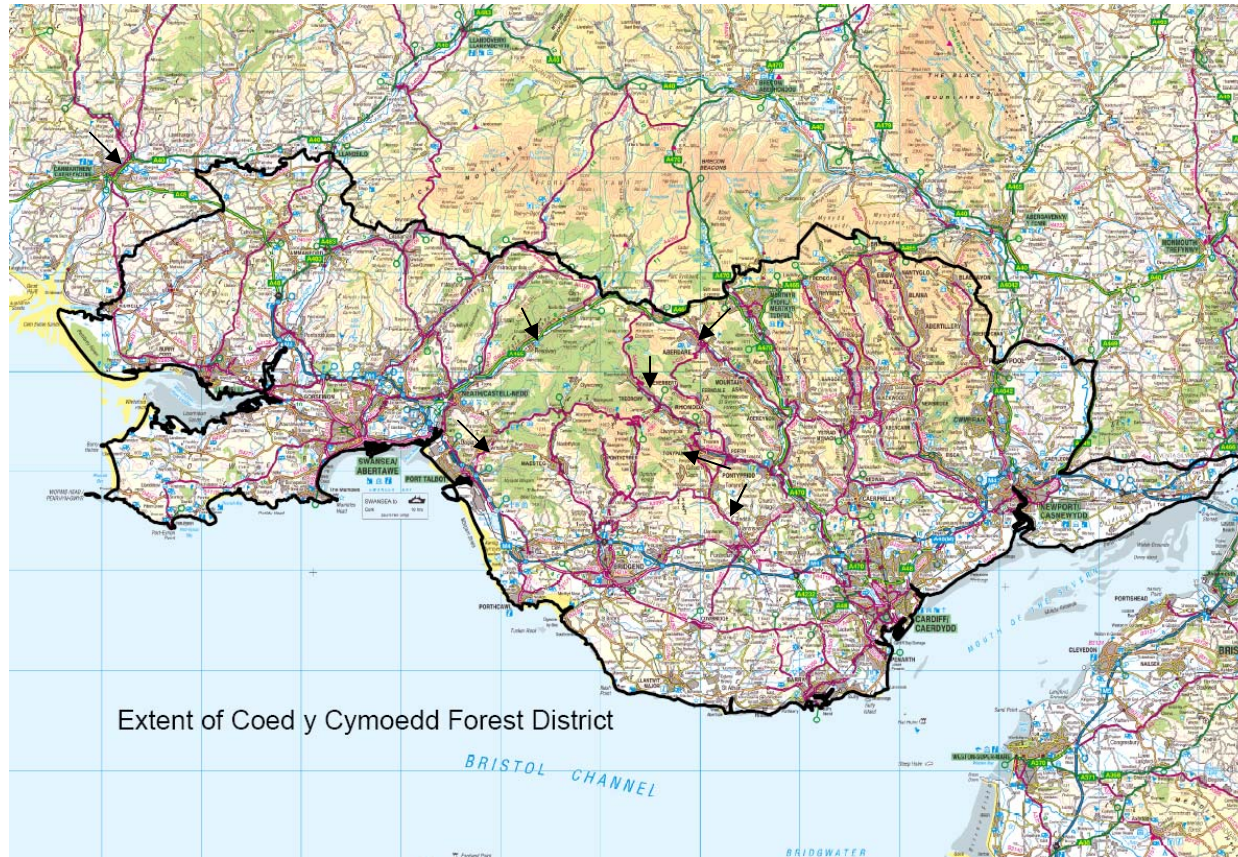


The uneasy Relationship between people and their trees

Wildfires in Wales

Matthew Jollands
Forest Research



Demonstrates a Clear Research need, identified by Forestry Commission Wales in Mid 00's.

Desired outcomes: to systematically gather information on wildfires, stakeholder perceptions of the problem, information on perpetrators, and to analyse and evaluate intervention and management measures currently in place.



- Responding to climate change
- Woodlands for people
- A competitive and integrated forest sector
- Environmental quality

‘It’s mixed up, commercial and recreation, more closely together. It’s not pleasant.’

-Questionnaire Respondent



- Access issues
- Issues of firesetting
- Firefighting issues
- Methods of using of land
- Camping
- Mountain Biking
- Fly-tipping
- 4x4/ Off-roading
- Neighbour conflicts



“Did you ever light a fire on the mountain?”

“No, I never did that”

“Are you sure? Be honest – he won’t report you, he’s [the researcher] not a policeman or anything”

“Well yeah, but it was only campfires and that”

-Exchange between youth worker and young person, Aberdare

“The council fair play, have been great, but whenever I ring the forestry I don’t get anything”

-Resident in fire-prone area concerned about proximity of gorse to house

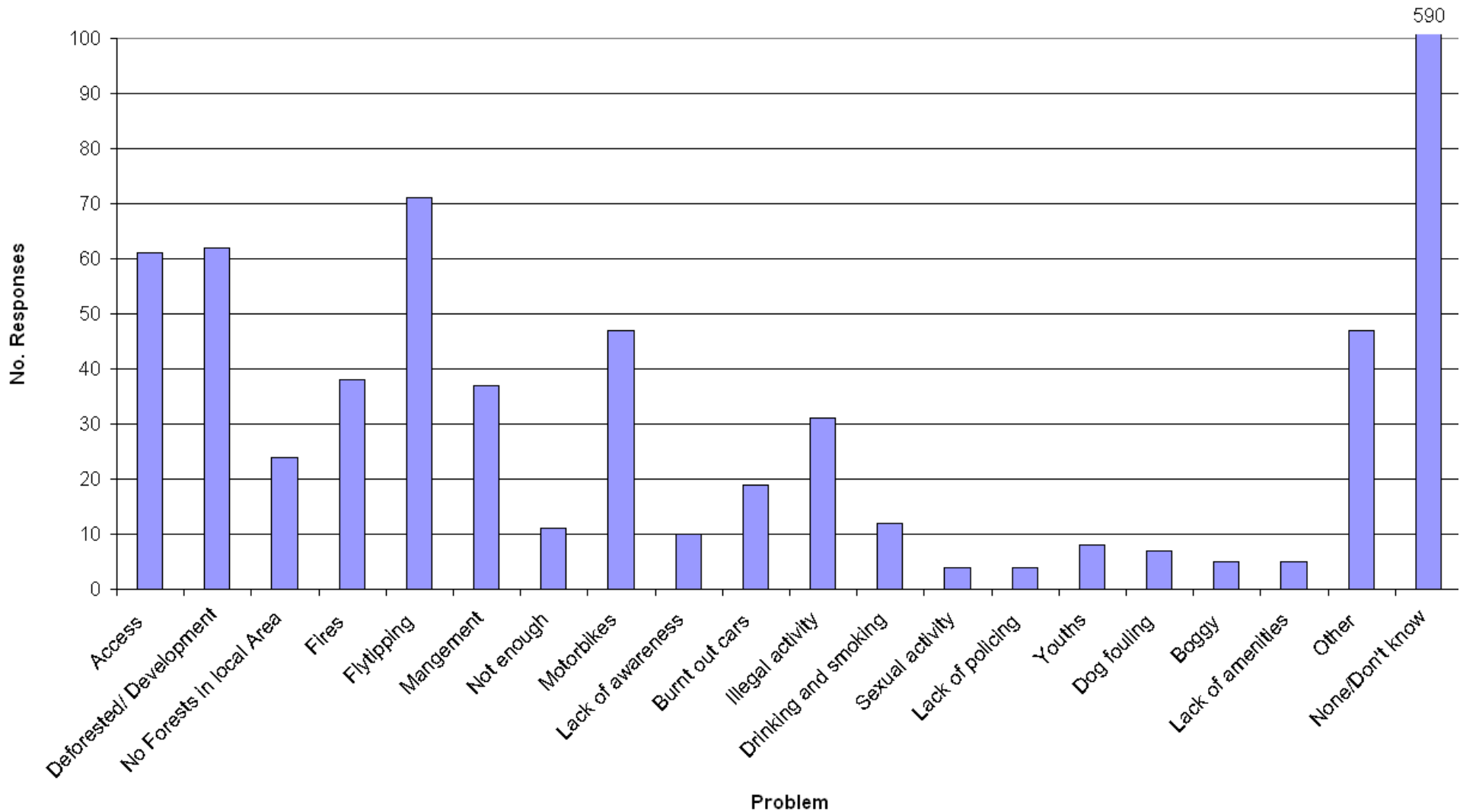
“We never see the forestry up on the mountain when we’re fighting fire”

“You never remove brash, they get tinder dry, and they’re a hazard to us”

- Fire Service Personnel



Problems in local forests





Environmental

Social

Management

Criminal

Contentment

And possibly the biggest category: Ignorance/ No problems (590/1093)



They stopped you using motorcycles in them - as apparently you are destroying common land
-Questionnaire Respondent

At the moment it seems to be just the motorcyclists, they seem to go up there on their bikes 'cause they're not allowed to go on the common. Last time we went up there they'd just turfed the place up, it was a terrible mess.
-Questionnaire Respondent



“So many different people want to use it e.g. horse riding
- pleasing everyone is an issue”
- Questionnaire respondent



Do people appear to care about wildfires?

Researcher: "Have you ever seen a wildfire?"

Respondent 1: "No, they happen in America don't they?"

Respondent 2: "Yeah you have, you saw Baglan mountain"

Respondent 1: "oh, that – yeah I seen that before, you mean that do you?"

- Conversation at 'Disco Inferno', Cwmafan.

What do people think are the main causes of ignition?

I remember a fire over that way, that was a while ago, but I think that it was an accident, maybe a cigarette or something

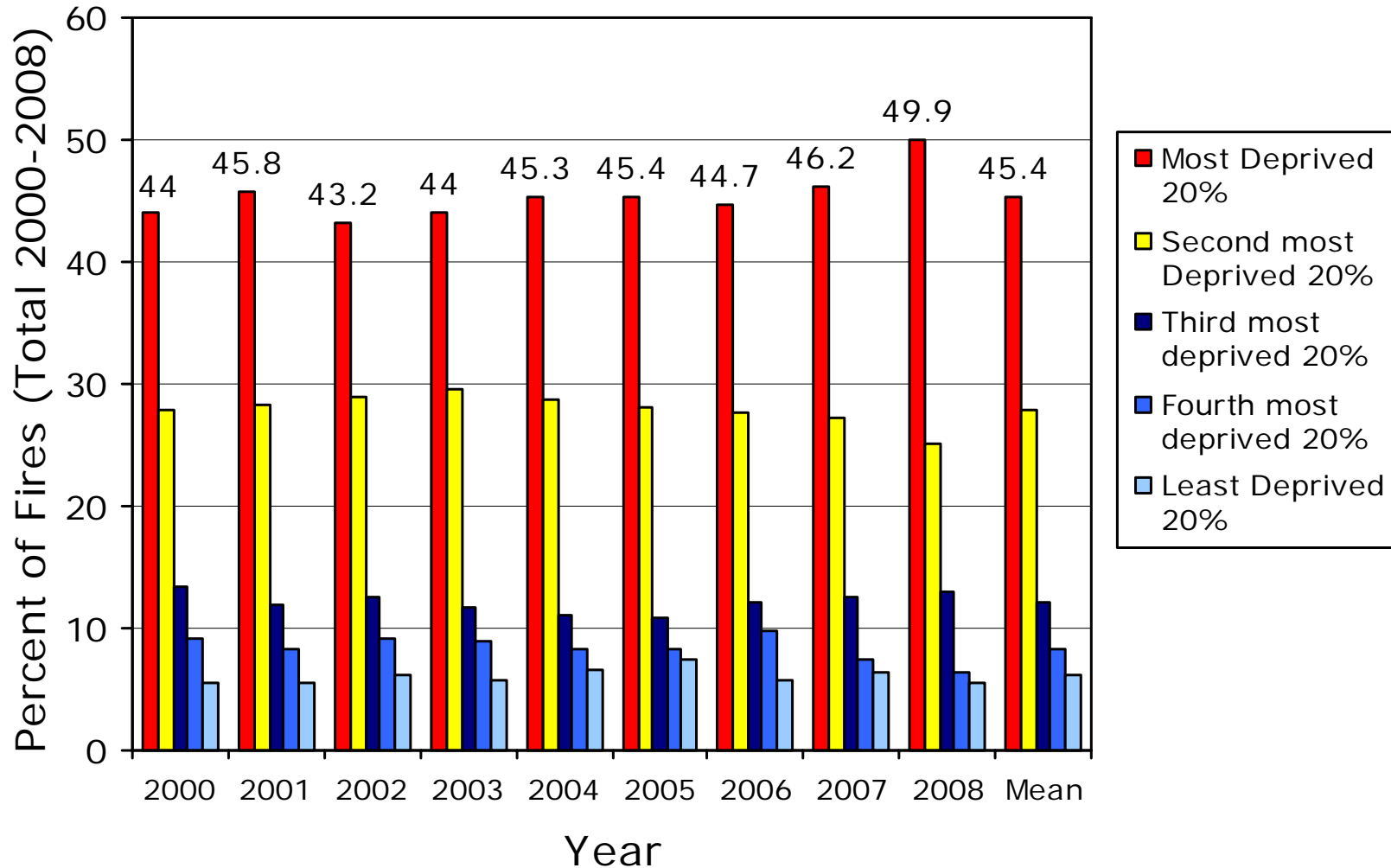
- 18 year old man Aberdare



Q13. Have you seen or heard any information, publicity or campaigns focussed on wildfires in your local area? ^a

Q5. Would you consider South Wales to have a problem with wildfires? Crosstabulation

		Q5. Would you consider South Wales to have a problem with wildfires?			Total	
		Yes	No	Don't know		
Q13. Have you seen or heard any information, publicity or campaigns focussed on wildfires in your local area?	Yes	Count	79	54	0	133
			59.4%	40.6%	.0%	100.0%
	No	Count	256	609	25	890
			28.8%	68.4%	2.8%	100.0%
	Don't know	Count	1	0	0	1
			100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%



Correlation of .328 significant to the 0.01 level



- Forests and Forest Users
 - Conflict, business use and community use
- Governance Issues
 - Access, design planning, community engagement
- Can agreement be forged, and, *should* this be an aim?