

The Contribution of Birches Valley Forest Centre to Quality of Life

'Monitoring and Evaluating Quality of Life'
A Flagship Case Study Report

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1. Introduction

This annex report presents the results of research undertaken between 2008 and 2010 at Birches Valley Forest Centre (hereafter: 'Birches Valley'). The research investigated 5-headline indicators - i) Use, ii) Engagement, iii) Quality of Experience, iv) Personal benefit and v) Social benefit, measuring the contribution of Birches Valley to "Quality of Life". Definition of the 5-headline indicators and methodologies for their measurement were developed as part of the 3-year 'Monitoring & Evaluating Quality of Life' project¹.

1.1 Project context

In England, at 9% of the land area, forests, woodlands and trees make a vital contribution to the well-being and prosperity of communities. They are an important component of the environment that shapes landscape and street scenes and, in the urban environment, provide an important role in terms of 'green space' and summer cooling. The UK Government believes it is important to protect the environment for future generations and to improve quality of life and well-being². As such, the Government holds that the emerging roles of forests, woods and trees in England and hence the abiding principles for their ownership and management should include:

- the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, contributing to a network of wildlife corridors across England
- the maintenance of public access for recreation and leisure
- ensure the continuing role of woodlands in climate change mitigation and adaptation; and
- protection of nationally important landscapes.

These principles will help to ensure that England's woodland resource continues to improve to increase the benefits that society derives from them; such as biodiversity, beautiful landscapes, public access, ecosystems services, quality of life and well-being.

1.2 Introduction to the 'Monitoring & Evaluating Quality of Life' project

Forestry Commission England's Corporate Plan (2008-2011) outlined a range of targets relating to 'Quality of Place' and 'Quality of Life', including increased provision of accessible woodland (Target 1: Quality of Place), and increased visits to and engagement with local woodland, quality of experience, and personal and social benefits

¹ 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.

² Forestry Commission England and Defra. (2011). The Future of the Public Forest Estate in England. A Public Consultation. Forestry Commission England, Bristol.

derived from woodland (Target 2: Quality of Life). The 'Monitoring and Evaluating Quality of Life' project is a 3-year research project delivered by Forest Research (FR) on behalf of Forestry Commission England (FCE) to develop a broad monitoring and evaluation framework to measure performance against Target 2: Quality of Life.

The Quality of Life indicator developed is a compound indicator comprising a 'basket' of five component indicators - Use, Engagement, Quality of Experience, Personal benefit, Social benefit. As a 'Flagship' case study site, results from Birches Valley will be used to measure changes in use, engagement, quality of experience, personal and social benefits as part of an evaluation of national delivery (England) against Quality of Life objectives.

The following research activities were undertaken at Birches Valley over the three-year monitoring period to produce the results reported:

1. On-site surveying of visitors to Birches Valley to establish quantitative values for indicators relating to engagement, quality of experience, personal and social benefits. Surveys were conducted between August and October in 2008, 2009 and 2010.
2. Surveying of a representative sample of Birches Valley's catchment population to establish quantitative values for indicators relating to use, engagement, quality of experience, personal and social benefits. Surveys were conducted in September during 2008 and 2010.
3. An Activities and Events³ database was established at Birches Valley in 2009 to record the diary of programmed events, associated finance, attendance, and related information.
4. Geo-spatial profiling of Birches Valley's catchment area (nominally defined as the area within a 2.5 mile (4 km) radius from the site boundaries⁴) to establish total catchment population and, using socio-demographic data from the 2001 Census, to establish demographic make-up of the catchment population. (Datasets are derived from the Census 2001, except the Index of Multiple Deprivation which is from Communities and Local Government. Income estimates are Model-Based Estimates 2004-05 (Office for National Statistics) based on the Family Resources Survey. The Census Area Statistics are Crown copyright 2003. This Crown copyright material is produced with

³ An 'activity' is defined as: organised and led by a group or an individual from outside the Forestry Commission (FC) on FC land. The group, or individual, request permission (a permit) to hold the activity on FC land.

An 'event' is defined as: organised and led by FC staff. May take place on or off of FC land.

⁴ Aligned to the Woodland Trust's Woodland Access Standard (WAS^t), and complementary to the Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace standards (ANGst), the Forestry Commission the working definition for the catchment area of woodland as the area within a 2.5 mile (4 km) radius of the site's boundaries. (See: 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.)

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1.3 Introduction to report chapters

Section 2 presents results for headline indicators relating to **use, engagement, quality of experience, personal and social benefits**. Data are drawn from on-site and catchment surveying and the events database across the three year monitoring period.

Section 3 draws on data from the events database to present a profile of the organised programme of events at Birches Valley including data on the range of events held, delivery themes, staffing and resourcing.

Section 4 represents a detailed, dynamic '**visit profile**' for Birches Valley, drawing on results from the on-site and catchment surveys and from the events database, to present data relating to frequency and seasonal variation of visits, distance travelled, mode of transport, activities, and barriers to more frequent use. A detailed analysis of quality of experience on-site is also presented, followed by a more detailed analysis of personal and social benefits derived during visits to Birches Valley.

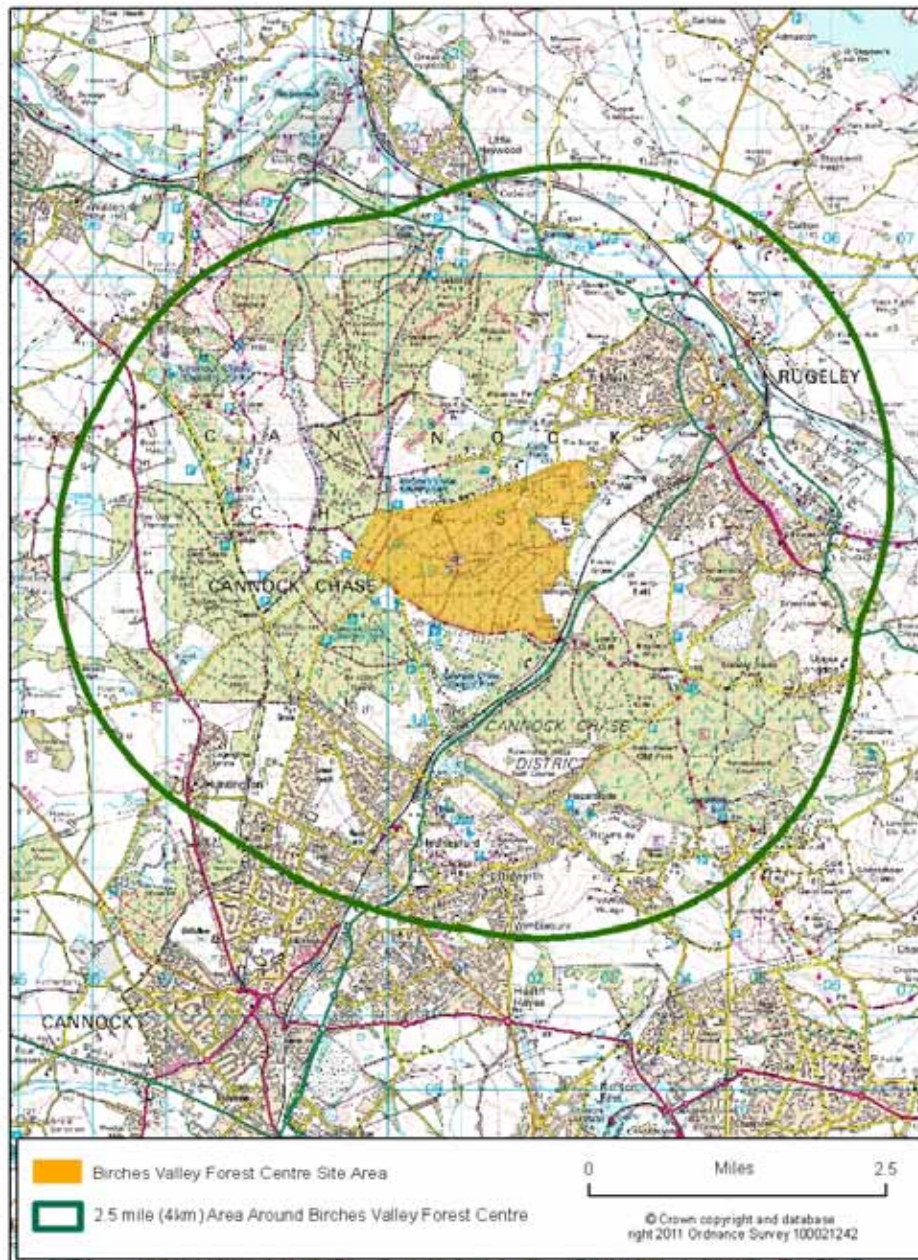
Section 5 represents a detailed, dynamic '**visitor profile**' for Birches Valley, presenting an analysis of changes in the demographic make-up of visitors to the site and showing how different categories of visitors respond to questions about use, engagement, quality of experience and benefits. The section also draws comparisons between the demographic make-up of visitors (as revealed by the on-site and catchment surveys and the events database) and the demographic make-up of Birches Valley's catchment population (as revealed by the catchment profiling work conducted in 2008). This comparative analysis of visitor and catchment profiles addresses questions about the 'representativeness' of visitors to Birches Valley and reveals whether certain sub-sections of the site's catchment population are under-represented.

1.4 Introduction to Birches Valley Forest Centre

Birches Valley Forest Centre is located on Cannock Chase in Staffordshire, close to the towns of Rugeley, Cannock, Lichfield and Stafford. Cannock Chase is the smallest mainland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) at just 64 square kilometres and is situated within 30 minutes drive of 4 million people including the diverse communities of Birmingham and Stoke on Trent. Staffing for Birches Valley comprises of the Education team (2 part time education assistants, 2 part time education rangers and 1 part time education manager), a recreation ranger, visitor services manager and part time weekend forest warden. Figure 1 (below) shows the site, its location, and the 2.5 mile

catchment area defined as part of the catchment profiling exercise. The definition of the catchment enabled the calculation of Birches Valley's total catchment population at 54,976 persons, on the basis of data from the 2001 Census.

Figure 1: Birches Valley Forest Centre and 2.5 mile catchment area



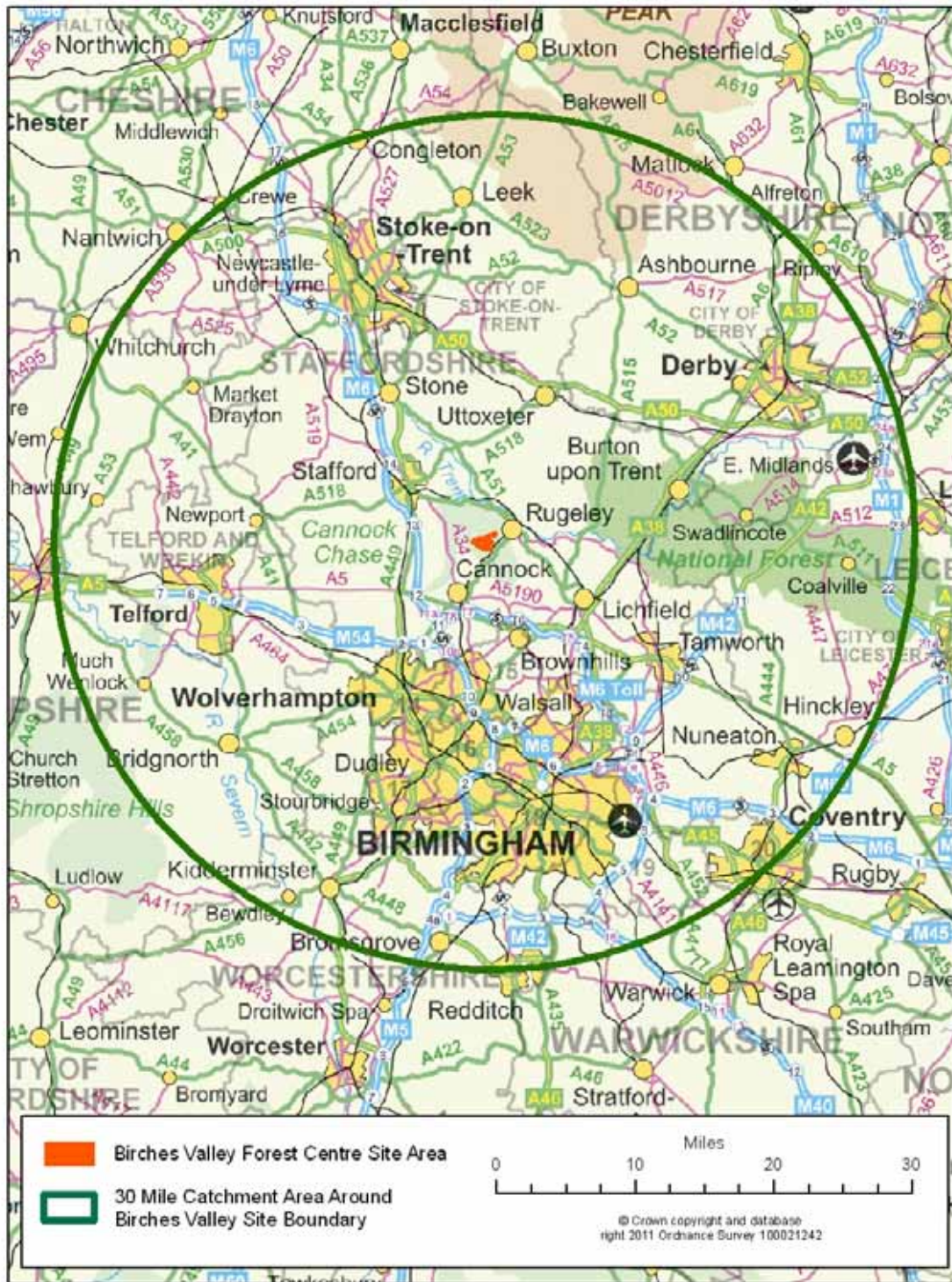
1.5 A new catchment area for Birches Valley

The working definition of a woodland's catchment area adopted in the Quality of Life project was the area within a 2.5 mile (4 km) radius of the site's boundaries; a sub-division was also made at 500 m. This definition was aligned to the Woodland Trust's Woodland Access Standards (WAS_t) and complementary to Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANG_{St}).

Analysis of the distances travelled by visitors to the Flagship sites demonstrated that, for Bentley and Ingrebourne, 75% (the 3rd quartile) of visitors travelled from within the project's 2.5 mile working definition catchment area (calculated using Yr 1 and Yr 2 visitor data). For Birches Valley, the investigations demonstrated that 75% of visitors travelled from an area within a 32.1 mile radius of the site. The catchment area for Birches Valley was subsequently re-profiled based upon an area of 30 miles radius of the sites boundaries. Birches Valley's 30-mile catchment area is ca. 70 times larger by area than the 2.5 mile catchments of Bentley and Ingrebourne Hill, and is presented in Figure 2.

For consistency, comparisons between site use and the catchment population has been based up the 2.5 mile catchment profile, as in previous reporting years, with one exception. Ethnic diversity of Birches Valley users is compared with the 2.5 mile and 30 mile catchments for comparison (Section 5.1.7). Socio-demographic statistics for Birches Valleys 2.5 mile and 30 mile catchments areas are presented in the Appendix

Figure 2: Birches Valley Forest Centre and the 30 mile catchment area



2. Headline indicators

In this section, values for headline indicators relating to use, engagement, quality of experience, personal and social benefits are presented, based on data from the on-site (2008, 2009 and 2010) and catchment (2008, 2010) surveys and the events database (2009 and 2010).

2.1 Use

Respondents to the 2008 and 2010 catchment surveys were asked if they had ever visited Birches Valley. In 2008, of 400 respondents, 257 (or 64% \pm 4.69%; 95% confidence level) said that they had visited. In 2010, of 446 respondents, 329 (or 74% \pm 4.05 %; 95% confidence interval) said that they had visited. These results suggest a statistically significant rise in the proportion of the population who have visited Birches Valley.

2.2 Engagement

Respondents to on-site and catchment surveys were asked about their involvement in management-related activities at Birches Valley in the last 12 months, including being involved in or consulted about plans for the site, organised tree planting events, or voluntary work.

The results of the on-site surveys show a steady rise in the proportion of visitors have been involved throughout the monitoring period from 4% in 2008, to 5% in 2009, and to 10% in 2010.

The results of the catchment surveys show that in 2008 $9 \pm 2.79\%^5$ of the catchment population had been involved in management related activities. In 2010 this proportion fell to $5 \pm 2.01\%$, but we cannot say this is a statistically significant fall, within the 95% confidence level.

The Activities and Events database indicates that there were no (0) formal events at Birches Valley in the reporting period November 2009 to October 2010 to promote engagement in management of the community woodland.

⁵ All statistics are reported at the 95% confidence level.

2.3 Quality of experience

Across the three years of monitoring at Birches Valley, on-site survey (all respondents) and catchment survey respondents (visitors only) were asked if they would recommend Birches Valley as a place to visit to friends and family. Data obtained from this question can be used to calculate a net promoter score for Birches Valley ⁶

In 2008 the proportion of visiting respondents (on-site and catchment surveys) who would recommend Birches Valley to friends or family was calculated at 95%, giving Birches Valley a baseline net promoter score of 71%.

In 2009, Birches Valley's net promoter score rose significantly to 84% (based on the results of the on-site survey only).

In 2010, of those respondents to the catchment survey who had visited Birches Valley (74%, n=329), 97% (n=318) either said they would 'definitely' (67%), 'probably' (23%), or were 'fairly likely' (7%) to recommend Birches Valley as a place to visit to friends or family. Of those respondents to the 2010 on-site survey who answered this question (n=325, or 99%), 99% said they would 'definitely' (82%), 'probably' (14%), or were fairly likely (4%) to recommend Birches Valley as a place to visit to friends or family. Taking the total number of relevant respondents from both surveys (329+325=654), the proportion of visiting respondents who would definitely recommend Birches Valley to friends or family (n=220+265=485), can be calculated at 74%, **giving Birches Valley a final net promoter score of 67%**. Birches Valley's net promoter score compares very favourably with that of the National Trust, who reported a national net promoter score of 36% in 2009/10, with a target 40% score for 2012/13 ⁷.

2.3.1 Quality of experience at events

Quality of experience can also be measured via organiser and participant feedback forms. Pertinent questions include:

- How would you rate our staff?
- How would you rate your impression of today's event overall?
- How would you rate the facilities at Birches Valley?
- How would you rate the site overall?
- Would you recommend our site to others?

⁶ Net promoter score is a proxy indicator for quality of experience. Based upon the interview question "would you recommend this site as a place to visit to friends or family?" it is calculated as the percentage of promoters (those who would 'definitely' recommend the site to friends or family) minus the number of detractors (those who would 'fairly likely' 'probably not' or 'definitely not' recommend the site).

⁷ National Trust. (Undated). Going Local: Strategy and Organisational Plan 2010-13.

The question “Have you been to this site before?” may also be used as a proxy for satisfaction with a site.

Individual feedback forms incorporating quality of experience questions were not used at any event at Birches Valley in the current reporting period.

Feedback forms were received from group organisers attending 12 (of the 150) programmed full-day education events and two (of the 17) programmed half-day education events. When asked “how would you rate our...” 83%, 75%, 83% and 92% of organisers to full day programmed education events rated staff, the event, the facilities and the site overall as excellent, respectively (see Table 1). The activities and events database indicates that 50% of respondents to half day programmed education events rated the staff, event, facilities and site overall as excellent, based upon 2 respondents

Table 1: Organiser feedback at Birches Valley (1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010)

Programmed education event	Rating			
	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Poor
Full Day (n=12)				
Rating of Staff	83%	17%	0%	0%
Rating of Event	75%	17%	0%	0%
Rating of Facilities	83%	17%	0%	0%
Overall Rating of Site	92%	8%	0%	0%
Half Day (n=2)				
Rating of Staff	50%	50%	0%	0%
Rating of Event	50%	50%	0%	0%
Rating of Facilities	50%	50%	0%	0%
Overall Rating of Site	50%	50%	0%	0%

To the question ‘would you recommend our site / services to others’ 100% answered ‘definitely’. Trends in organiser and participant’s perceptions of the site and the activities and events held at Birches Valley cannot be made as feedback forms were not used in previous reporting periods.

2.4 Personal benefits

Respondents to the catchment surveys (only those respondents who had heard of Birches Valley) and all respondents to the on-site surveys were asked about ways in which Birches Valley is important to them personally. Respondents were asked whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed or strongly disagreed with a series of statements relating to different categories of personal benefit. The results from the 2008

and 2010 catchment surveys are presented in Table 2, and show no statistically significant changes in the proportion of respondents who strongly agree or agree with the 11 benefit statements. Overall, the picture of the perception of personal benefits is stable.

Table 2: Personal benefits derived from Birches Valley (catchment survey 2008 and 2010)

Categories of personal benefit	Strongly agree / Agree		Disagree / Strongly disagree		Don't know/ not stated	
	2008	2010	2008	2010	2008	2010
It helps me to earn a living or make ends meet	10% ± 3.37%	6% ± 2.43%	83%	90%	7%	4%
It's a place where I can relax and de-stress	88% ± 3.65%	88% ± 3.33%	7%	8%	5%	4%
It's a place where I can exercise and keep fit	82% ± 4.31%	88% ± 3.33%	10%	9%	8%	3%
It's a place where I can have fun and enjoy myself	91% ± 3.21%	91% ± 2.93%	3%	6%	6%	3%
It's a good place to socialise	83% ± 4.22%	75% ± 4.44%	19%	19%	8%	6%
It's a place where I can learn about the environment	88% ± 3.65%	87% ± 3.45%	5%	10%	8%	3%
It's an important place for wildlife	93% ± 2.86%	96% ± 2.01%	2%	1%	5%	3%
It brings the community together	69% ± 5.19%	75% ± 4.44%	18%	18%	13%	7%
It makes this area a nicer place to live	91% ± 3.21%	94% ± 2.43%	3%	3%	6%	3%
It gets me involved in local issues	43% ± 5.56%	34% ± 4.85%	48%	60%	9%	6%
It's a place where I feel at home	80% ± 4.49%	78% ± 4.24%	14%	18%	6%	4%

The results from the 2008, 2009 and 2010 on-site surveys are presented in Table 3, and show consistently high proportions of visitors (>90%) strongly agreeing or agreeing with three benefit statements (It's a place where I can relax and de-stress, It's a place where I can exercise and keep fit, It's a place where I can have fun and enjoy myself).

However, the results do show some statistically significant decreases in the proportion of visitors strongly agreeing or agreeing with two benefit statements (coloured red) (It brings the community together; It gets me involved in local issues).

Table 3: Personal benefits derived from Birches Valley (on-site survey 2008, 2009, 2010)

Categories of personal benefit	Strongly agree / Agree			Disagree / Strongly disagree			Don't know/ not stated		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
It helps me to earn a living or make ends meet	10%	1%	6%	9%	18%	20%	81%	81%	74%
It's a place where I can relax and de-stress	95%	94%	95%	1%	2%	2%	4%	4%	3%
It's a place where I can exercise and keep fit	100%	99%	97%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%
It's a place where I can have fun and enjoy myself	100%	99%	100%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
It's a good place to socialise	91%	85%	86%	5%	4%	4%	4%	11%	10%
It's a place where I can learn about the environment	75%	72%	70%	4%	8%	8%	21%	20%	22%
It's an important place for wildlife	86%	92%	89%	2%	2%	3%	12%	6%	8%
It brings the community together	75% ± 7.95%	62%	61% ± 5.29%	6%	9%	10%	19%	29%	29%
It makes this area a nicer place to live	85%	82%	75%	2%	2%	4%	13%	16%	21%
It gets me involved in local issues	48% ± 9.17%	31%	32% ± 5.06%	14%	16%	18%	38%	53%	50%
It's a place where I feel at home	73%	76%	67%	9%	10%	7%	18%	14%	26%

Visitors attending Birches Valley events may also be asked about ways in which the site is important to them, using feedback forms. Forms incorporating these questions were not used at Birches Valley in the current reporting period or previous reporting periods.

2.5 Social benefits

Respondents to the catchment and on-site surveys were also asked about ways in which Birches Valley is important to their local community. Respondents were asked whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed or strongly disagreed with statements relating to different categories of collective, social benefit. The results from the 2008 and 2010 catchment surveys are presented in Table 4. The survey sample is sufficiently large to be representative of Birches Valley's catchment (confidence level = 95%). As such, statistically significant changes in the proportion of the survey sample who strongly agree / agree with the statements relating to social benefits delivered by Birches Valley can be taken to represent changes within the wider catchment population. The results do not show any significant changes for any categories of social benefit. However, we can confidently say that the proportion has at least remained stable for all benefit categories.

Table 4: Social benefits derived from Birches Valley (catchment survey 2008 and 2010)

Categories of social benefit	Strongly agree / Agree		Disagree / Strongly disagree		Don't know / not stated	
	2008	2010	2008	2010	2008	2010
It contributes to the local economy	75%	80%	14%	10%	11%	10%
People can relax and de-stress	91%	94%	2%	1%	7%	5%
People can exercise and keep fit	91%	95%	1%	1%	7%	4%
It's a place where people can have fun and enjoy themselves	91%	95%	1%	1%	8%	4%
It's a place where people can learn about the environment	90%	94%	1%	2%	9%	4%
It's an important place for wildlife	92%	95%	2%	1%	6%	4%
It brings the community together	76%	79%	13%	14%	11%	7%
It makes this area a nicer place to live	91%	92%	2%	4%	7%	4%
It gets people involved in local issues	64%	70%	21%	20%	15%	10%

Table 5 (below) shows the results from the same question asked during the on-site survey (2008, 2009 and 2010), revealing a consistently high proportion (> 90%) of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing with 4 of the 9 social benefit statements. The results also reveal a significant increase in the proportion of visitors strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement relating to economic benefits (coloured green).

Table 5: Social benefits derived from Birches Valley (on-site survey 2008, 2009 and 2010)

Categories of social benefit	Strongly agree / Agree			Disagree / Strongly disagree			Don't know / not stated		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
It contributes to the local economy	57% ± 9.09%	99%	86% ± 3.76%	3%	1%	1%	40%	0%	13%
It's a place where people can relax and de-stress	98%	99%	96%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	4%
It's a place where people can exercise and keep fit	99%	100%	97%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	3%
It's a place where people can have fun and enjoy themselves	98%	100%	96%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	3%
It's a place where people can learn about the environment	85%	97%	92%	8%	3%	1%	7%	0%	7%
It's an important place for wildlife	91%	99%	95%	1%	1%	1%	8%	0%	4%
It brings the community together	81%	91%	76%	6%	9%	5%	13%	0%	19%
It makes this area a nicer place to live	87%	99%	89%	4%	1%	1%	9%	0%	10%
It gets people involved in local issues	80%	91%	69%	9%	9%	8%	11%	0%	23%

2.6 Volunteering

Volunteering is an indicator of personal and social benefit. For the Quality of Life project, volunteering was measured through Activities and Events (only):

- number of events promoting volunteering on site and attendance at these events
- contribution of volunteers through support in the running of events.

The number of events promoting volunteering on site for the reporting period November 2009 to October 2010 was nil. The number of volunteers who assisted in the running of Activities and Events is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Volunteering contribution at Birches Valley

Activity and Event type	Birches Valley		
	No. of events	No. of volunteers	Practical Voluntary work (days)
Event – community	1	0	0
Event – education	170	0	0
Event – recreation	1	0	0
Permission – community – fundraising	1	7	28
Permission – community – other	12	2	44
Permission – education	1	0	0
Permission – recreation – physical activity	23	2	0.9
Permission – recreation – sport	1	10	20
Permission – recreation – other	4	0	0
Total	214	21	92.9

The contribution made by volunteers at Birches Valley, in this reporting period, was 92.9 person-days (based upon a 7.4 hr working day or a 37 hr working week). In monetary terms, the value of volunteering contribution equates to £4,645, based upon the Heritage Lottery Fund's 'Guidance for Landscape Partnerships' unskilled labour rate of £50 a day. The contribution made by volunteers at Birches Valley in the current reporting period is 141% of the estimated annual contribution of £3,300 in 2008-09.

Caveat: the majority of volunteering at Birches Valley is managed directly rather than through Activities and Events. They are, therefore, not recorded in the database nor included in the figures above. They include:

- full-time volunteer student - 37hrs per week, for 1 year working, at Birches Valley
- 2 part-time students - minimum 16 hours per week all year
- Chase trails volunteers - minimum 40 hours per week (10 people doing 4 hours) all year and often significantly more
- Big-build-days – up to 100 people, 8 hour day, once every month
- Wildlife monitoring – seasonal (6 months), up to 6 people, 2 days per week.

If included, these figures would add significant value. However, for the Quality of Life project, volunteering was measured through Activities and Events only. These volunteers are managed directly in support of health-and-safety and training provision.

3. Birches Valley's event profile

Drawing on data from the Activities and Events database, this section provides a profile of the organised programme of events held at Birches Valley. In order to report a full 12-month period, data from 1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010 is used. Data on staffing and resourcing are presented to highlight Birches Valley's inputs to promoting use, engagement, personal and social benefit.

3.1 Event profile

The events database categories events according to whether they are a ranger led event or a self-led group activity and, secondly, whether the primary focus is community, education or recreation⁸.

In the current reporting period, 172 ranger led events and 42 self-led (group) activities were held at Birches Valley. The majority of events (n=170) had a primary focus on education and learning, one had a primary focus on community and one on recreation. A total of 10,708 people attended these 214 activities and events. Attendance ranged from 2 to >500 participants, with the largest audiences for sports-based permissions such as mountain biking, running and orienteering.

The Activities and Events database shows that, in this reporting period, nil events were held specifically related to managing the site. No planning or consultation events were held. No formal health events were recorded in the events database, although 24 of the Activities had a sporting or physical activity focus. Two events were cultural in nature. The number of events held to enable people to volunteer on site was nil.

A number of informal partnership events are also supported each year at Birches Valley that were not captured in the activities and events database in the current reporting period. In 2010/11, such events attracted an approximately additional 2,300 people (NB. these are not represented in Table 7).

⁸ A community event aims to encourage participation at, feedback or consultation on a site; it may have an engagement plan with defined objectives

- An education event aims disseminate specific knowledge; it may have an education or lesson plan, with associated learning aims, objectives and/or outcomes

- 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

Table 7: Event profile at Birches Valley (1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010)

Event type	Specific type	Quarter								Totals	
		1		2		3		4		No. of events	No. of partic.
		No. of events	No. of partic.	No. of events	No. of partic.	No. of events	No. of partic.	No. of events	No. of partic.		
Event - community	Forest experience										
	Other			1	15					1	15
	Event – community – total			1	15					1	15
Event – education	Prog. – full day	67	3,054	51	1,988	14	702	18	829	150	6,573
	Prog. – half day	8	313	4	147	2	64	3	86	17	610
	Other	2	58	1	41					3	99
	Event – education – total	77	6,425	56	2,176	16	766	21	915	170	7,282
Event – recreation	Education/learning							1	45	1	45
	Event – recreation – total							1	45	1	45
Permission - community	Cultural			2	280					2	280
	Educational visit					1	10			1	10
	Fundraising					1	7			1	7
	Theatrical							1	5		
	Wildlife / ecological study			1	35			2	40	3	75
	Other					5	24				
	Permission – community – total			3	315	7	41	3	45	13	401
Permission - education	Youth group	1	28							1	28
	Permission – education - total	1	28							1	28
Permission - recreation	Physical activity	4	211	4	46	3	469	12	1,730	23	2,456
	Sport			1	250					1	250
	Other	1	10	1	20	1	1	1	200	4	231
	Permission – recreation – total	5	221	6	316	4	470	13	1,930	28	2,937
	Grand Totals	83	3,674	67	2,822	27	1,277	38	2,935	214	10,708

Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4: quarters of the reporting period

#: Part = number of participants (registered for the event, counted by lead ranger or, in the case of Activities, as provided by organiser).

3.2 Resourcing

Events at Birches Valley are principally organised by the Education team, comprising of two part time education assistants, two part time education rangers and one part time education manager. A recreation ranger, visitor services manager and a number of other staff who work from the Birches Valley offices provide periodic staffing support at events as required.

A charge is made to attend most events at Birches Valley, ranging ca. £50-150 depending on the type and duration of an event. The events database demonstrated that ca. £16,400.00 income was generated from 150 programmed full day educational events, £1,380 from 17 programmed half day educational events and £3,430 from 40 other activities and events. A further £232.50 was raised through ranger visits to groups (i.e. an event held away from Birches Valley Forest Centre).

The activities and events database provides the option to record direct costs incurred in holding activities and events (e.g. stationery and equipment purchases). These figures were not recorded in the database in the current reporting period.

An alternative perspective on the level of resourcing (input) required to hold events at Birches Valley is the annual budget allocation for staffing and cash expenditure. The budget allocation for Birches Valley as a single site is not available, however budget allocations for the Cannock Chase recreation and education teams who run events at Birches Valley and 18 other neighbouring locations within Cannock Chase Forest can be considered (the total number of sites indicated here includes only those listed within the activities and events database as locations where events were held in the current reporting period). The total 2010/11 allocation was £145,000 (£128k staffing - 7 staff; 4.4 full time equivalents; £17k cash expenditure). These costs reflect the full budget allocation. However, as staff also perform wider duties these figures reflect a conservative (over-estimated) cost estimate of holding activities and events at Birches Valley. Offsetting these input resources was an estimated income in 2010/11 of £62,000 (figure relates specifically to income from education and recreation activities and events, only).

3.3 Event delivery themes

Each event can be grouped according to its main themes of delivery. Themes provide an indication of the possible outcomes of Birches Valley's Events programme. The themes adopted for this project were: physical activity, sport, healthy eating, natural play, enjoyment, climate change, community, culture and heritage, natural environment, diversity/equality, skills/employment. The assessment may be undertaken by the ranger leading an event or, in the case of Activities, by the organiser. During the current reporting period, 10% of the 170 education events were assessed for their main themes to be delivered. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Themes delivered through activities and events at Birches Valley (1st November 2009 to 31st October 2010)

Theme	Number of 'education events' delivering a 'theme' (by education event type)			Total
	Programmed - full day	Programmed - half day	Other	
Physical activity	7	1	1	9
Sport	0	0	0	0
Healthy eating	0	0	0	0
Natural play	4	1	0	5
Enjoyment	7	0	0	7
Climate change	0	0	0	0
Community	1	0	0	1
Culture / heritage	2	0	0	2
Natural environment	11	1	0	12
Diversity / equality	0	0	0	0
Skills / employment	0	0	0	0

Events at Birches Valley contributed to the delivery of a diverse range of themes in the current reporting period. The natural environment, physical activity and enjoyment featured regularly. Natural play, culture and heritage, and community also featured as a delivery objective during Birches Valley's education events. Trends in the range of themes delivered were not recorded for events in the previous reporting period (1st April through to 30th November 2009). Delivery themes were not assessed by organisers of self-led activities in the current reporting period.

4. Birches Valley's 'visit profile'

In this section, results from the 2010 on-site and catchment surveys (only responses given by those respondents who have visited - 74%, n=329) are used to present a detailed 'visit profile' for Birches Valley. In a first sub-section (4.1), survey responses relating to basic visit characteristics are presented, such as frequency and seasonal variation of visits, who people visit with, mode of transport, and barriers to more frequent use. The second sub-section (4.2) presents an analysis of visitors' actual experiences on-site, focusing on feedback provided in relation to particular features, facilities and other factors that shape the visitor experience at Birches Valley, thereby complementing the results relating to quality of experience presented in Section 3 (above). Sub-section 4.3 looks at barriers and presents an analysis of responses to questions about factors that prevent more frequent use of Birches Valley.

4.1 Visit characteristics

4.1.1 Frequency / seasonal variation of visits to Birches Valley

On-site (n=327) and catchment survey (visitors only; n=329) respondents were asked how often they visit Birches Valley in Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter. Results are shown in Figure 3 (on-site survey) and Figure 4 (catchment survey). The results reveal that there is little seasonal variation in frequency of visits amongst on-site survey respondents. However, respondents to the catchment survey visit less frequently in autumn / winter.

Figure 2: Frequency / seasonal variation of visits (on-site survey)

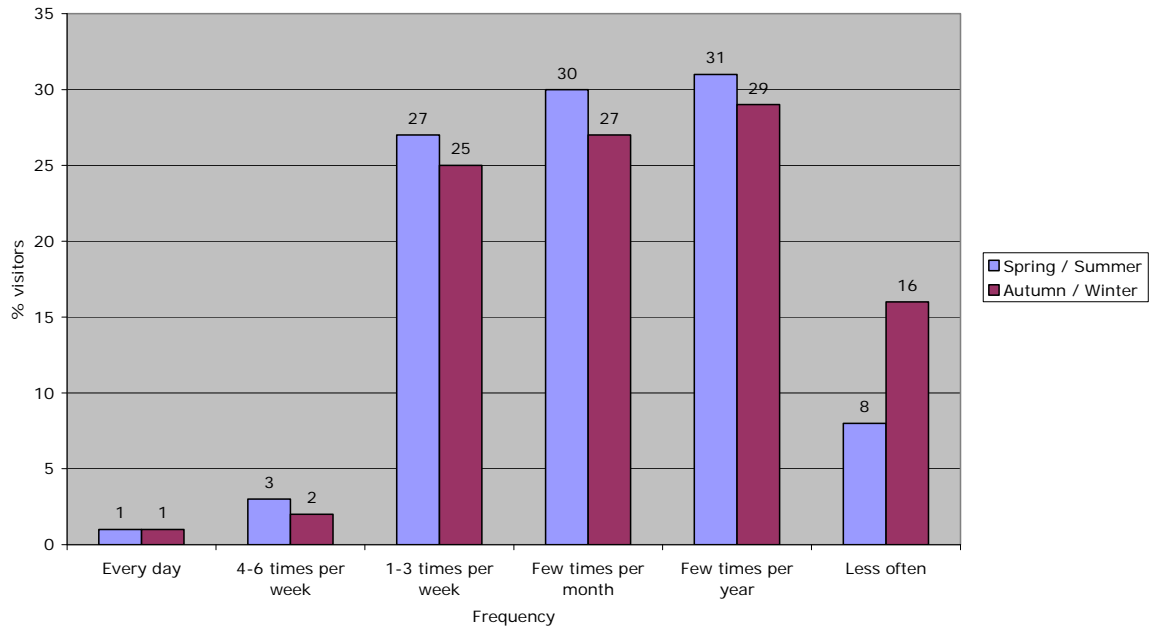
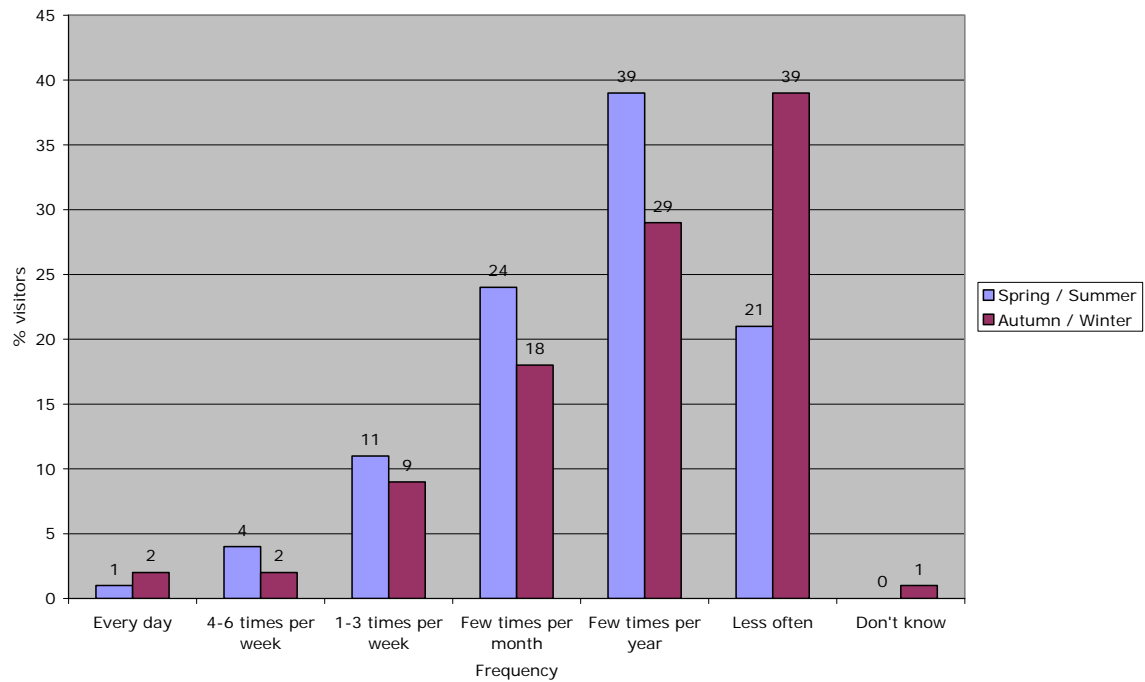


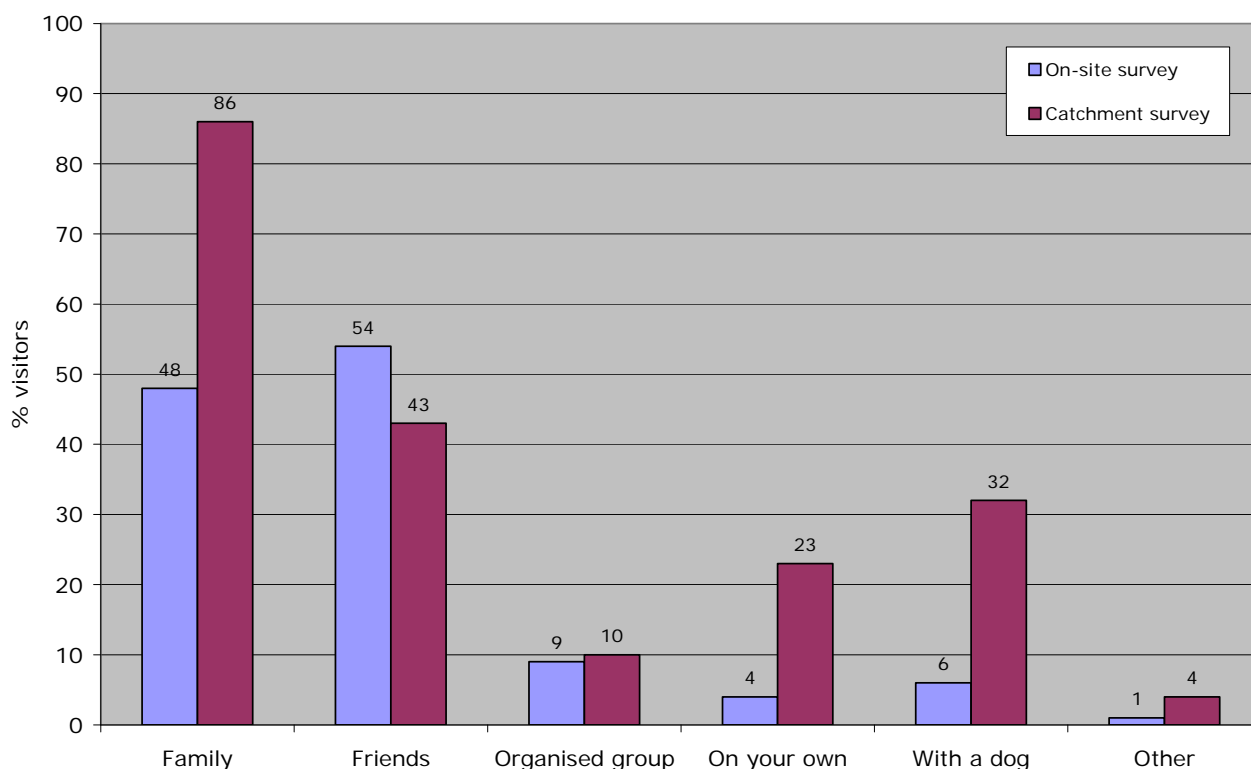
Figure 3: Frequency / seasonal variation of visits to Birches Valley (catchment survey)



4.1.2 Who do people visit Birches Valley with?

Respondents to the on-site and catchment (visitors only (74%, n=329)) surveys were asked who they tend to visit Birches Valley with. The results from both surveys are shown in Figure 4, below. The results show that visiting with family, friends, or with a dog are most popular.

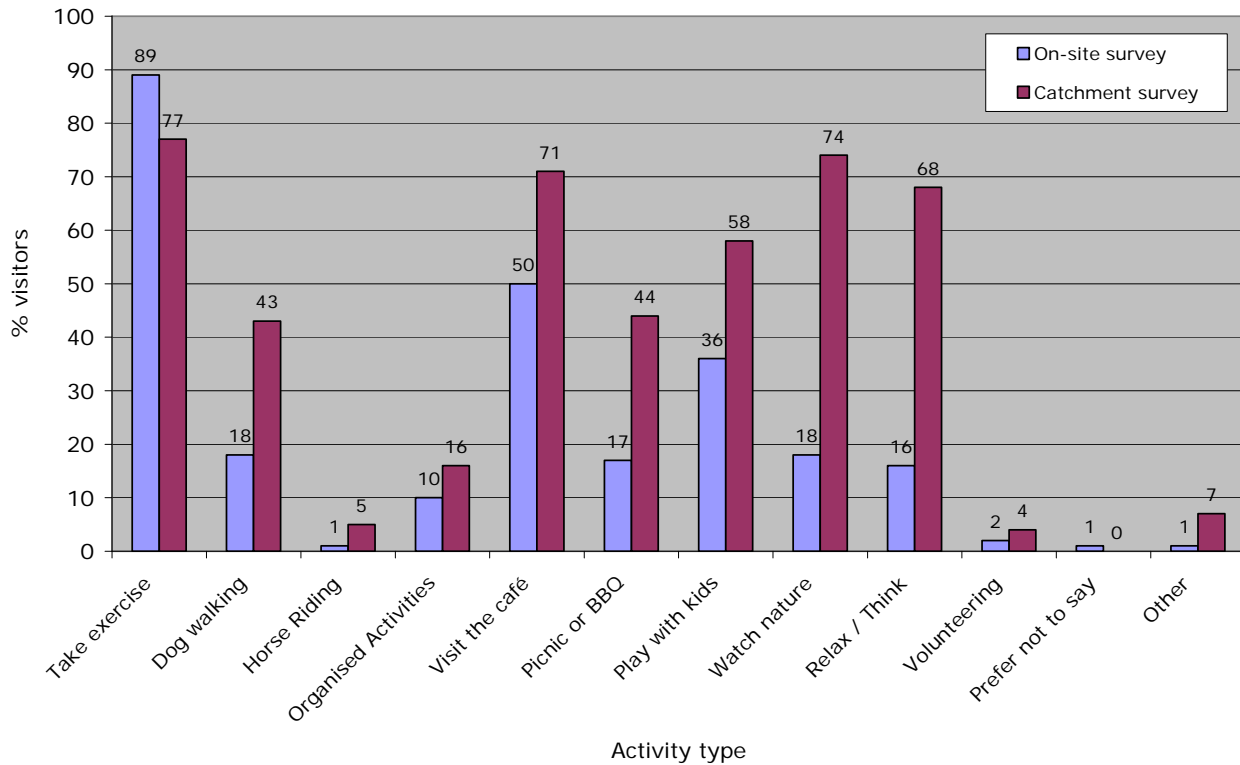
Figure 4: Who do you visit Birches Valley with?



4.1.3 Activities at Birches Valley

Respondents to the on-site and catchment (visitors only; n=329) surveys were asked what they tend to do at Birches Valley. The results from both surveys are shown in Figure 5, below. Taking exercise, visiting the cafe, playing with the kids, nature watching, relaxing and thinking are the most popular activities.

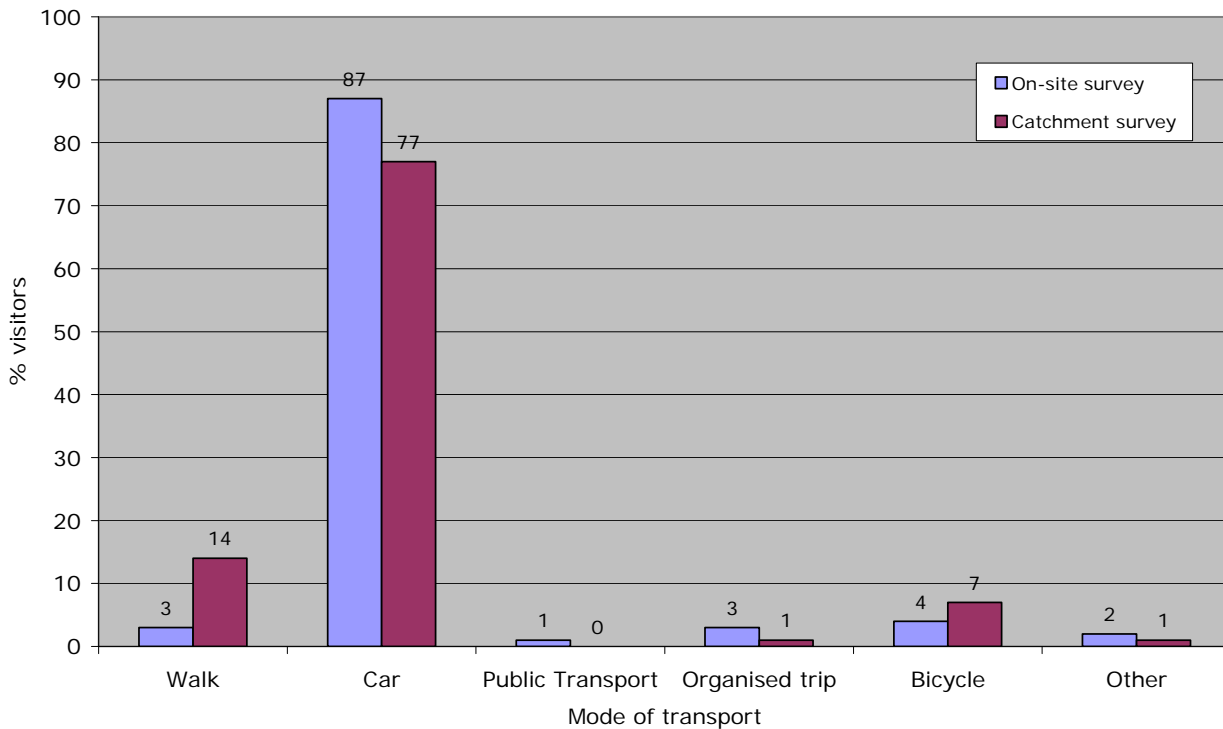
Figure 5: Activity types at Birches Valley



4.1.4 Travelling to Birches Valley

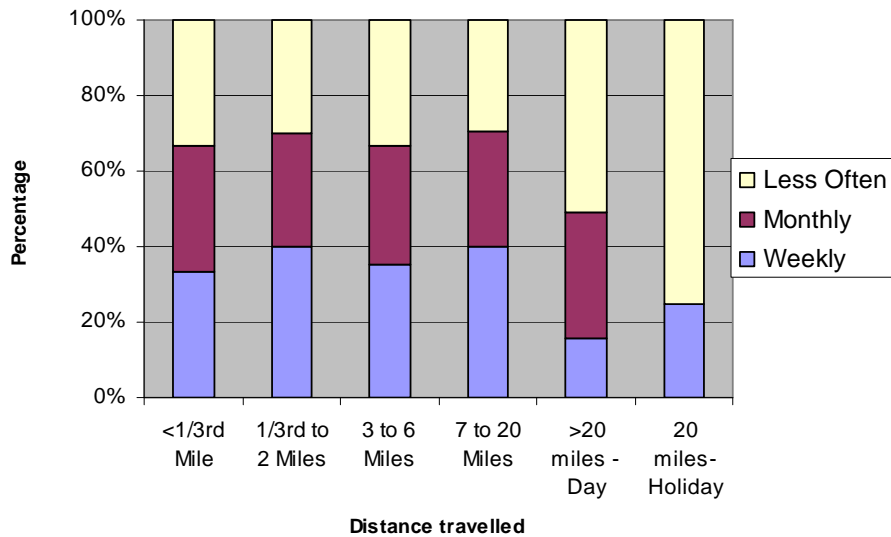
Respondents to the on-site survey were asked how they had travelled to Birches Valley. Catchment survey respondents (visitors only; n=329) were asked how they usually get to Birches Valley. The results in Figure 7, below, show that most visitors come by car. Some visitors either walk or cycle. Respondents to the on-site survey were also asked how far they live from Birches Valley. The results show that only 8% of visitors live within 2 miles of the site (2 mile = 3.22 km; within the 2.5 mile catchment area). The majority of visitors (92%) of visitors live outside the catchment (between 3 and 20 miles from Birches Valley). This explains the high proportion of visitors who arrive by car.

Figure 6: Travelling to Birches Valley



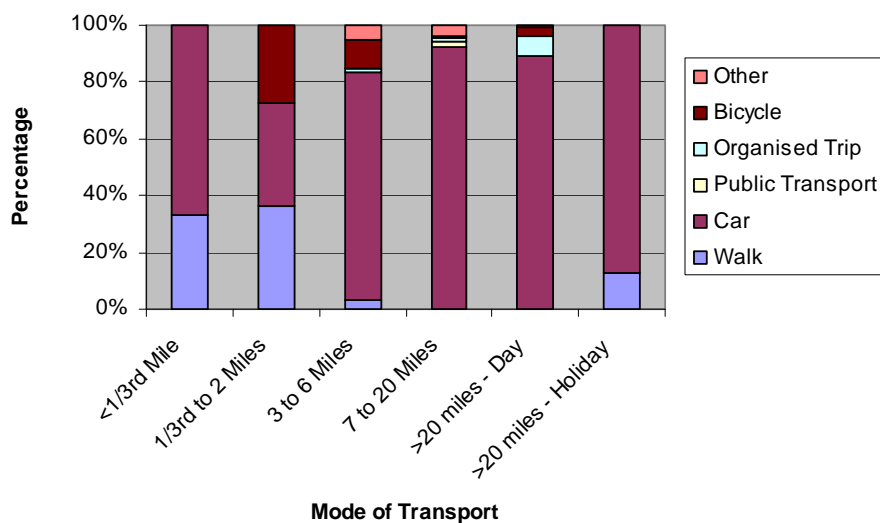
Analysis of how far respondents travelled to Birches Valley and their stated frequency of visit is presented in Figure 8. The data demonstrates that of those visitors who live within 1/3 and 2 miles of the site, 33% and 40% visit weekly, respectively (i.e. every day, 4-6 times per week or 1-3 times per week). Of the visitors who travelled >20 miles to the site (and who had been to the site previously) 16% visit Birches Valley weekly, 33% visit monthly and 51% visit less than monthly (i.e. 'a few times per year' or 'less often').

Figure 7: Variation in distance travelled to Birches Valley and frequency of visit (on-site survey)



Analysis of how far respondents travelled to Birches Valley and their stated usual mode of travel is presented in Figure 8. The data demonstrates that of those visitors who live <1/3 and 2 miles from the site, 33% and 36% reported walking, and 67% and 36% travelled by car, respectively. Visitors who lived 7-20 miles from Birches Valley, none reported walking to site, 93% travelled by car, 2% travelled by public transport, 1% visited on an organised trip, 1% cycle and 4% reported using other means of transport.

Figure 8: Variation in distance travelled to Birches Valley and usual mode of travel (on-site survey)

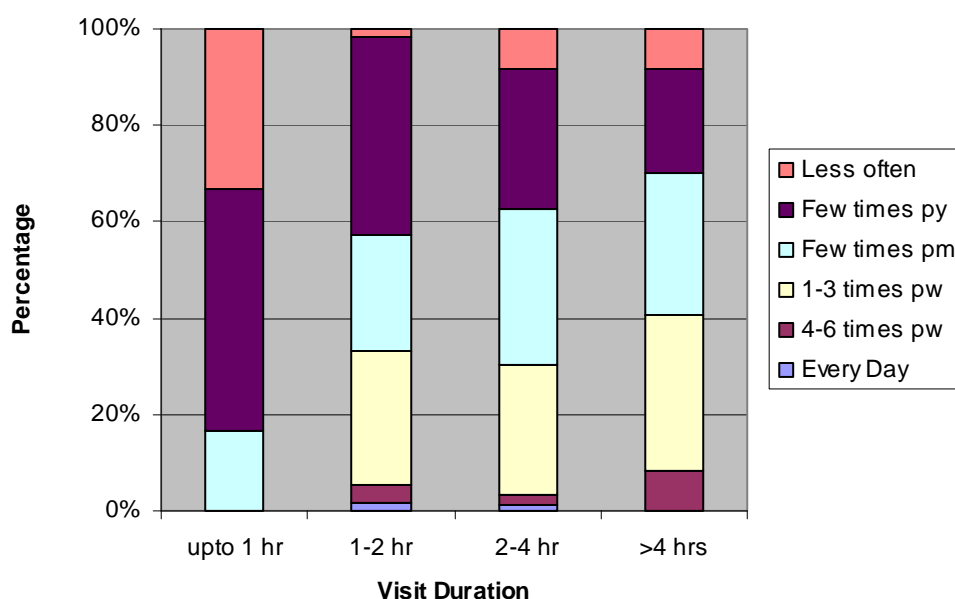


4.1.5 Duration of visits to Birches Valley

Respondents to the on-site survey were asked how long a typical visit to Birches Valley lasts. The results show that the mean length of a visit is 2 hours and 48 minutes. Only 2% of visitors stay less than 1 hour, 19% visit for between 1 - 2 hours, and 66% between 2-4 hours.

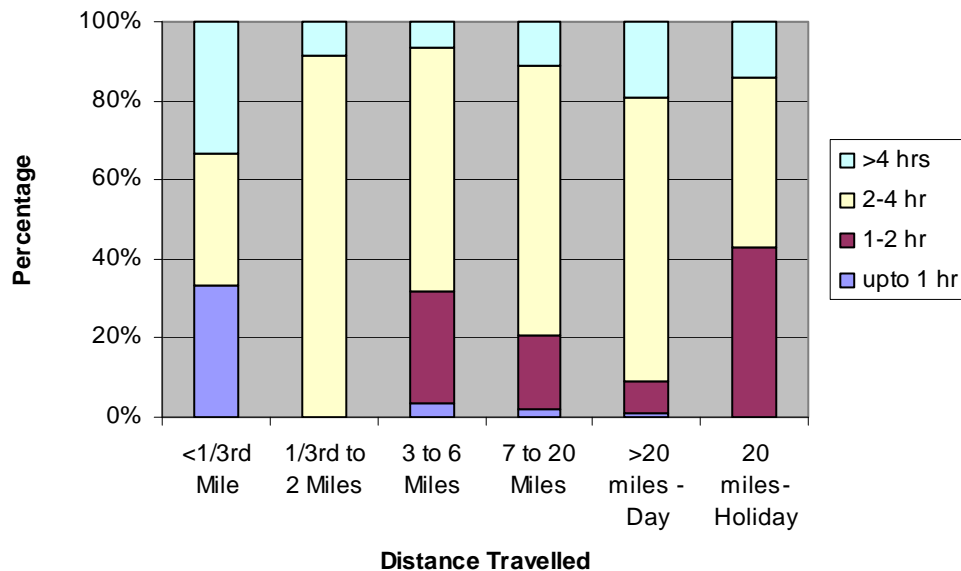
Analysis of how long respondents visit Birches Valley and their stated frequency of visit is presented in Figure 9. The data demonstrates that of those visitors who spend up to 1 hour at Birches Valley, 17% visit 4-6 times per week, 50% visit a few times per month and the remaining 33% visit 'less often'. Contrastingly, of respondents who visit Birches Valley for 2-4 hours, 1% visit every day, 2% visit 4-6 times per week, 27% visit 1-3 times per week, 33% visit a few times per month, 29% visit a few times per year and the remaining 8% visit 'less often'.

Figure 9: Variation in duration of visit to Birches Valley and frequency of visit (on-site survey)



A comparison of how far respondents travelled to Birches Valley and their stated duration of visit is presented in Figure 11. The data demonstrates that of those visitors who live <math>< 1/3^{\text{rd}}</math> mile from the site 33% stay up to 1hr, 33% stay for 2-4 hrs and the remaining 34% stay >4 hours.

Figure 10: Variation in distance travelled to Birches Valley and duration of visit (on-site survey)



4.1.5 Group visits to Birches Valley

The Activities and Events Database indicates that 172 ranger led community, education and recreation events were held at Birches Valley in the current reporting period. One of these events (an education event) was specifically targeted towards young people who attended as a youth group. The youth group and one group from a deprived community made their first visit to Birches Valley in the current reporting period. Data on the number of follow-up visits to Birches Valley and the number of 1st guided visits were not stored on the in the current reporting period.

Forty two groups requested permission to hold a group activity at Birches Valley in the current reporting period. One of these groups was from a college, one was a charity and one from a church; 6 were commercial groups and 30 were broadly categorised as community groups.

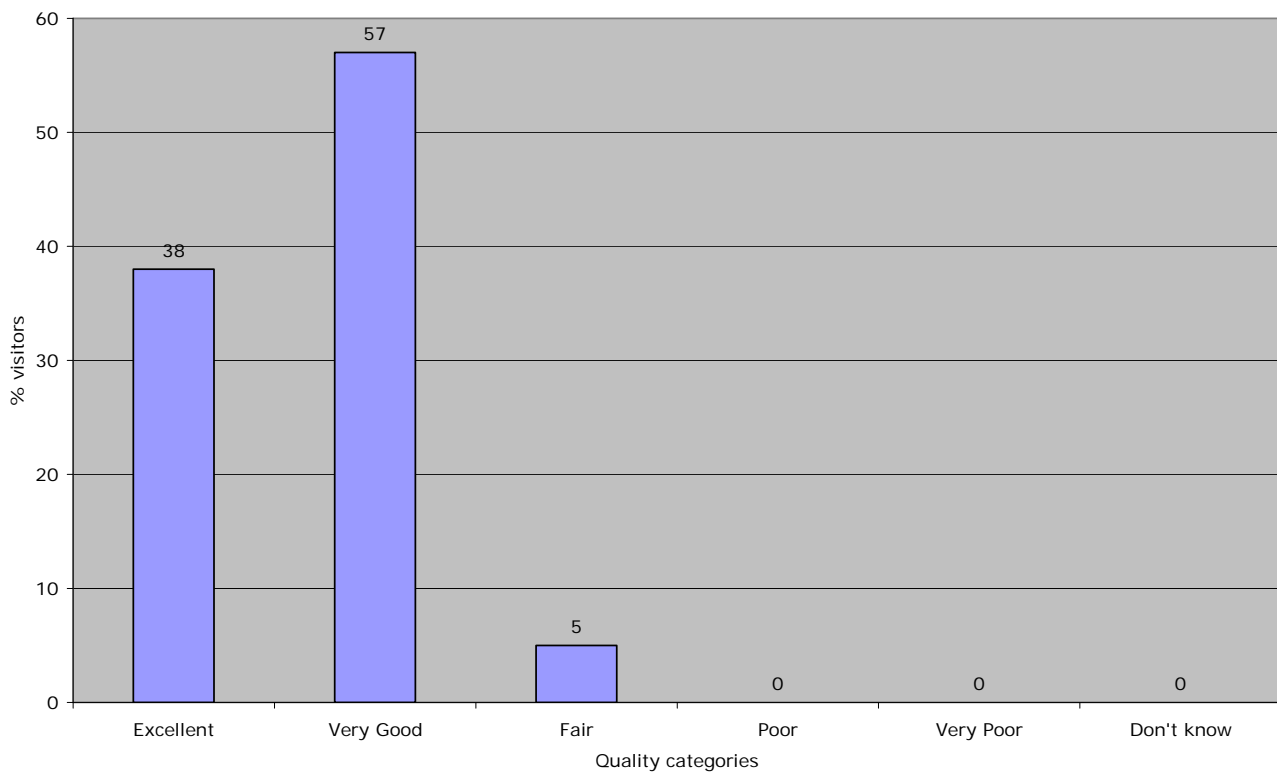
4.2 Visitors' experiences at Birches Valley

4.2.1 Birches Valley's quality rating

Visitors surveyed on-site were asked to give an overall quality rating for Birches Valley as a place to visit, using the following quality scale: Excellent, Very good, Fair, Poor, Very poor, Don't know. The results show that 95% of visitors rate Birches Valley as

either 'excellent' or 'very good' (Figure 12). No visitors gave Birches Valley a negative overall quality rating.

Figure 11: Overall quality rating for Birches Valley



To understand what aspects of the site might be contributing to the overall quality ratings, visitors were also asked to rate the quality of individual features and facilities at Birches Valley, using the same quality scale. Mean scores for each feature / facility were calculated, where a score of 1=Excellent, 2=Very Good, 3=Fair, 4=Poor, 5=Very Poor. The results in Table 9 (below) suggest that trails and paths, nature conservation, and site maintenance are largely responsible for the overall high quality ratings shown in Figure 12 (above). There were no aspects of the site that received a negative quality rating (3 and above).

Table 9: Quality ratings for facilities / features at Birches Valley

Facilities / features	Mean quality rating
Car Park	2.3
Design of site	2.0
Site Maintenance	1.9
Trails and paths	1.7
Visitor facilities	2.1
Nature Conservation	1.8
Kids Facilities	2.0
Sports Facilities	2.0
Info Available	2.2

4.2.2 Negative aspects

In 2010, on-site survey respondents were asked whether a range of potentially problematic aspects had 'affected a lot', 'affected a little', or 'did not affect' their enjoyment of Birches Valley. If respondents did not encounter the problem, they could state this as a response. The results for each potentially problematic aspect are shown in Figures 13 to 19 (below) and reveal that, for a significant number of visitors, litter or fly tipping (13%) and dogs and dog dirt (24%) affect the enjoyment of Birches Valley either a lot or a little.

Figure 12: Litter or fly tipping

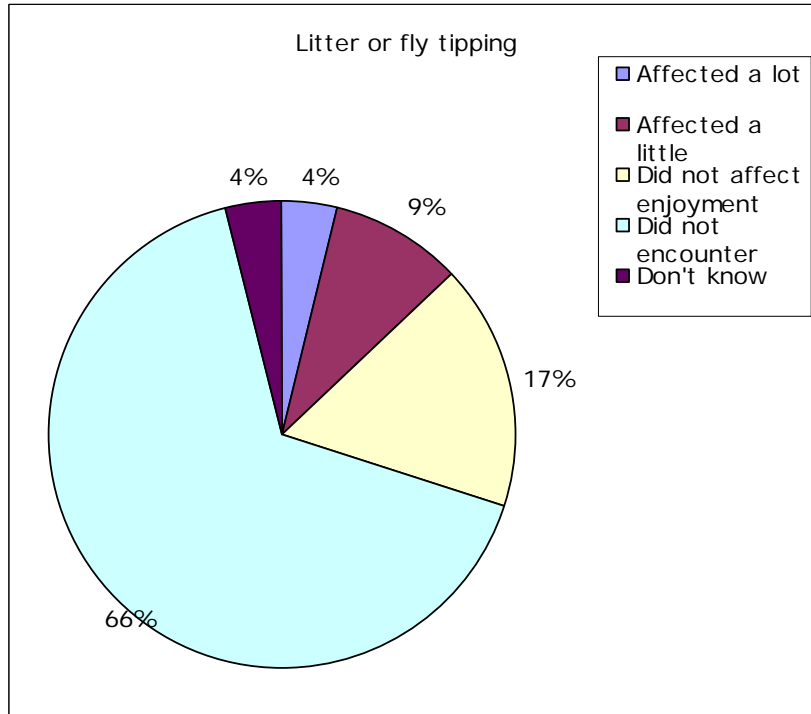


Figure 13: Dogs and dog dirt

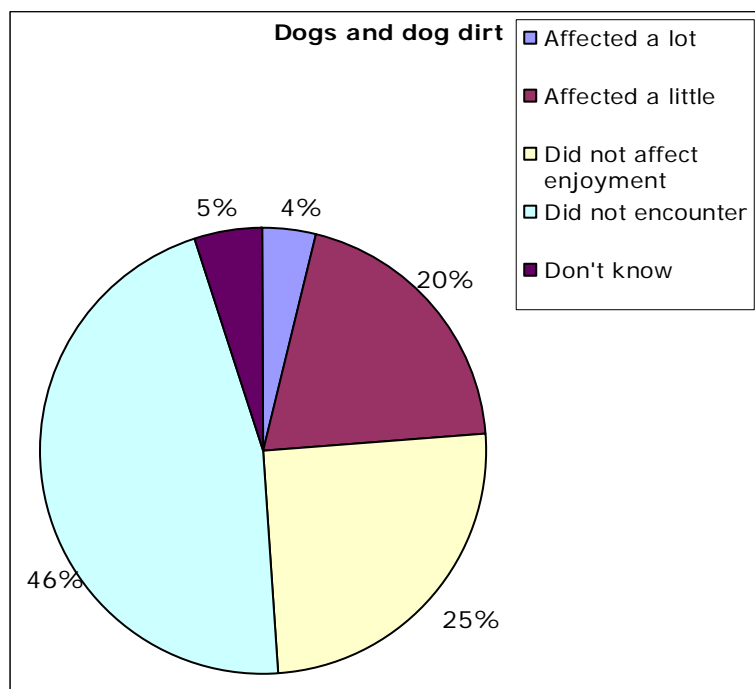


Figure 14: Muddy tracks

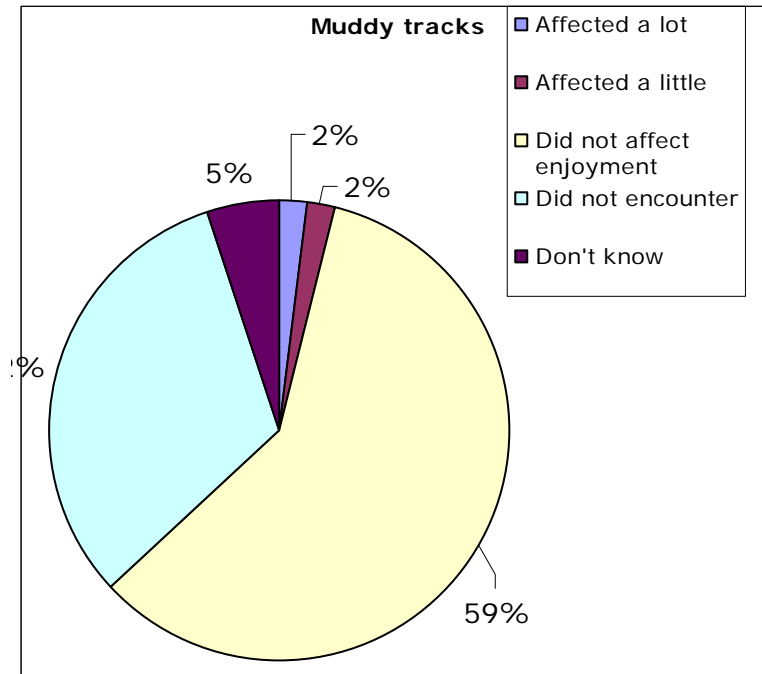


Figure 15: Vandalised or missing signs

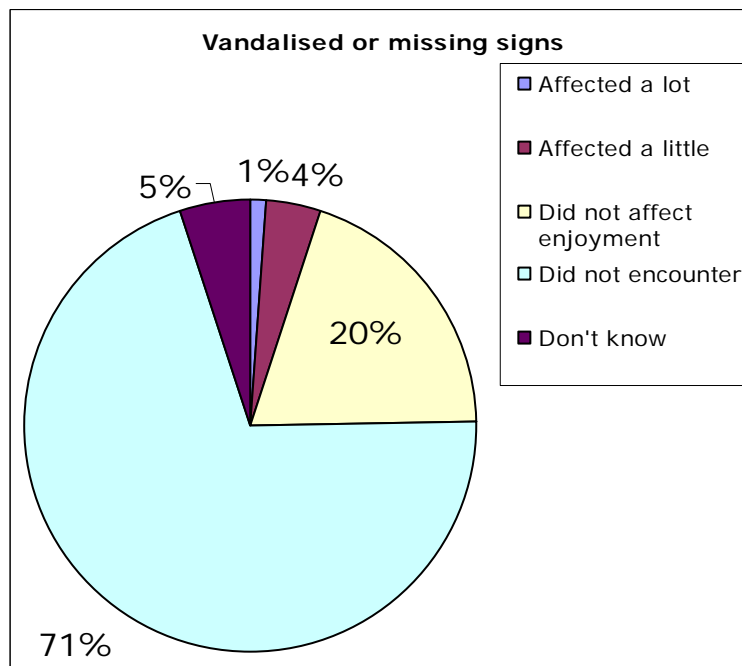


Figure 16: Forestry operations e.g. felling

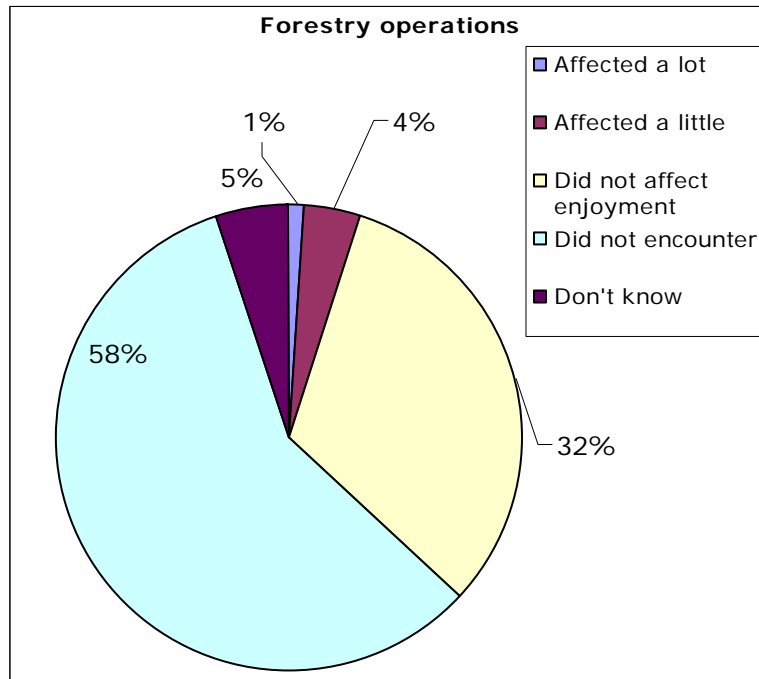


Figure 17: Motorised sports

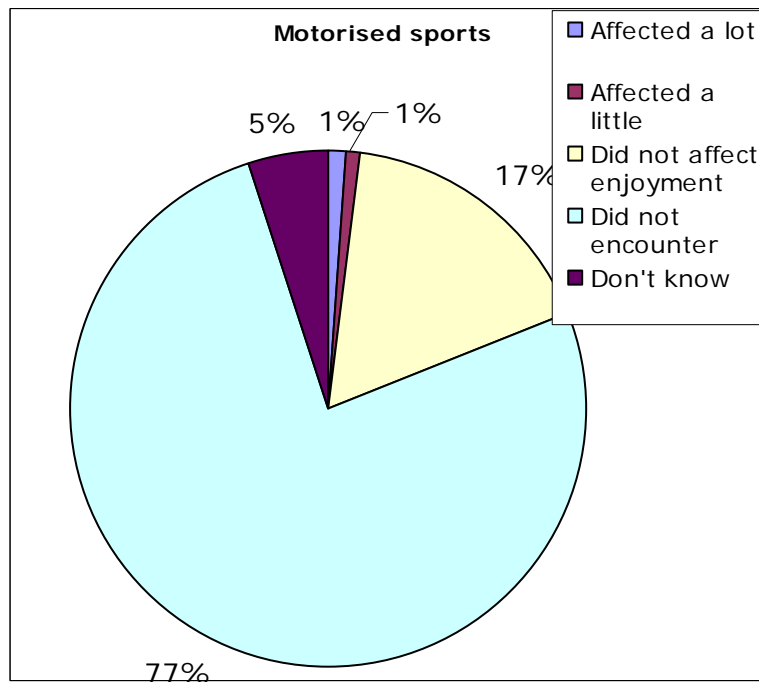
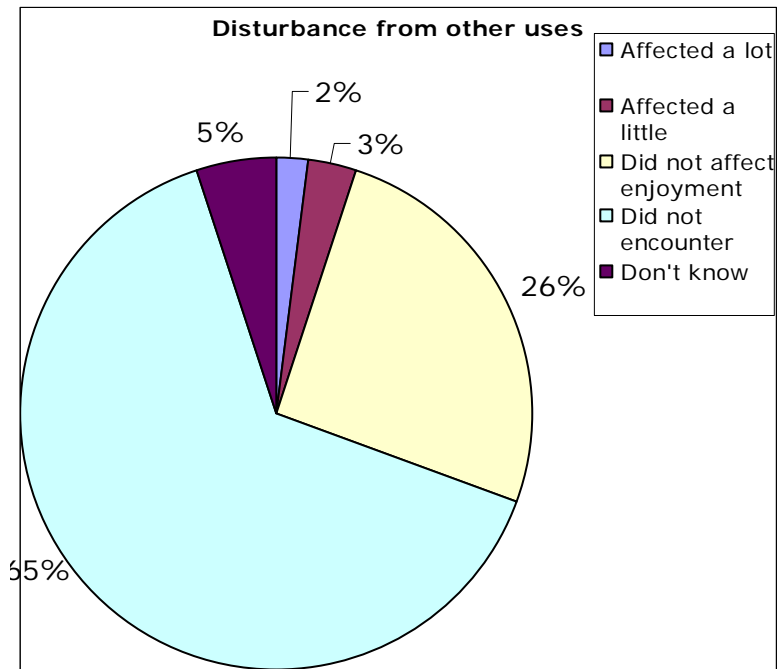


Figure 18: Disturbance from other users



4.3 Additional benefits

In addition to the closed list of personal and community benefit categories, respondents to the on-site survey in 2010 were given the opportunity to state other types of benefit that they felt they had gained through visits to Birches Valley. Responses included:

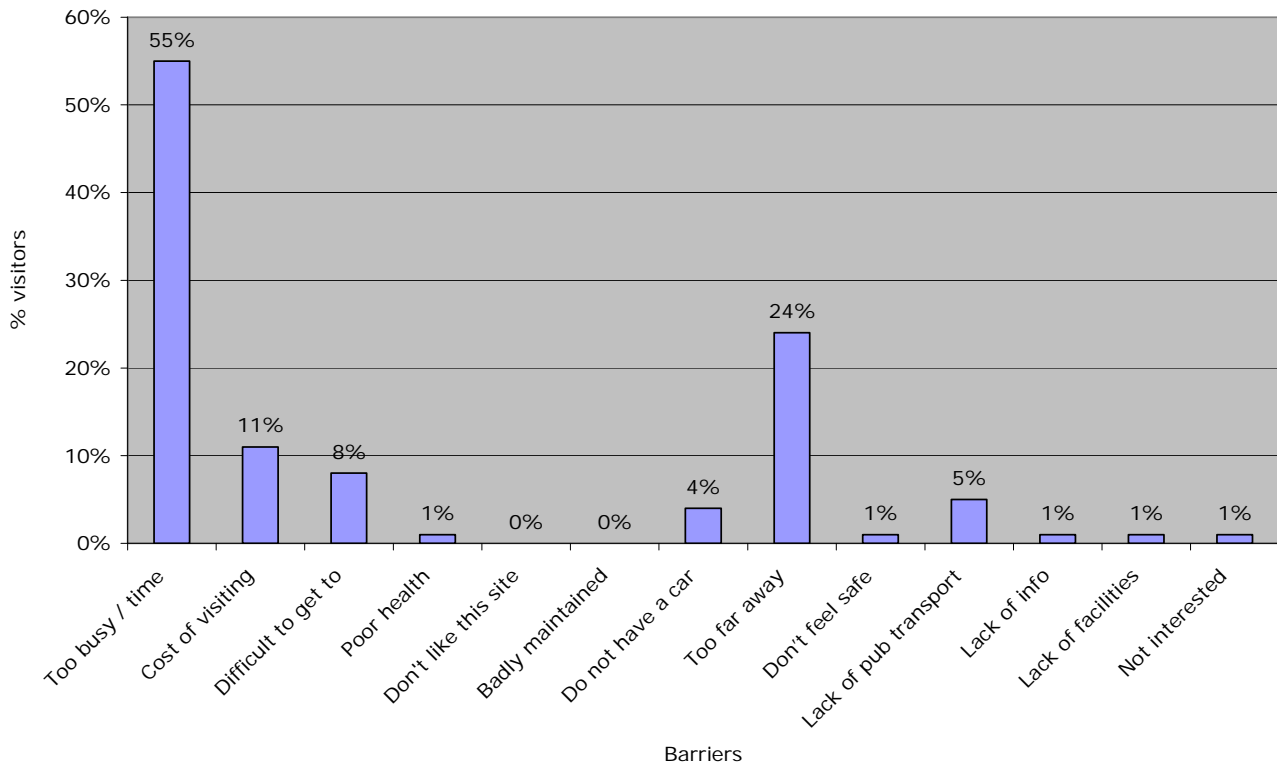
- Brings nature to the masses
- Great social scene & friendly shop staff
- Great bike shop & friendly staff
- Tranquillity away from everyday humdrum
- Socialising with new people from all walks of life
- MTB improved my life lost 2 1/2 stone & am a richer person
- Non polluted air is good for my family's asthma

4.4 Barriers to visiting

Respondents to the 2010 on-site survey were asked about factors that prevent them from visiting Birches Valley more often. The results in Figure 19 (below) show that, for many visitors (55%), lack of time prevents them from visiting more often. 24% of respondents identified 'woods are too far away' as a barrier, reflecting Birches Valley's

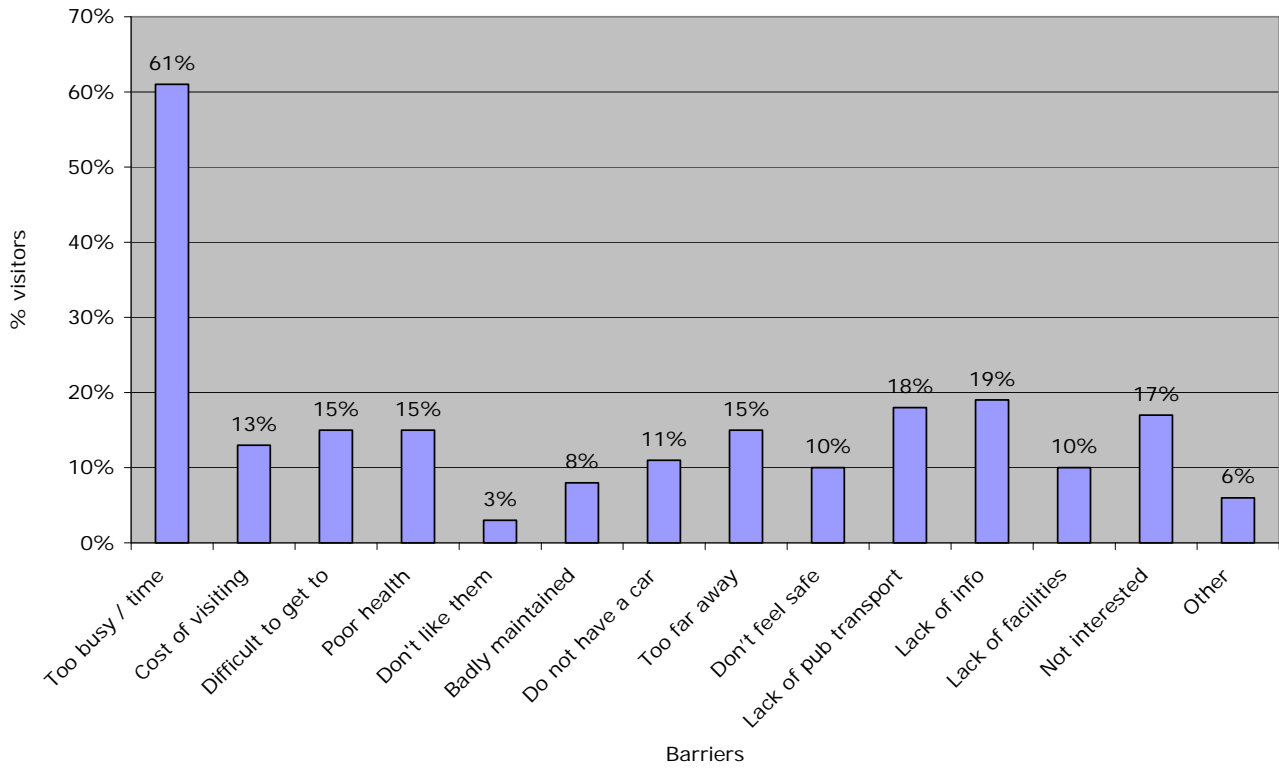
character as a tourist/day-trippers destination with the majority of visitors (92%) of visitors live outside the catchment (between 3 and 20 miles from Birches Valley).

Figure 19: Barriers to visiting Birches Valley more often



Respondents to the 2010 catchment survey were asked about factors that prevent them from visiting local parks, woods and green spaces more often. The results in Figure 21 (below) show that many respondents (61%) cite 'lack of time' as a barrier. Significant numbers of respondents also cite 'Lack of information' (19%), 'Lack of public transport' (18%), and 'Not interested' (17%) as reasons for not visiting local green spaces more often.

Figure 20: Barriers to visiting local green spaces more often



5. Birches Valley's baseline visitor profile

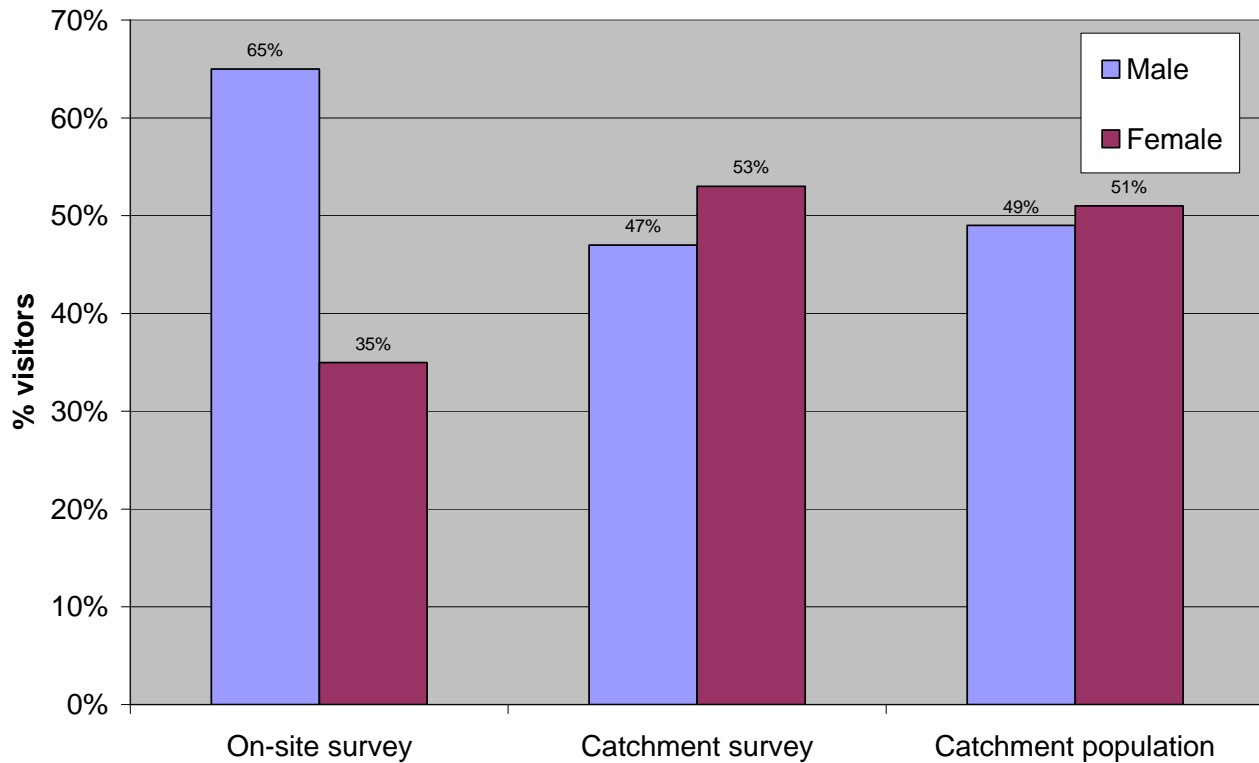
In this section, results from the on-site and catchment surveys and the analysis of management data returns are used to present a detailed 'visitor profile' for Birches Valley. Sub-section 5.1 presents an analysis of the socio-demographic make-up of visitors, focusing on gender, age, household income, employment status, disability and ethnicity. For each socio-demographic category, comparisons are made between the visitor profile and the profile of Birches Valley's catchment population carried out in 2008 to assess the 'representativeness' of the visitor profile. In sub-section 5.2 the socio-demographic disaggregation of visitors to Birches Valley is then used in a re-analysis of the headline indicators presented in Section 2 to reveal whether there is any significant relationship between the demographic categories and engagement, quality of experience, personal and social benefits, and barriers. Analyses are only presented in those cases where there is a statistically significant relationship between the socio-demographic category of visitors and responses to questions in the surveys – in other words, where the research results warrant the conclusion that socio-demography has an influence over quality of experience, benefits, or barriers.

5.1 Socio-demographic profile of visitors to Birches Valley

5.1.1 Gender profile

The catchment survey results (2010) show that there are slightly more female than male visitors to Birches Valley (Figure 22, below). The profiling of Birches Valley's catchment population in 2008 revealed that females (51%) slightly outnumbered males (49%). As such, the catchment survey results suggest that the gender profile of visitors to Birches Valley is closely representative of the gender profile of the catchment population. However, the results of the on-site survey suggest that males (65%) significantly outnumber females (35%) amongst visitors. It is unclear what lies behind this discrepancy between the results of the two surveys.

Figure 21: Gender profile of visitors to Birches Valley

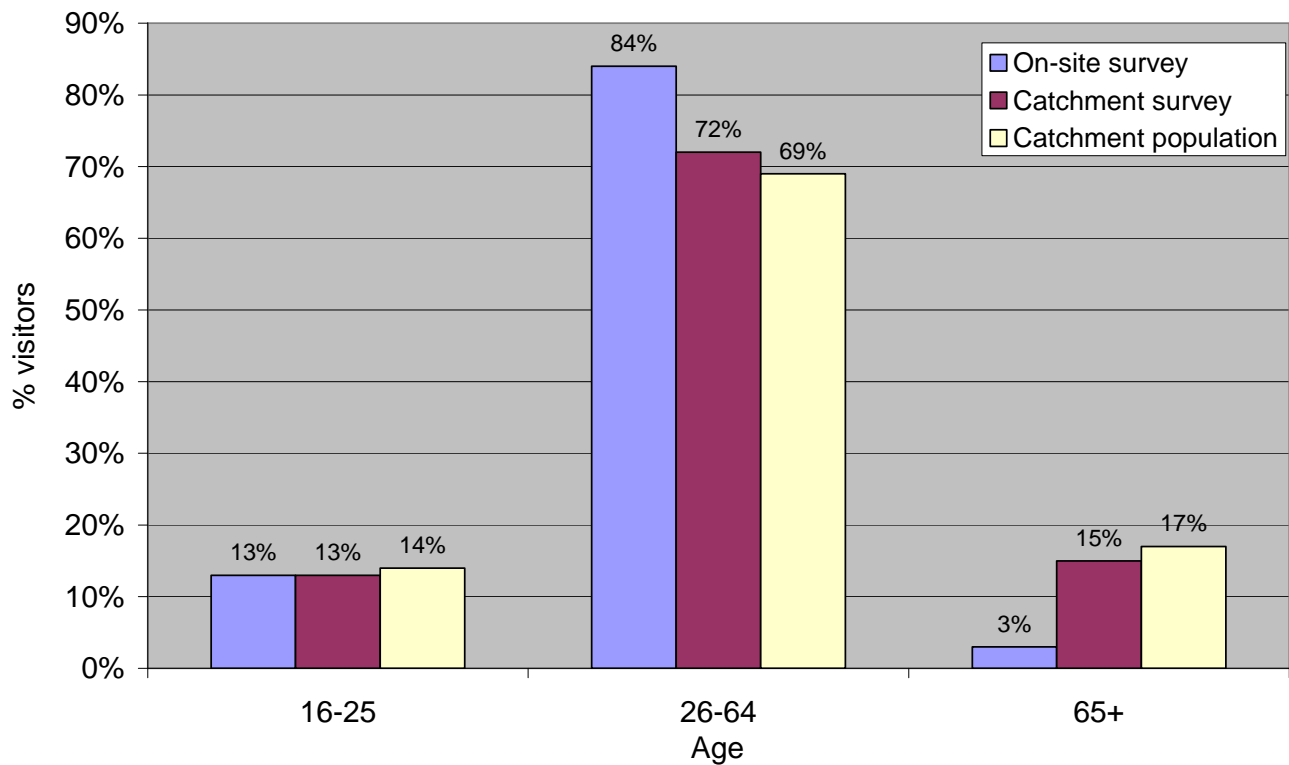


5.1.2 Age profile

The age profile of visitors surveyed through the on-site and catchment survey are compared in Figure 23, below. Most visitors (84% on-site survey, 72% catchment survey) fall within the 26-64 yrs age category.

Figure 22 also presents the age profile of the catchment population (adjusted to exclude the under 16 yrs category) and shows that representation of 65+ yrs within the on-site survey respondents is lower than in the background population. The results of the on-site survey indicate, therefore, that this age group may be slightly under-represented amongst visitors to Birches Valley.

Figure 22: Age profile of visitors to Birches Valley



5.1.3 Income profile

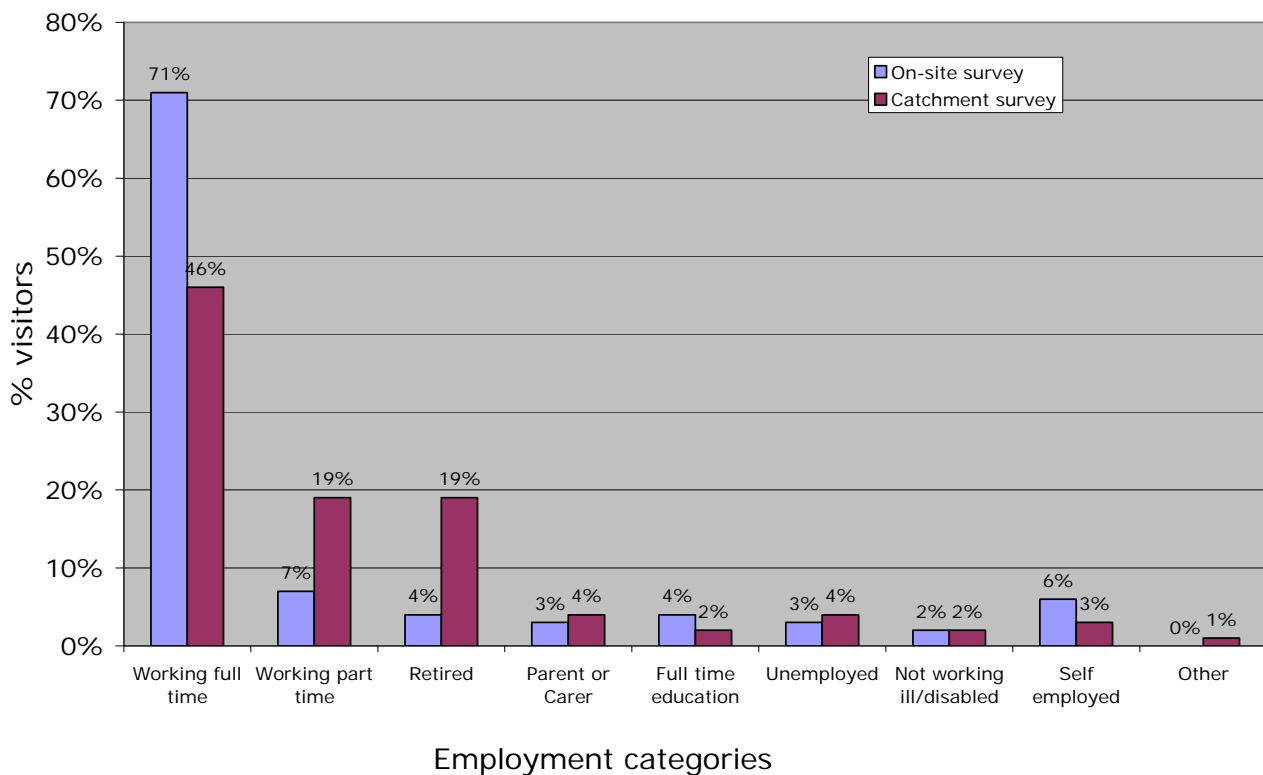
Results from the on-site and catchment surveys in 2010 reveal that not all respondents were willing to answer questions about household income. Out of 327 on-site survey respondents, only 252 (77%) answered this question. In the catchment survey, of the 329 respondents who had visited Birches Valley, only 175 (53%) answered. As such, the results presented here should be treated with caution.

Of those on-site survey respondents who answered the question relating to household income (77%, n=252), 17% are from low income households (20K or less). Respondents from low income households accounted for 15% (n=49) of visiting respondents to the catchment survey. The profiling of Birches Valley's catchment population reveals a mean average household income of £30,539 (median: £25,046). In 2008, just over 33% of respondents to the on-site survey recorded a household income lower than the mean average for the catchment, whereas this proportion had dropped to just over 30% in 2010. These results suggest that i) the representation of low income visitors is falling at Birches Valley, or ii) incomes have risen slowly (NB: average income figures are based on the 2001 Census and therefore are fixed for the project period).

5.1.4 Employment profile

The employment profile of visitors surveyed through the on-site and catchment surveys is shown in Figure 23, below. The majority of on-site (82%) and catchment (84%) survey respondents are either working full-time, part-time, or retired. Taking the visitor population from both surveys (327+329=656), retired (n=13+64=77) and unemployed people (n=10+14=24) account for about 15% of visitors to Birches Valley. The results of the catchment profiling reveal that about 15% of the catchment population fall within social grade 'E', which includes unemployed people, pensioners and all people on state benefits. The results of the research suggest, therefore, that unemployed and retired people are well represented amongst visitors to Birches Valley.

Figure 23: Employment profile of visitors to Birches Valley



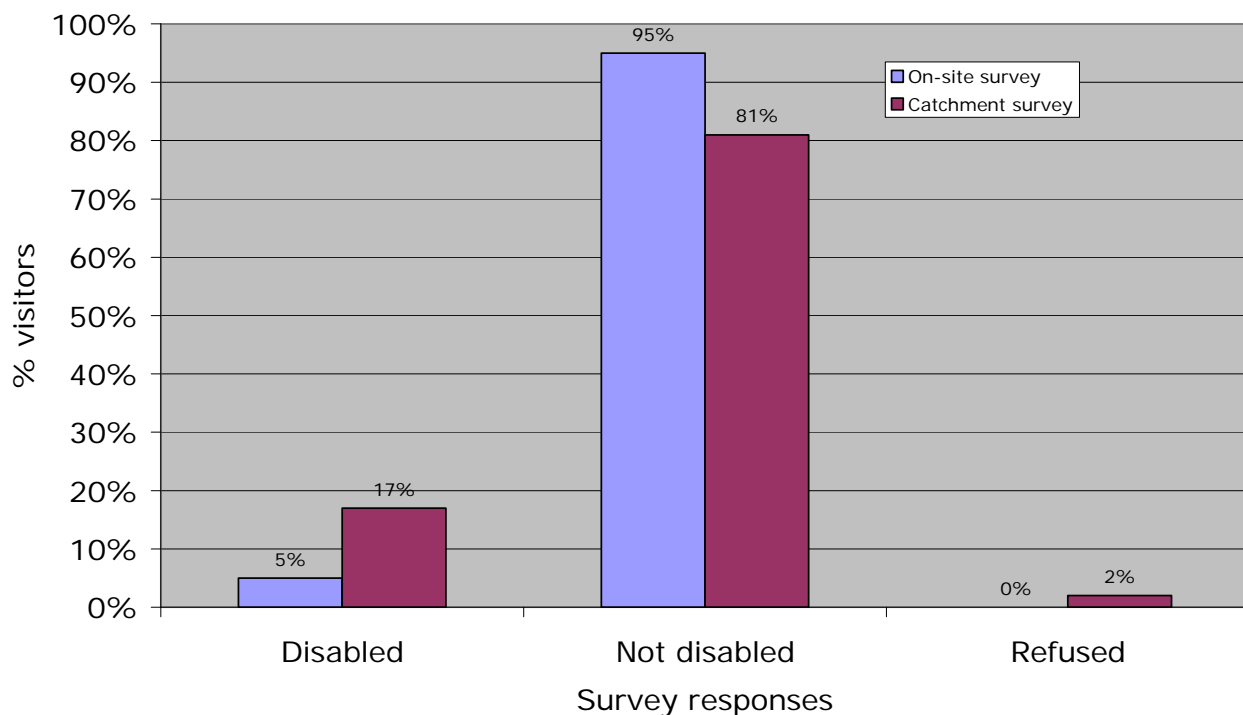
5.1.5 Disability profile

The 2010 on-site and catchment survey results show, respectively, that 5% and 17% of visitors to Birches Valley are disabled. Disabled respondents to the on-site survey fell within the following categories of disability: Mobility (n=2), Visual impairment (n=2), Hearing impairment (n=1), Mental health (n=3), Physical health (n=4), Other (n=5).

Taking the visitor population from both surveys (327+329=656), visiting disabled respondents (n=15+57=72) account for about 11% of visitors to Birches Valley. The

socio-demographic indicator 'Disability' was not used to profile the Birches Valley catchment, so direct comparisons with the catchment profile are not possible. However, the catchment profiling does show that about 20% of people living within the catchment suffer from limiting, long-term illness. The research allows a tentative conclusion to be drawn, therefore, that people with disabilities are broadly represented amongst visitors to Birches Valley.

Figure 24: Disability profile of visitors to Birches Valley

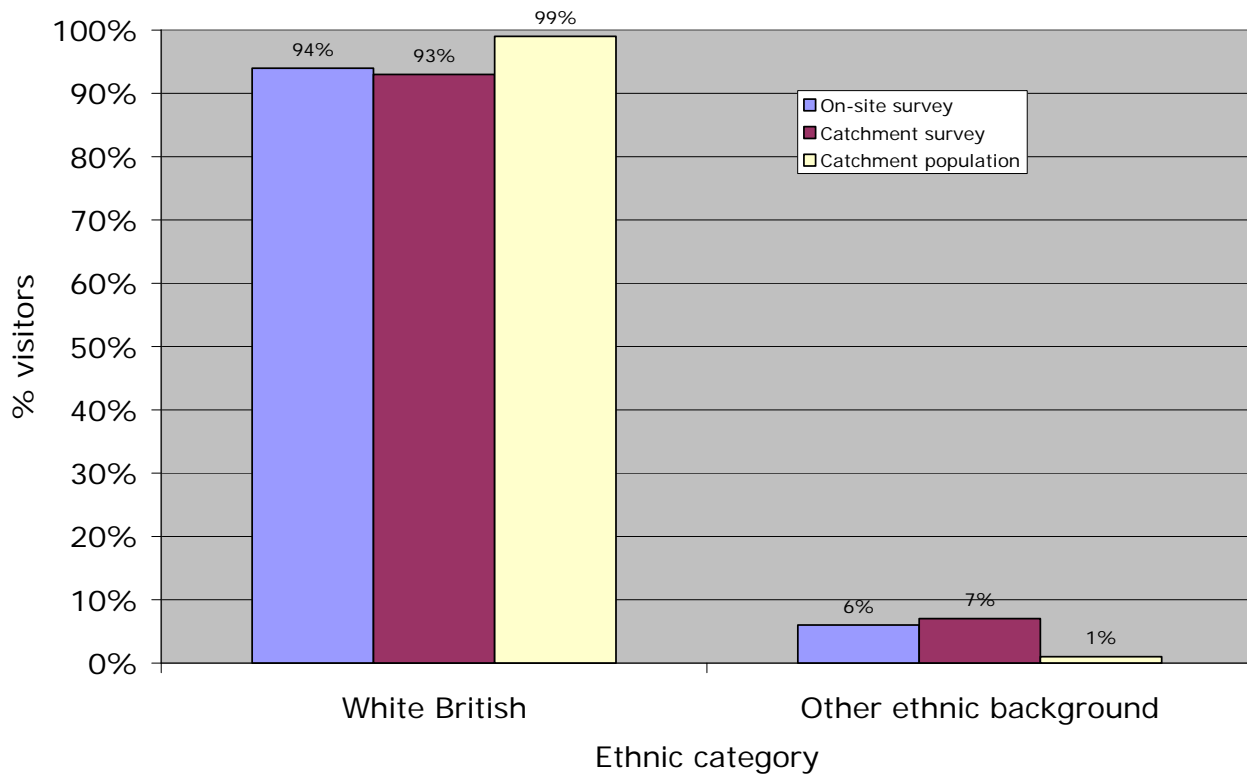


5.1.6 Ethnic profile

Results from both on-site and catchment surveys reveal that the vast majority of visitors to Birches Valley categorise themselves as 'White British' (see Figure 25, below).

Taking the visitor population from both surveys (only those who answered this question) (303+329=632), people who categorise themselves as other than 'White British' (n=7+23=30) account for about 5% of visitors to Birches Valley. The ethnic profiling of visitors and Birches Valley's catchment population shows that people falling within the 'Other ethnic background' category account for just over 1% of the catchment population. The research results indicate, therefore, that minority ethnic groups are well represented amongst visitors to Birches Valley.

Figure 25: Ethnicity profile of visitors to Birches Valley

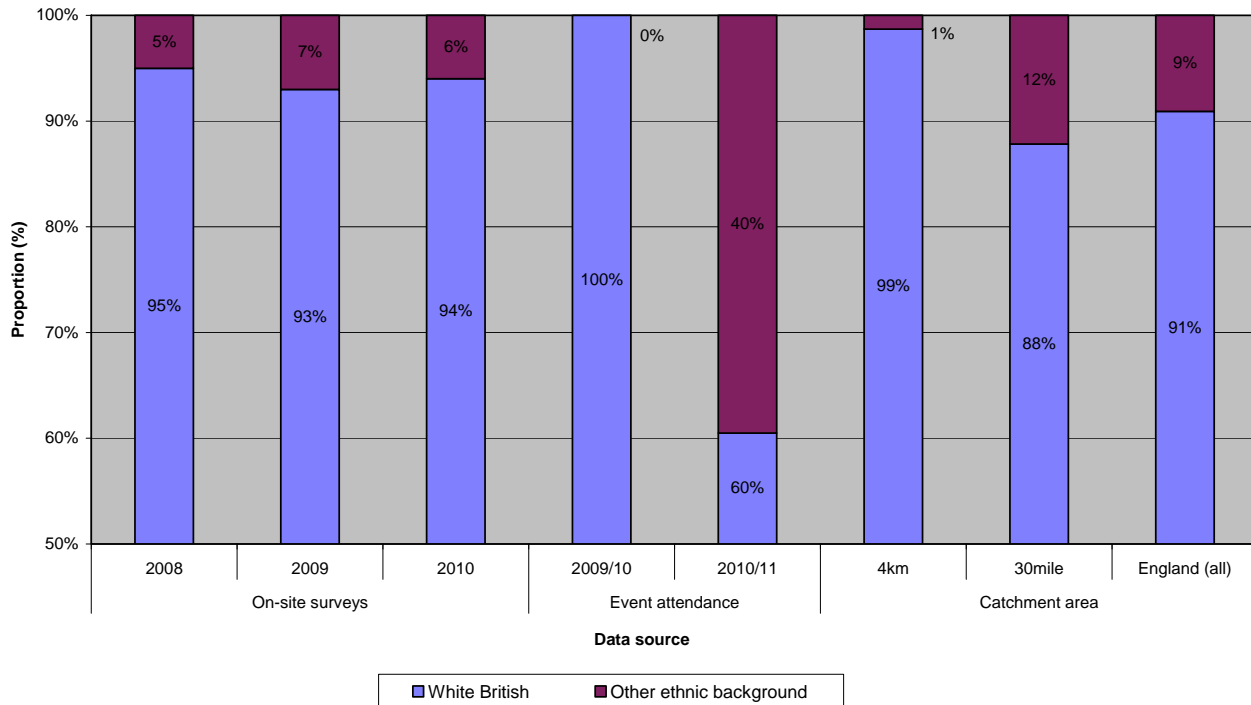


5.1.7 Ethnic profile - 30mile catchment area

A comparison of visitor (on-site surveys and event feedback forms) and catchment population ethnic profiles is presented in Figure 27 (below). The data demonstrates that the majority of these visitors categorised themselves as 'White British', with the notable exception of activities and event participants in 2010/11: 'White British: 60%', 'other ethnic backgrounds: 40%'.

The ethnic profiling of visitors and Birches Valley's 2.5 mile catchment population shows that people falling within the 'Other ethnic background' category account for just over 1% of the 2.5 mile catchment population and 12% of the 30mile catchment population. With respect to the 2.5 mile catchment area, therefore, minority ethnic groups are well represented amongst visitors to Birches Valley. However, with respect to the 30mile catchment area, minority ethnic groups were under-represented amongst informal visitors (on-site surveys) and under-represented amongst formal visitors in 2009/10, although well represented amongst formal visitors in 2010/11.

Figure 26: Comparison of ethnicity profiles for on-site surveys, events & the different size catchment areas



5.1.8 Diversity profile for events

Total attendance at Birches Valley events in the current reporting period was 10,708 persons (Table 7) or 19.5% of the 2.5 mile catchment population. To provide an indication of the representativeness of diversity to events relative to the catchment population data was aggregated by Event type and grand totals were generated of participant ethnicity, age and gender, and disability (Table 10). The Activities and Events database indicates that diversity data of participants at self-led Activities was not collected in the current reporting period.

Of the 172 events held at Birches Valley between November 2009 and October 2010, ethnicity data was collected from 1 community event and 43 education events. Age and gender was collected from 1 community event and 44 education events (Table 10). The low percentage of events for which diversity data is available for analysis can be related to the flexibility granted to participants to part-take in the monitoring programme. Feedback forms included the option to tick the box if they “do not wish to assist us with monitoring”.

Table 10. Percentage diversity of attendees at Birches Valley events (November 2009 - October 2010).

Event type	Ethnicity			Age												No. of events*		
	White British	Other ethnic background	No. of events*	0-4		5-11		12-15		16-25		26-59		Over 60			Total	
				M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		M	F
Event - community	100%	0%	1 (1) [#]	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	5	0	0	0	0	10	5	1 (1) [#]
Event - education	60%	40%	43 (170)	123	92	637	551	6	6	0	0	10	29	0	0	776	678	44 (170)
Event - recreation	0	0	0 (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (1)
Total	56	0	44 (172)	123	92	637	551	6	6	10	5	10	29	0	0	786	683	45 (172)

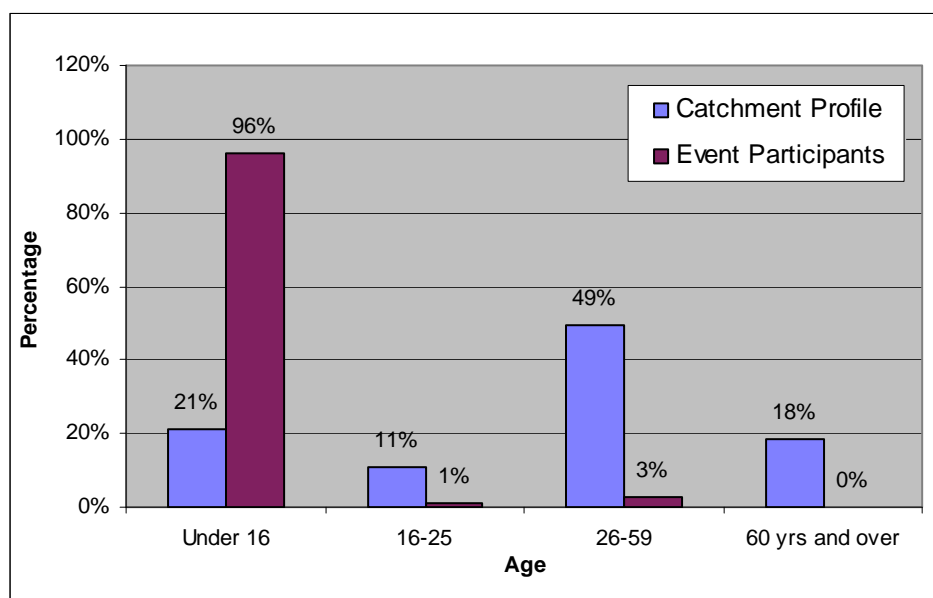
* = number of events that data is based upon

= number in brackets is total number of events for current reporting period

Diversity monitoring data gathered at the education events show that attendees were 60:40% White-British: Other ethnic background (Table 10). The ethnic profiling of Birches Valley's catchment population shows that people falling within the other ethnic background categories account for about 1% of the catchment population. The research results indicate that minority ethnic groups were well-represented amongst event participants during the current reporting period. The data indicates a swing in the ethnic diversity representativeness of event participants in comparison to the previous reporting period (2009) when other ethnic background categories were under-represented amongst event participants.

Age diversity monitoring was undertaken primarily at educational events for school aged children, with only three events monitored for age groups >16 years old. The Events database indicates that diversity data gathered is representative of the types of groups that visit Birches Valley for ranger led events. Of the total 172 education events, 170 were for schools, education bodies and youth organisations, and age and gender diversity data was gathered for 44 of these events. The Events Database indicates that under 16s were overly-represented in comparison to other age groups attending events and when compared to the catchment population. The age groups 16-25, 26-59 and 60 years and over were heavily under-represented in comparison to the catchment population. In previous reporting periods, insufficient data was entered in the Events database for trends in the representativeness of the age groups of participants to events at Birches Valley be presented.

Figure 27. Age diversity of event participants at Birches Valley



Gender diversity data recorded at the 1 community event and 44 education events indicates that participants were 46% female. This data is similar to that in the previous reporting periods when normalised event attendance was recorded to be 50:50 male:female. The socio-demographic indicator 'Gender' showed that within the catchment 51% were female.

Disability data was recorded for 18 of the 172 community, education and recreation events. Of the 7,342 participants to these 172 events, 51 (0.69%) recorded a disability: physical health (n=9), visual impairment (n=8), mental impairment (n=3), learning impairment (n=29), other disability (n=2). Adjusting the figures for the fraction of events where disability diversity was monitored, the proportion of participants at formal events at Birches Valley with a disability was: 1.0% physical health, 0.9% visual impairment, 0.3% mental impairment, 3.4% learning impairment, 0.2% other disability.

Comparison to the catchment is not possible as the socio-demographic indicator 'Disability' was not profiled. In the previous reporting period, 1.4% of participants to 3 education events recorded a disability (the total number of education events for which disability data was recorded was 25).

5.2 Socio-demography and use, engagement, quality of experience, benefits and barriers

In this sub-section, the relationship between socio-demographic categories of visitors and responses to the questions about use, engagement, quality of experience, benefits and barriers are analysed to discover whether there is any significant relationship between the demographic categories and respondents' perceptions and experiences of Birches Valley. As stated above, analyses are only presented in those cases where there is a statistically significant relationship between the socio-demographic category of visitors and responses to questions in the surveys – in other words, where the research results warrant the conclusion that socio-demography has an influence.

5.2.1 Socio-demography and use

The results of the on-site survey reveal that males are more likely than females to visit more frequently in both spring / summer and autumn / winter ($p=0.01$). Males are also more likely to engage in exercise (e.g. walking, running, mountain biking) whilst females are more likely to have picnics and play with the kids ($p=0.01$).

5.2.2 Socio-demography and engagement

The results of the on-site survey reveal that 10% ($n=29$) of visitors to Birches Valley have been involved in management related activities. Given that the number of visitors involved is small, differences between responses given by different categories of respondents need to be large in order to conclude that socio-demography has an influence. The results of the statistical analysis of responses to the on-site survey indicate that disabled visitors are more likely to be involved in management related activities than non-disabled visitors ($p=0.09$).

5.2.3 Socio-demography and benefits

The results of the statistical analysis reveal a significant relationship between socio-demographic categories and some categories of social benefit at Birches Valley. Females were more likely ($p<0.01$) to identify with learning about the environment, whilst people aged 55+ yrs were more likely to agree that the site gets them involved in local issues ($p<0.01$). Higher income groups were more likely ($p<0.01$) to agree with statements about the Birches Valley as a good place to relax, keep fit, have fun, and see wildlife. They were also more likely to agree that Birches Valley brings the community together, makes the area nicer place to live, and gets people involved in local issues.

5.2.4 Socio-demography and barriers

The results of the statistical analysis reveal a significant relationship between socio-demographic categories and some barriers to visiting Birches Valley. Young people are more likely to be affected by lack of car and public transport ($p<0.01$). Over 55s are more likely than other age groups to be concerned about personal safety.

Appendix

Socio-demographic profile tables for Birches Valley Forest Centre – 2.5 mile and 30 mile catchment areas

Count of LSOAs in that Decile			
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 (Decile)	2.5 mile catchment area	30mile catchment area	England as a whole
1 most deprived	0	532	3,248
2	6	427	3,248
3	6	358	3,250
4	5	297	3,247
5	8	285	3,248
6	5	275	3,248
7	9	297	3,248
8	4	261	3,249
9	4	249	3,248
10 least deprived	2	208	3,248
Count of LSOAs within Catchment	49	3,189	32,482

Population Density	2.5 mile catchment area	30mile catchment area	England as a whole
All People	54,976	4,835,470	49,138,616
Area (Hectares)	11,322	773,506	13,028,764
Population Density (Persons per hectare)	4.9	6.3	3.8
Count of OAs	176	15,882	165,664

Gender	2.5 mile catchment area	30mile catchment area	England as a whole
Males	27,135	2,364,614	23,922,036
Females	27,841	2,470,856	25,216,580
All People	54,976	4,835,470	49,138,616
Count of OAs	176	15,882	165,665

Age	2.5 mile catchment area	30mile catchment area	England as a whole
Under 16 years	11,795	1,016,911	9,901,028
16 to 25 years	6,116	595,138	5,955,080
26 to 64 years	29,870	2,467,755	25,474,146
65 years and over	7,318	754,801	7,806,053
All People	55,099	4,834,605	49,136,307
26 to 59 years	27,095	2,226,231	23,080,940
60 years and over	10,093	996,325	10,199,259
Count of OAs	176	15,882	165,664

Count of LSOAs in that Decile

Income Estimate	2.5 mile catchment area	30mile catchment area	England as a whole
Average annual household income (GB Pounds)	30,539	27,412	31,898
Standard deviation (GB Pounds)	5,998	6,214	8,752
Minimum annual household income (GB Pounds)	21,915	14,088	14,088
Maximum annual household income (GB Pounds)	44,352	51,135	73,050
Count of MSOAs	17	673	6,781

Social Grade	2.5 mile catchment area	30mile catchment area	England as a whole
AB: Higher and intermediate managerial / administrative / professional	7,161	708,832	8,520,655
C1: Supervisory, clerical, junior managerial / administrative / professional	10,983	1,001,855	11,410,515
C2: Skilled manual workers	9,380	634,900	5,780,600
D: Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers	8,825	749,240	6,538,232
E: On state benefit, unemployed, lowest grade workers	6,527	654,757	6,143,176
All People Aged 16 and over in Households	42,876	3,749,584	38,393,178
Count of OAs	176	15,882	165,664

Ethnic Group	2.5 mile catchment area	30mile catchment area	England as a whole
White	54,288	4,246,767	44,679,346
Chinese	41	14,666	220,707
Mixed	253	71,630	643,208
Asian or Asian British	302	384,973	2,248,261
Black or Black British	101	104,215	1,132,329
Other Ethnic Group	16	12,908	214,202
All People	55,001	4,835,159	49,138,053
Count of OAs	176	15,882	165,664

Count of LSOAs in that Decile

Long term limiting illness	2.5 mile catchment area	30mile catchment area	England as a whole
People with limiting long-term illness (Count)	10,898	926,267	8,809,133
All People (Count)	54,976	4,835,470	49,138,619
Count of OAs	176	15,882	165,664

Rural and Urban Classification	2.5 mile catchment area	30mile catchment area	England as a whole
Urban >10,000 population	160	13,951	132,777
Town and fringe	2	857	15,091
Village	10	686	12,059
Hamlet & isolated dwellings	4	388	5,737
Count of OAs	176	15,882	165,664

Area Classification Super-Group	2.5 mile catchment area	30mile catchment area	England as a whole
Blue Collar Communities	58	2,991	24,532
City Living	0	344	11,661
Countryside	11	1,299	20,208
Prospering Suburbs	58	4,116	36,027
Constrained by Circumstances	20	2,077	17,566
Typical Traits	29	2,715	34,340
Multicultural	0	2,340	21,330
Count of OAs	176	15,882	165,664

Produced by David Cross, Policy & Programmes Group, Forestry Commission England

LSOA = Lower Super Output Area

LSOAs determined to be included in 500m, 2.5 mile and 10km catchment areas if they INTERSECT the respective catchment area.

LSOAs determined to be included in 30 mile, Region or England if they have their CENTRE WITHIN the respective area.

Produced with IMD2007_1.mxd

Data Source: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 (Communities and Local Government)

