One postcode sector from each primary sampling unit is selected for each Omnibus, alternating on successive selections between the A and B halves of the primary sampling unit again to reduce clustering effects. For each wave of interviewing each interviewer is supplied with two blocks of 70 addresses drawn from different parts of the sector. Addresses are contacted systematically with three doors being left after each successful interview.

To ensure a balanced sample of adults within effective contacted addresses a quota is set by sex (male, female housewife, female non-housewife); within female housewife, by presence of children and working status; and within men, by working status.

As with all multi-stage sample designs, there are effects on the magnitude of the standard error of estimates that arise from a number of sources. The greatest contributors are caused negatively by the effects of clustering and weighting and positively by the effects of stratification. These are collectively known as 'design effects'. The 'design factor' is used to estimated the ratio of the standard error of these complex sample estimates to that of a simple random sample of the same size. Design factors vary from one variable to another depending on the inter-correlations that exist between that variable and the causes of variation in the size of the standard error. For example social grade tends to be correlated between households in small geographical areas and thus variables that are correlated with social grade (e.g. visits to woodland) will have larger design factors. Such design factors need to be individually calculated from actual data to obtain accurate estimates for any given variable. Common practice is the use of a 'modal' value for application to estimates. For the Omnibus Taylor Nelson Sofres recommend a design factor of 1.5 be applied to the calculation of confidence limits and when testing for significance.

Appendix 2: UK Questionnaire[1]

Q1.	**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?** (Multi choice) • 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 woodland • Restoration of ancient or native woodland • Creation of new native woodlands • Selling public woodlands • Public rights of access to woodlands • Protests about roads or other developments on woodlands • Labelling/certification of wood products • Timber transport • None of these
Q2.	**Which of these promotions have you heard of?** • 'Wood for Good' or other promotions for timber uses and products • Autumn Colours *(GB only)* • Heritage Trees *(GB only)* • National Tree Week • Walk in the Woods *(GB only)* • None
Q3.	**In the UK, public money is given to support forestry, the planting and management of all types and sizes of forests and woods, because it is believed to be of public benefit. From this list, please tell me which of the following reasons are good reasons to support forestry in this way?** (Multi choice) • To support the economy in rural areas • To help rural tourism • To provide timber for sawmills and wood processing • To provide wood as a renewable fuel • So that the UK can buy less wood products from abroad • To make woods more accessible to all in the community • To help prevent the "greenhouse effect" and global warming • To provide places for wildlife to live • To provide places to visit and walk in • To provide places to cycle or ride horses • To improve the countryside landscape • To create pleasant settings for developments around towns • To restore former industrial land • None

[1] Questionnaire wording differed slightly between GB and Northern Ireland. These differences are detailed in individual questions

Q4.	**On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is very good and 5 is very poor, how good do you think UK forestry is at ...** • Providing opportunities for walking • Protecting the environment • Providing the UK's timber, board and paper needs • Providing homes for birds and other animals • Supporting the economy in rural areas **..and on the same scale, how would you rate the overall performance of UK forestry?**
Q5.	**In the last 20 years, do you think the amount of woodland in the UK has been increasing or decreasing?** • Increasing • Decreasing • Staying about the same
Q6.	**a. Have you ever been consulted about plans for creating, managing or using woodlands in your area?** YES NO **b. Would you like to be consulted (again) about plans for creating, managing or using woodlands in your area?** YES NO
Q7.	**a. Would you like to have more or less woodland in this part of the country?** • More • Neither more nor less *(skip to Q8)* • Less *(skip to Q8)* **b. How much more woodland: a little more, half as much again or more than that?** • A little more • About half as much again • More than that
Q8.	**a. Have you been shopping for wood products at all in the last few years?** YES NO (*skip to Q9)* **b. Have you ever seen either of these logos on wood products such as furniture?** [show symbols] • FSC YES/NO • PEFC YES/NO • None

Q9.	**Which of these have you heard of?** (Multi choice) • Countryside Agency (GB only) • English Nature (GB only) • Forestry Commission (GB only) *- if not, then skip to Q12 in GB* • Forest Enterprise (GB only) • Forest Research (GB only) • Forest Service *– if not then skip to Q12 in NI* • National Trust • Woodland Trust • National Forest (GB only) • Community Forests (GB only) • Tree Wardens • Environment Agency (GB only) • None
Q10.	**Thinking about the Forestry Commission (GB)/ Forest Service (NI),** **do you think that it is ...** • A government department or agency • An independent body • A body representing private woodland owners • A private company **.. and which part or parts of the United Kingdom do you think that it works in?** (Multi choice) • England • Scotland • Wales • Northern Ireland
Q11.	**I am now going to read out a number of forestry activities and for each one I would like you to say whether you think it is something done by the Forestry Commission (GB)/ Forest Serivce (NI).** **So do you think the Forestry Commission (GB)/ Forest Serivce (NI) ...** • Lets the public walk in its woods and forests • Provides trails for cycling and horse-riding • Improves woodland habitats for wildlife • Runs cabins and campsites for forest holidays (GB only) • Runs campsites and caravan parks (NI only) • Sells Christmas trees • Gives grants for to private woodland owners • Carries out scientific studies **On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very good and 5 is very poor, how would you rate the Forestry Commission's (GB)/ Forest Service's (NI) overall performance in..** • Managing and protecting Forestry Commission (GB)/ Forest Service (NI) woodlands • Encouraging other landowners to protect and expand the UK's woodlands

Q12.	**Are there any forests or woodlands which you can get to easily, without using a car or other transport?** YES NO
Q13.	**a. In the last few years, have you visited forests or woodlands for walks, picnics or other recreation?** YES, *- then skip to Q13c* NO **b. What is the main reason why you have not visited forests or woodlands for walks, picnics or other recreation?** *(then skip to Q17)* • Not interested in going *(If this response, skip to Q19 instead of Q17)* • Don't have a car • 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 • Other (specify) **c. Did you visit woodlands in the countryside or woodlands in and around towns or both?** • Woodlands in the countryside • Woodlands in and around towns • Both
Q14.	**How frequently did you visit forests and woodlands last summer, i.e. between April and September 2002?** • Several times per week • Several times per month • About once a month • Less often • Never
Q15.	**And how often this winter, i.e. since October 2002?** • Several times per week • Several times per month • About once a month • Less often • Never

Q16.	**Which of these types of woodland owners do you think owns any of the forests or woodlands you have visited in the last few years?** (Multi choice) • Local authorities • National Trust/ National Trust for Scotland • Woodland Trust • Other voluntary bodies • Forestry Commission/Forest Enterprise (GB only) • Forest Service (NI only) • Environment and Heritage Service (NI only) • Private owners • None
Q17.	**If you were thinking about visiting forests or woodlands that you had not visited before, which of the following sources of information would you normally use?** (Multi choice) • Ask friends/relatives • Guide book or map • Forestry Commission (GB)/ Forest Service (NI) • Tourist Information Centre • Internet • Library or sports centre • Other (specify) • No interest in visiting - *Skip to Q19*
Q18.	**In choosing to visit a woodland, which of these are important to you?** (Multi choice) • It is in close/ easy reach • Knowing that visitors are welcome there • Attractive scenery • Wildlife • Peace and quiet • A good place to unwind / destress • Good for exercise • Safe environment • No entrance charge • None

Q19.	**If you were going to a woodland for a day out, which of these facilities would you like to see there?** (Multi choice) • Signposted walks suitable for all abilities • Long walks (min. 2 miles) • Car park • Information about the woodland • Minimum facilities to ensure peace and quiet • Nature trails • Cycle trails • Picnic areas • Children's play area • Toilets • Cafe or restaurant or kiosk • Shop with gifts and souvenirs • Accessible local staff • None
Q20.	**Do you own or have the use of a car at all?** YES NO
Q21.	**Do you have any long term illness, health problems or disability which limits your daily activities or the work you can do?** YES NO
Q22.	**And which of these best describes your ethnic origin? (GB only)** White West Indian or Guyanese Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Chinese African Arab Other (please specify)