

Activities and Events in England's Woodland

'Monitoring and Evaluating Quality of Life' An Annex Report

March 2011

Kieron Doick & Jake Morris



Contents

Chapter	Chapter title	Page
1.	Introduction	1
2.	National event profile	3
3.	Volunteering	5
4.	Diversity profiles	
	4.1 Gender and age	7
	4.2 Disability	8
	4.3 Ethnicity	9
5.	Quality of experience	11
	Appendix	13

For more information contact Kieron Doick <u>kieron.doick@forestry.gsi.gov.uk</u> Jake Morris <u>jake.morris@forestry.gsi.gov.uk</u>



1. Introduction

This annex report presents data gathered within the 'Activities and Events Database' by Forestry Commission (FC) staff as part of their day-to-day management of FC ranger and 3rd-party led group events held on the public forest estate. The activities and events database was developed within the 3-year 'Monitoring and Evaluating Quality of Life' project, undertaken by Forest Research.

The Monitoring and Evaluating Quality of Life project was commission by Forestry Commission England (FCE) in response to FCE's Corporate Plan (2008-2011) which outlined a range of targets relating to 'Quality of Place' and 'Quality of Life'. The targets included increasing the provision of accessible woodland (**Target 1**), and increasing the number of visits to and engagement with local woodland, quality of experience, and the personal and social benefits that people derive through woodland visits (**Target 2**). The Monitoring and Evaluating Quality of Life project aims to deliver a framework to measure performance against these targets by *inter alia*:

- developing and testing an effective methodology (including a suite of tools) for measuring the character and quality of visitor experience on these sites
- analysing activity and experience on the sample sites.

The activities and events database is one of the tools delivered within the Monitoring and Evaluating Quality of Life project to measure the character and quality of visitor's experience to the public forest estate. For further information on the Monitoring and Evaluating Quality of Life project see Morris and Doick (2011)¹.

The Activities and Events Database was implemented across a suite of sites:

1. **Bentley Community Woodland** in Doncaster (managed by the Sherwood Forest District on behalf of the Land Trust) and a 'Monitoring and Evaluating Quality of Life' project Flagship site (Background information for the Flagship sites is provided in the Baseline report; Morris and Doick, 2009)².

(pto)

_

¹ Morris, J., Doick, K. (2011). Monitoring and Evaluating Quality of Life. Final Report. March 2011. A report to Forestry Commission England. Forest Research, Farnham.

² Morris, J., Doick, K. (2009). Monitoring and Evaluating Quality of Life for CSR 07. Final annual report 2008/9 and Deliverable 7.1.1 to Forestry Commission England. Forest Research, Farnham.

Activities & Events in England's Woodlands



- 2. Birches Valley Forest Centre in Cannock Chase (West Midlands District). A 'Monitoring and Evaluating Quality of Life' project Flagship site, and included the locations:
- Education Area
- Fairoak Valley
- Go Ape
- Heritage Trail
- Lady Hill
- Pingleslade
- Route to health

- Swinnerton Cycles Forest Centre
- Tackeroo
- The Acorn Room
- The Hideaway
- The Pinecone Room
- The Tree House

- Meeting Room
- Birches Valley Forest Café
- Mountain Bike Routes
- Christmas Tree Sales Site.
- 3. Ingrebourne Hill Community Woodland in London Borough of Havering (East Anglia Forest District) and a 'Monitoring and Evaluating Quality of Life' Flagship site.
- 4. Westonbirt National Arboretum in Gloucestershire.
- 5. Cannock Chase Forest (West Midlands Forest District), including the sites:
- Badger HIII
- Beaudesert
- Chetwyn Coppice
- Dimmingsdale
- Lichfield Block
- Rawnsley

- Rifle Ranger Corner
- Rosliston
- Sense Valley
- Stile Cop
- White House Block
- Frogshall

- Threpwood
- Castle Ring
- Hanchurch Woods
- Swynnerton Old Park
- Pepperslade
- Baggots.
- 6. Forestry Commission Thames Beat (covering the Thames Chase Community Forest) in East London (East Anglia Forest District), including the sites:
- Bonnetts Wood
- Folkes Lane Woodland
- Cely Woods
- Berwick Glades
- Harold Court Woods
- Mardyke Woods
- Pages Wood

- Thames Chase Forest Centre
- Tylers Wood
- Jeskyns (in Kent).
- 7. Wyre Forest in Worcestershire and Shropshire (West Midlands Forest District).
- 8. Thetford Forest in East Anglia (East Anglia Forest District) (and in 2011, Rendlesham Wood).

In November 2010, copies of the activities and events databases from Bentley Community Woodland, Birches Valley Forest Centre, Ingrebourne Hill Community Woodland, Westonbirt National Arboretum, Cannock Chase, FC-Thames Beat, Wyre Forest and Thetford Forest were amalgamated into a single database for reporting. This report presents data collected during the period: 1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010.



2. National event profile

The events database categories events according to whether they are a ranger-led event or a self-led group activity (known as a 'permission') and, secondly, whether the primary focus is community, education or recreation.

A community event aims to encourage participation at, feedback or consultation on a site; it may have an engagement plan with defined objectives. Specific types of community event identified within the activities and events database are: conservation management, environmental education, forest experience, health activities, site awareness raising, training, volunteering, or 'other'. Specific types of community permissions identified within the activities and events database are: music, arts, spiritual/ religious, fundraising, cultural, heritage, educational visit, organised walk, theatrical, training/skills, wildlife/ecological study, fungal foray and 'other'.

An education event aims to disseminate specific knowledge; it may have an education or lesson plan, with associated learning aims, objectives and/or outcomes, and they are usually held for educational establishments or similar groups. Specific types of education events identified within the activities and events database are: programmed - full day, programmed - half day, illustrated talk, in-school visit, promoted, spontaneous, community forest, forest school, and 'other'. Specific types of education permissions identified within the activities and events database are: school, college/FE, community group, youth groups, education body, volunteer, youth offender, and 'other'.

A recreation event aims to promote and/or encourage participation in sports or leisure activities; it may have an event plan to manage people safely for an enjoyable visit. Specific types of recreation events identified within the activities and events database are: health, well-being, sport, animal event, conservation management, education/learning, skills/training, hobbies, and 'other'. Specific types of recreation permissions identified within the activities and events database are: sport, physical activity, motoring, military, police, equestrian event, dog event, and 'other'.

The activities and events database also records information on 'Licenced' activities, which includes large-scale concerts through to small-scale wildlife monitoring studies. Specific types of 'licence' event categorised in the activities and events database are: music-concert, motoring, filming/television, sporting permissions, grazing, archery, beehives, cycle hire/franchise, and 'other'.

The data demonstrates that **973 activities and events were held between 1**st **November 2009 and 31**st **October 2010, with around 48,500 participants** (Table 1). The number of events per office per quarter ranged from 1-89; diversity of event type reflect local differences in delivery objectives, staff, resourcing and site constraints.



Table 1: National event profile (1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010)

			No.		No.		No.		No.		
Office	Event Type	Q1	of Part. (Q1)	Q2	of Part. (Q2)	Q3	of Part. (Q3)	Q4	of Part. (Q4)	Total Events	Total Participants
	Event - community	22	740	22	311	16	83	16	146	76	1,280
0 11	Event - education	2	56	2	36	15	204	6	214	25	510
South Yorkshire	Event - recreation	3	22	17	242	1	33	9	51	30	348
Coal Fields	Permission - community Permission - education							2	61	2	61
	Permission - recreation			1	23			1	38	2	61
	Event - community	8	258	6	2,806	1	7	7	258	22	3,329
	Event - education		0	2	44					2	44
Thames	Event - recreation	4	419	2	511					6	930
Beat	Permission - community	3	250	1	34	1	25	1	80	6	389
	Permission - education	1	44							1	44
	Permission - recreation			1	124	2	1,155	0	0	3	1,279
	Event - community			2	15	0	0	1	20	3	35
	Event - education	89	3,822	59	2,344	18	822	23	992	189	7,980
0 1	Event - recreation							1	45	1	45
Cannock Chase	Licence 1	1	10	1	10					2	20
Chase	Permission - community	2	37	4	325	7	41	3	45	16	448
	Permission - education	1	28	2	26	1	130			4	184
	Permission - recreation	9	2,571	10	796	6	1,498	25	2,850	50	7,715
	Event - community										
Westonbirt National	Event - education Event - recreation	40	2,044	23	1,175	42	1,747	18	1,496	123	6,462
Arboretum	Permission - community			1	18	2	172			3	190
7 ii boi cium	Permission - education	18	970	20	1,098	46	2,078	9	238	93	4,384
	Permission - recreation							1	85	1	85
	Event - community	12	186	20	830	5	62	2	30	39	1,108
	Event - education	65	2,423	45	1,321	21	675	10	455	141	4,874
	Event - recreation	6	170	9	255	4	1,032			19	1,457
Wyre Forest	Licence	4	1							4	1
	Permission - community	22	613	1	1	1	150			24	764
	Permission - education	2	33							2	33
	Permission - recreation	2	35							2	35
	Event - community										
	Event - education	1	22	2	37	1	15			4	74
Thetford	Event - recreation										
Forest	Permission - community										
	Permission - education	31	1,895	35	1,931	4	277	7	281	77	4,384
	Permission - recreation	٥.	.,570	30	.,,,,,,	1	30	•	_0.	1	30
	. camission rootoution						- 50			973	48,583

Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4: quarters of the reporting period. No. of Part. = number of participants registered, counted by ranger or organiser. ¹ = Licence only reported where used by an office.



3. Volunteering

Volunteering is measured two ways through the activities and events database:

- number of events promoting volunteering on site and attendance at these events
- contribution of volunteers in the running of events (ranger-led and self-led group events).

The national activities and events database demonstrates that **volunteers were involved in the running of 455** of the 973 **(47%) activities and events** held between 1st November 2009 and 31st October 2010 (Table 2). The total number of volunteers involved in this period was 1,647.

The contribution made by the volunteers, in this reporting period, was 689 person-days (calculated based upon a 7.4 hr working day / 37 hr working week). In monetary terms, the value of this volunteering contribution equates to £34,450, based upon the Heritage Lottery Fund's 'Guidance for Landscape Partnerships' unskilled labour rate of £50 a day.

(pto)



Table 2: Summary of national volunteering at activities and events (1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010)

Office name	Туре	Specific type	No. of volunteers involved	Practical voluntary work (days)	Total No. of events figure based on	Total No. of these type of events
South Yorkshire	Event - community	Conservation Management	74	30.0	19	76
Coal Fields	Event - recreation	Health	5	1.4	20	30
	Event -	Other	14	11.4	10	22
	community	Volunteering	106	55.8	12	22
	Event -	Other	1	0.3	1	2
	education	Skills/training	1	0.5	1	Z
Thames Beat	Permission - community	Other	32	17.3	2	6
	Permission - education	School	2	1.4	1	1
	Permission - recreation	Physical activity	28	7.6	3	3
	Permission -	Fundraising	7	28.0	1	
	community	Other	2	44.0	5	3
Cannock Chase	community	Training/skills	4	3.2	2	
Calliock Chase	Permission -	Military	34		2	
	recreation	Physical activity	2	0.9	41	50
	recreation	Sport	10	20.0	1	
		In-school visit	2	1.9	6	
Westonbirt National	Event - education	Programmed - full day	27	11.9	60	123
Arboretum	cudcation	Programmed - half day	37	12.0	56	
	Event -	Conservation Management	23	6.2	2	
	community	Environmental Education	15	4.9	5	39
		Other	35	11.5	13	
Wyre Forest	Event -	Programmed - full day	558	342.0	91	141
	education	Programmed - half day	110	37.0	15	171
	Event - recreation	Education/ Learning	4	1.1	4	19
	Event -	Forest School	7	1.9	3	4
	education	Illustrated talk	5	2.7	1	7
Thetford	Permission -	Other	10		3	77
motioid	education	School	472	34.0	74	11
	Permission - recreation	Other	20		1	1
			1,647	689	455	597

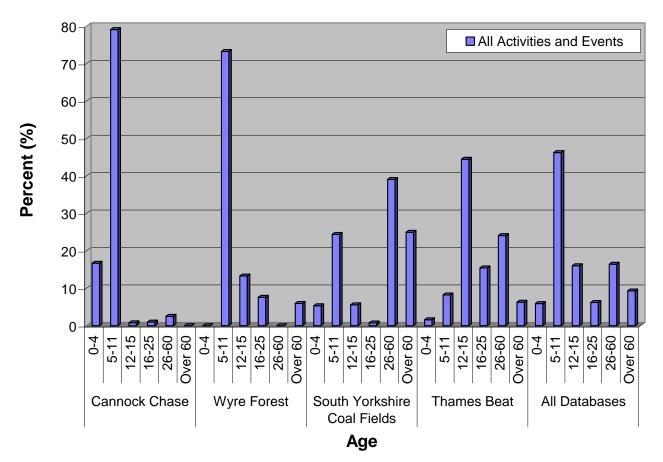
4. Diversity profiles

4.1 Gender and age

Gender and age diversity data was collected across a range of events by the offices: Cannock Chase, Wyre Forest, S. Yorkshire Coalfields and Thames Beat (see Appendix). Of all the events held at these offices, gender and age diversity data was collected for around 20% of the events. The data demonstrates that gender diversity was 53:47% (Male: Female; Cannock Chase), 41:59% (Wyre Forest), 41:59% (South Yorkshire Coal Fields), 48:52% (Thames Beat) and 48:52% (National average), in this reporting period.

Age diversity data of participants to activities and events (sum total) in the period 1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010 is presented in Figure 1. For each office, the age profiles of attendees is indicative of the major types of events held and permissions granted. For example, Cannock Chase and Wyre Forest offices deliver mostly education events to schools; South Yorkshire Coal Fields office focus on community participation on their sites and the health agenda, and, similarly, Thames Beat focus on community and recreational events, which attract a wide range of participants from the community.

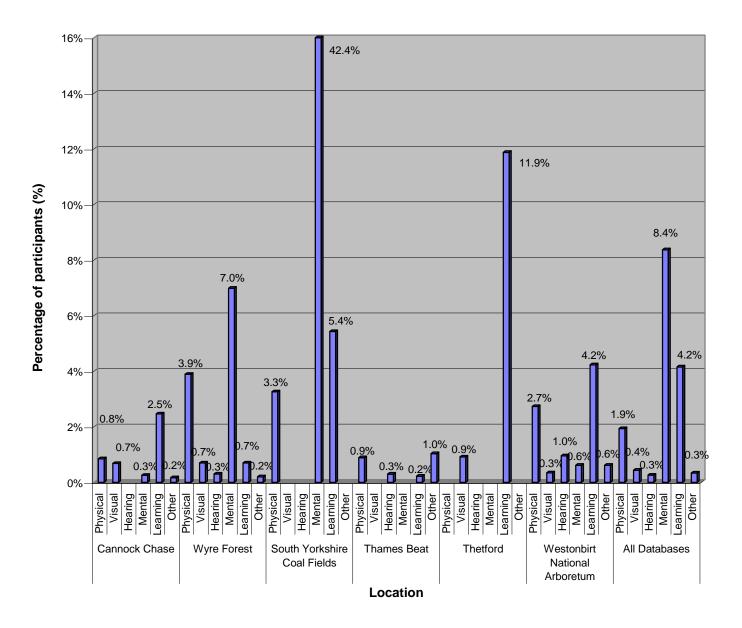
Figure 1. Age diversity of participants at activities and events between 1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010.



4.2 Disability

Disability diversity data was gathered at around 10% of activities and events held at: Cannock, Wyre, South Yorkshire Coalfields, Thames Beat, Thetford and Westonbirt; the data is presented in Figure 2. The data demonstrates that, nationally, around 0.3% of attendees to activities and events had a visual, hearing or 'other' disability, 1.9% had a physical disability, 4.2% had a learning disability, and 8.4% had mental disability (figures are percentage of total number of participants to all activities and events held by each office, adjusted for the percentage of events at which disability was monitored).

Figure 2. Disability diversity (national events profile) between 1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010.





4.3 Ethnicity

The ethnicity of participants to activities and events was monitored at 17% of Cannock Chase events; 11% of Wyre Forest events; 89% of South Yorkshire Coal Fields events; 82% of Thames Beat events; 9% of Thetford events, and 25% of Westonbirt events. The diversity of participants to the events where ethnicity diversity was monitored is presented in Figure 3 (on page 10).

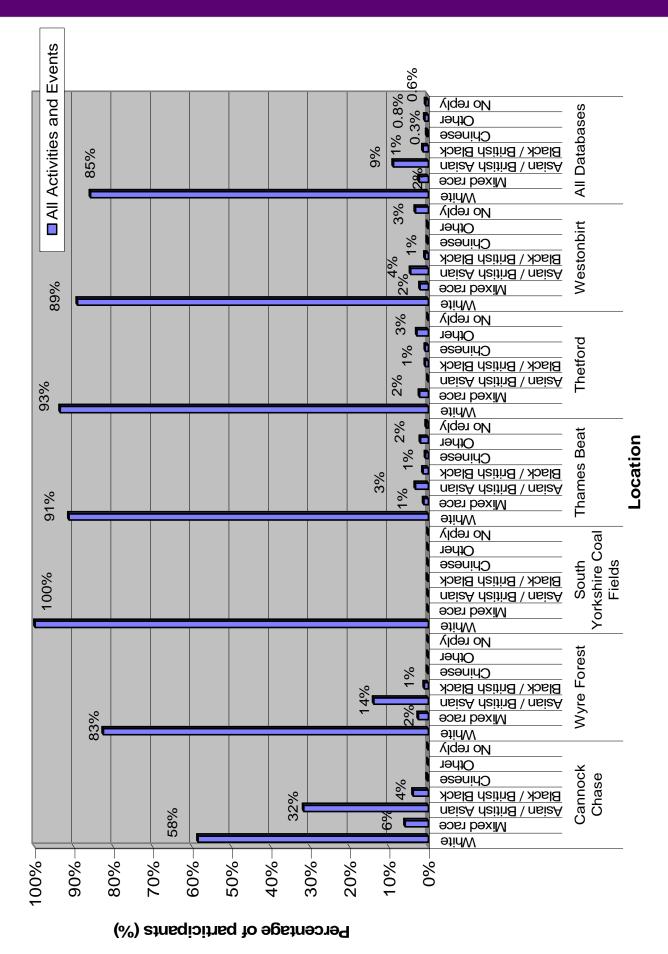
The activity and event database demonstrates that, nationally, 85.7% of participants described their ethnic background as 'White', 2.3% described their ethnic background as 'Mixed race'; 8.9% as 'Asian / British Asian', 1.3% as Black / British Black, 0.3% as Chinese and 0.8% as 'Other'. 0.6% of respondents chose to respond 'No reply'.

In comparison to the population of England as a whole, participants from a 'White' background were slightly under-represented (England as a whole fraction: 90.9% White). Participants from a 'Mixed race' background were well represented (England as a whole fraction: 1.3%). Participants from an 'Asian / British Asian' background were very well represented (England as a whole fraction: 4.6%). Participants from a 'Black / British Black' background were slightly under-represented (England as a whole fraction: 2.3%). Participants from a 'Chinese' background were well represented (England as a whole fraction: 0.4%) and participants from any 'Other ethnic group' were very well represented (England as a whole fraction: 0.4%).

Table 3: Summary of ethnic diversity at activities and events (1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010) and comparison to the 'England as a whole' population

Ethnic Background	National Activities and	England as a whole
	Events Database	(%)
	(%)	
White	85.7	90.9
Mixed	2.3	1.3
Asian or Asian British	8.9	4.6
Black or Black British	1.3	2.3
Chinese	0.3	0.4
Other Ethnic Group	0.8	0.4

Figure 3. Disability diversity (national events profile) between 1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010.





5. Quality of experience

Quality of experience of an activity or an event can be measured via pertinent questions on organiser and participant feedback forms, for example:

- How would you rate your impression of today's event overall?
- How would you rate the facilities at <site name>?
- How would you rate our staff?
- How would you rate the site overall?
- Would you recommend our site/services to others?

Feedback forms using these quality of experience questions were used at 2 events in the Wyre Forest and 14 activities and events in the Thames Beat area in the current reporting period. A summary of responses, presented in Table 4, demonstrates that 100% of respondents (n= 8) to the two community events held in the Wyre Forest rated the overall quality of the 'event overall' and the 'staff' as excellent. When asked to rate 'overall impression of the site', 50% respondents rated it as 'excellent'; the other 50% responded 'don't know'.

Table 4: Summary of quality rating questions used in activity and event feedback forms (1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010)

		Service	Excellent	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor
Wyre	Event -	Event	100%				
Forest	community	Facilities	50%		50%		
	(n= 2)	Staff	100%				
		Site	50%				
Thames	Event –	Event	39%	40%	19%		
Beat	community	Facilities	53%	31%	15%		1%
	(n=3)	Staff	63%	27%	9%		
		Site	54%	32%	13%		
	Event –	Event	75%	25%			
	education	Facilities	75%	25%			
	(n= 1)	Staff	75%	25%			
		Site	100%				
	Event –	Event	60%	28%	11%	1%	
	recreation	Facilities	57%	29%	14%		
	(n= 5)	Staff	80%	17%	3%		
		Site	58%	33%	8%	1%	
	Permission	Event					
	– community	Facilities Staff	71%	29%			
	(n= 1)	Site	86%	14%			

Feedback forms were used at a wide variety of activities and events held by the Thames Beat team in the current reporting period (Table 4). When asked to rate the event



overall, the facilities, the staff and the site overall, 79%, 84%, 90% and 86% of respondents (n= 289) to the community events answered 'excellent' or 'very good'. 100% of respondents who completed feedback forms (n= 4) to the education event rated the event, facilities, staff and site overall as 'excellent' or 'very good'.

Feedback provided by respondents to Thames Beat events was, for the most part, 'good', 'very good' or 'excellent'. At some recreation events, 1% of respondents rated the event overall and the site overall as 'poor' (n=2 of 137 respondents). Examination of the qualitative feedback section of feedback forms revealed that often this feedback was provided by young people bought to the event by parents (e.g. "mum made me come").

Activity (permission) feedback forms vary to event feedback forms as they include only two services to rate: facilities and site overall. Feedback was provided for one community activity held in the Thames Beat (n=7) in the current reporting period: 100% of respondents rated 'facilities' and 'site overall' as either excellent or very good.

When asked 'would you recommend our site/services to others' 100% of respondents to events held at Wyre Forest answered 'definitely' (Table 5), giving **Wyre Forest a net promoter score for events of 100%**.

Responses to the question 'would you recommend our site/services' varied only slightly between events held by the Thames Beat (Table 5): those answering 'definitely' was 85%, 100% and 86% at community, education and recreation events, respectively. These scores give **Thames Beat events a mean net promoter score of 89%** (i.e. 83% for community events; 100% for education events; 83% for recreation events).

Table 5: Summary of 'recommendation' ratings scored on activity and event feedback forms (1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010)

Office	Event type	Definitely	Probably	Fairly likely	Probably not	Definitely not	Don't know	No. of Events
Thames Beat	Event - community	85%	13%	2%				7
	Event - education	100%						1
	Event - recreation	86%	10%	3%			1%	5
	Permission - community	100%						1
Wyre Forest	Event - community	100%						1

Appendix

(p.t.o)



Appendix

Age

Cannock Chase			Ever	nts			Lice	ence			Perm	issions				
Age group	Comn	nunity	Edu	cation	Recr	eation			Com	munity	Ed	ucation	Rec	reation		Total
	М	F	M	F	M	F	М	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0-4			146	114											146	114
5-11			662	571											662	571
12-15			6	6											6	6
16-25	10	5													10	5
26-60			10	29											10	29
Over 60																
Cannock Chase total	10	5	824	720											834	725
Number of events figures based upon		1		46												47
No. events with no age data recorded		2		143		1		2		16		4		50		218

Wyre Forest Age group	Comi	munity	Ever Edu	nts cation	Rec	reation	Lice	ence	Com	munity		nissions	Rec	reation		Total
3. 3 · · · ·	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	М	F	M	F	M	F
0-4																
5-11		38	134	137											134	175
12-15			19	37											19	37
16-25			7	25											7	25
26-60																
Over 60	12	13													12	13
Cannock Chase2 (Wyre) total	12	51	160	199											172	250
Number of events figures based upon		6		44												50
No. events with no age data recorded		33		97		19		4		24		2		2		181

(p.t.o)

Activities & Events in England's Woodlands

South Yorkshire Coal Fields			Ever	nts			Lice	ence			Perm	nissions				
Age group	Comr	nunity	Edu	cation	Recr	eation			Con	munity	Ed	lucation	Recr	eation		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0-4	19	13	13	13	2	4									34	30
5-11	37	37	28	31	69	77							7	8	141	153
12-15		2	33	32											33	34
16-25	7	2													7	2
26-60	179	183	7	25	6	67							2	2	194	277
Over 60	68	160			20	53									88	213
South Yorkshire Coal Fields total	310	397	81	101	97	201							9	10	497	709
Number of events figures based upon		45		11		20								1		77
No. events with no age data recorded		31		14		10				2				1		58

Thames Beat			Evei				Lice	ence				issions				
Age group	Comr	nunity	Edu	cation	Recr	eation			Comn	nunity	Ed	ucation	Recr	eation		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0-4					3	1			10	5			1	2	14	8
5-11	1	4	13	3	6	13			10	15			28	21	58	56
12-15		8	1		1								307	300	309	308
16-25	12	6	16	3		5			6	2			82	82	116	98
26-60	56	136	7	1	4	30			30	20			34	16	131	203
Over 60	23	25			4	3			11	10			7	4	45	42
Thames Chase total	92	179	37	7	18	52			67	52			459	425	673	715
Number of events figures based upon		9		2		3				3				3		20
No. events with no age data recorded		13				3				3		1				20

Westonbirt National Arboretum Age group	Com	munity	Eve Edu	nts ication	Red	reation	Lice	ence	Com	munity		ssions cation	Red	creation		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0-4																
5-11			73	60											73	60
12-15																
16-25											11	1			11	1
26-60																
Over 60																
Westonbirt National Arboretum total			73	60							11	1			84	61
Number of events figures based upon				3								2				5
No. events with no age data recorded																,

