

Monitoring the quality of experience in Garwnant Forest

Final Report

February 2007



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A. Background and introduction

Background

Forestry Commission (FC) forests and woodlands offer many recreation opportunities such as walking, cycling and picnicking, as well as more formalised activities such as mountain biking, horse riding, car rallies and orienteering. They also offer log cabins, camping and caravan accommodation, with a number of sites also equipped with a visitor centre. Printed material is produced in order to maximise the visitor experience and the FC currently working alongside Ordnance Survey to incorporate information on land access into their maps.¹

In June 2002, TNS (then NFO) were commissioned to undertake a study which would investigate what constitutes quality of experience for visitors, addressing related concepts such as motivations, expectations and the needs of different groups. The output of this study was a survey method which could be used across Forestry Commission sites to effectively monitor quality of experiences. Since completing this study on-site Quality of Experience (QOE) surveys have been undertaken using this survey method at 8 locations, with over 2,400 interviews undertaken with forest visitors.

Reflecting the increasing importance of community forests, TNS were commissioned in 2004 and 2005 to undertake surveys amongst residents of areas close to selected woodland sites in the Thames Chase and South Yorkshire areas. Research conducted at these sites employed a method developed from the on-site QOE approaches and investigated the profile of both users and non-users of the forests, the motivations and barriers to use, the benefits received from the forest and any improvements that could be made.

The *Forestry Commission Corporate Plan for Wales and Great Britain* identifies a need for further evidence to demonstrate the benefits that woodlands and forests bring to society and it is on this basis that the FC continued the QOE survey programme through a series of

¹ 'Forestry Commission Corporate Plan for Wales and Great Britain Activities 2005/06'
[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/gbengcorp2005.pdf/\\$FILE/gbengcorp2005.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/gbengcorp2005.pdf/$FILE/gbengcorp2005.pdf)

on-site and community surveys in England and Wales during 2006. These surveys had the following key objectives

- to undertake on-site surveying of a minimum 300 visitors per site at 5 sites in England and Wales in 2006;
- to undertake community surveys at a minimum of 300 households surrounding 2 community woodland areas, one in England, one in Wales in 2006;
- to provide full reports and data to FC

Method

A total of 302 visitors were interviewed at Garwnant Forest between 26th July and 28th October during 25 days of interviewing.

Visitors who used the site at least once a month were interviewed and asked to rate both the levels of importance of different aspects of woodland and forest visits and their satisfaction with the same aspects at Garwnant Forest. Visitors who came less often were interviewed for a shorter period before being given a questionnaire regarding their levels of satisfaction. This was completed and returned, using a reply-paid envelope. Copies of the questionnaires used are appended.

Report

This report provides the results of the survey undertaken at Garwnant Forest. As mentioned previously, similar surveys have also been undertaken in nine other Forestry Commission sites to date, providing a total 'database' of over 3,800 interviews with forest users. The results of the surveys undertaken at other sites have been used within this report to help draw comparisons and to highlight the key variations at Garwnant Forest. It should be noted that variations between the results obtained at Garwnant Forest and at other locations may not always be statistically valid (i.e. are within margins of error) so should be treated with some caution.

A total of 302 visitors were interviewed and 55 self completion questionnaires were returned (26% of the 211 distributed). The following section provides the survey results across the total survey sample and, where appropriate, compares the responses provided by visitors in different demographic groups and those taking part in different activities.

Answers to open ended questions have been appended.

B. Main results

Summary

The majority of visitors to Garwnant Forest were in the Empty Nester and Family lifecycles. Both of these lifecycle groups were likely to have visited the café, with those in the Family lifecycle also likely to take part in walking without a dog.

The majority of visitors to Garwnant Forest lived locally and travelled for less than an hour to reach the site. A large proportion of visitors were from the Cardiff area, while a significant number were from Merthyr Tydfil. Approximately two-thirds of visitors were on a repeat visit to the site, with these visitors tending to visit between 1 and 6 times per year.

The leisure activities most frequently undertaken at Garwnant Forest included visiting the café, walking (both with and without a dog), hillwalking or rambling and visiting the forest shop. The peace, quiet and tranquillity of the forest, the scenery, beauty and views, the café, the activities available for children and the walks on offer are aspects of Garwnant Forest that are particularly appreciated by visitors.

Garwnant Forest was important in the decision to visit the local area for a large proportion of non-locals. Previous experience was the most commonly cited information source when planning a visit, especially amongst frequent visitors, those travelling for less than an hour to reach the forest and those walking a dog. Road signs were most frequently used by those on holiday, while infrequent and first time visitors were particularly likely to mention word of mouth recommendations.

As with other sites, the majority of encounters with other visitors were positive, with motorbikes and other vehicles driving in the forest most likely to be the ones involved in a negative encounter. Dogs and dog dirt and litter or fly tipping were the aspects most likely to have a negative impact on visitor enjoyment.

Improvements that visitors felt could be made to Garwnant Forest include improving the provision of dog bins and litter bins, the car park and the toilets. A quarter of visitors could not think of anything that needed to be improved.

A summary of the TRI*M analysis regarding the visitor experience can be found at the end of Section C.

Visitor profile

To determine the types of people using the forest, visitors were asked to provide some information about their age, family situation and place of residence.

Demographics

Table B-1 – Age and lifecycle (%)

Base: All respondents (302)

	%
Age	
16 – 24	5
25 – 34	15
35 – 44	22
45 – 54	20
55 – 64	21
65+	18
Lifecycle	
Young Independents	7
Families	42
Empty Nesters	48
Other	2

Over half of visitors to Garwnant Forest were aged 45 or over, with similar proportions in the 45-54, 55-64 and 65 and over age brackets (20%, 21% and 18% respectively). 22% were between the ages of 35 and 44 (22%), with 15% aged 25-34 and 5% of visitors aged between 16 and 24.

In terms of lifecycle, over two-fifths of visitors to Garwnant were in the Empty Nester lifecycle (aged 55+ with no children in household, 48%), with a slightly smaller proportion in the Family lifecycle (children in household, 42%). A small proportion were in the Young Independent lifecycle (aged under 35 and no children in household, 7%), while 2% of visitors did not fit into the any of these lifecycle groupings.

It is also useful to compare these results with the averages obtained across all of the forests included in this programme of research to date². The profile of visitors at Garwnant Forest is slightly older than the average across all of the sites, with 59% aged 45 or over compared to 48% across all sites surveyed to date. In terms of specific locations, the lifecycle profile at Garwnant Forest was fairly similar to that obtained at Nant Yr Arian.

Table B-2 – Social class (%)

Base: All responses (302)

	Visitors	UK Population
AB – ‘upper middle class’ – higher/ intermediate managerial, administrative or professional	32	17
C1 – ‘lower middle class’ – supervisory or clerical, junior managerial, administrative or professional	32	26
C2 – ‘skilled working class’ – skilled manual workers	17	25
DE – ‘working class’ and unemployed – semi and unskilled manual workers, state pensioners, unemployed	19	32

Just under two-thirds of those visiting Garwnant Forest were in the ABC1 socio-economic groupings, a higher proportion than amongst the UK population as a whole (64% and 42% respectively). Conversely, the proportions of visitors in the C2 and DE social classes were lower than amongst those resident in the UK overall (17% v 25% and 19% v 32% respectively).

The social class profile of visitors to Garwnant Forest was fairly similar to the overall average recorded across the other sites included within this programme of research.

² See Appendix 2 for full details of results obtained at other sites and overall benchmarking scores.

Origin

All visitors were asked to provide the postcode of their place of residence. The table below lists the areas of residence mentioned by 1% or more of visitors.

Table B-3 – Area of residence (%)

Base: All respondents (302)

	%		%
Cardiff area (CF)	56	Newport (NP)	8
<i>Merthyr Tydfil area (CF47 and CF48)</i>	17	Llandrindod	5
<i>Aberdare area (CF44)</i>	9	Swansea	3
<i>Cardiff city area</i>	8	Hereford	2
<i>Caerphilly area (CF83)</i>	4	Oxford	1
<i>Pontypridd area (CF37)</i>	3	Bristol	1
<i>Mountain Ash area (CF45)</i>	3	Gloucester	1
<i>Treharris area (CF46)</i>	2	Guildford	1
<i>Penarth area (CF64)</i>	2	Reading	1
<i>Others within Cardiff area</i>	10	Shrewsbury	1
		Taunton	1

Slightly over half of the visitors to Garwnant forest were from the Cardiff area (56%), which includes 17% from the Merthyr Tydfil area and 9% from Aberdare. Outside of the Cardiff area, 8% of visitors were from Newport, 5% from Llandrindod and 3% from Swansea. Smaller proportions originated from England.

Season ticket ownership

Only 5% of visitors indicated that they had a season ticket for Garwnant Forest. 18% of visitors who came to the forest at least once a month owned a season ticket compared to none of those who visited less frequently or who were on their first visit to the site.

Visitors who stated that they had a season ticket were also asked how they rated the value for money they obtained from it. Encouragingly, 69% felt that this was 'very' good, with the remaining 31% describing the value for money offered as 'good'. Please bear in mind that the sample size for this question was small (16 respondents) therefore, the results should be treated with caution.

Trip profile

Visitors were also asked a number of questions about their current visit to Garwnant Forest in terms of the length of time spent away from home, time spent in the wood and activities undertaken.

Type of visit³

Six in ten visitors to Garwnant were on a short trip of an hour or less from home (60%), with a further 15% on a short trip of between 1 and 3 hours from home. A small proportion were on a day out of 3 hours or more, while 17% were on holiday staying away from home.

Compared to the average for of the sites surveyed to date, the types of visit undertaken are fairly similar to those recorded at Garwnant Forest, with an average of 73% of visitors across all sites on a short trip of up to 3 hours from home compared to 75% at Garwnant.

Table B-4 – Type of visit (%)

Base: All respondents (302)

	%
On a short trip of less than 1 hour from home	60
On a short trip of 1-2 hours from home	10
On a short trip of 2 to 3 hours from home	5
On a day out for more than 3 hours from home	8
On holiday away from home	17

76% of those who visited Garwnant Forest at least once a month were on a short trip of less than an hour from home compared to 54% of those who visited less often or were on their first visit.

³ Please note that this question refers to the type of trip respondents were taking (short trip, day trip or holiday), with short and day trips further broken down by distance travelled from home. Times mentioned do not relate to time spent in the forest.

Frequency of visits

Approximately two-thirds of all visitors had been to Garwnant Forest previously (67%). Amongst those who had visited before, half of visitors indicated that they visited the forest between 1 and 6 times a year (50%), with a small proportion indicating that they visited less often than that (4%). 29% said they visited 1 to 3 times a month while 14% visited 1-3 times per week. 2% indicated that they visited 4 times a week or more.

Table B-5 – Frequency of visits to forest (%)

Base: Respondents who have been to Garwnant Forest before (201)

	%
Every day	1
4 to 6 times per week	1
1 to 3 times a week	14
1 to 3 times a month	29
4 to 6 times a year	22
1 to 3 times a year	28
Less often	4

Compared to the averages recorded across all of the sites included in this programme of research, visitors to Garwnant were more likely to be on their first visit to the site than the average across all of the sites surveyed to date (33% and 23% respectively). Visitors to Garwnant were less likely than the average to visit the site every day (1% v 7%) but more likely to visit 1-6 times per year (50% v 38%).

Length of visits

On average, visitors to Garwnant spent 1 hour and 52 minutes visiting the forest. The average length of time spent varied between visitor groups with those on a short trip of less than a hour from home spending less time in the forest than those on holiday (1 hour and 9 minutes compared to 1 hour and 24 minutes). In terms of activities undertaken, those who cycled spent slightly longer on average in the forest than those participating in any type of walking (2 hrs 28 minutes v 2 hrs 6 minutes).

Table B-6 – Length of visit (%)

Base: All respondents (302); All who walked (200); All who cycled (16)

	Total time on site %	Time spent on any walking %	Time spent cycling %
Up to 15 minutes	1	9	13
15 – 30 minutes	4	14	-
30 minutes – 1 hour	23	31	-
1 hour – 2 hours	36	26	38
2 hours – 3 hours	21	16	31
3 hours – 5 hours	12	4	19
More than 5 hours	2	1	-
<i>Average</i>	<i>1 hr 52 mins</i>	<i>1 hr 17 mins</i>	<i>2 hrs 7 mins</i>
<i>Proportion of time on site</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>61%</i>	<i>86%</i>

- No responses * Less than 0.5%

Table B-6 also illustrates the amount of time spent walking or cycling by those visitors who took part in such activities. Overall, visitors who took part in walking spent an average of 1 hour and 17 minutes undertaking this activity, 61% of their time on site. Visitors who took part in cycling spent an average of 2 hours and 7 minutes undertaking this activity, around four-fifths of their total time on site (86%).

Overall, the average length of visit to Garwnant was shorter than the average across all of the sites included in this programme of research (2 hours 33 minutes). Indeed, the average length of visit recorded at Garwnant Forest was lower than that recorded for all of the other sites with the exception of Whiston (average of 36 minutes). This lower average dwell time is likely to be a reflection of the low proportion of people taking part in cycling during their visits but high proportions using the café and/or taking shorter walks.

Activities undertaken

When asked what they did during their visit, slightly over half of visitors stated that they had been to the café (56%). 36% of visitors walked without the dog while in the forest, while 21% took part in hill walking or rambling, 19% in dog walking and 16% visited the forest shop.

When asked, 69% of visitors who had taken part in walking or cycling during their visit to Garwnant Forest indicated that they had followed waymarked trails.

Table B-7 – Activities undertaken during visit to forest (%)

Base: All respondents (302)

	%
Visiting the café	56
Walking without a dog	36
Hill walking/ rambling	21
Dog walking	19
Visiting the forest shop	16
Picnic or barbecue	12
Bird watching	8
Other wildlife watching	8
Photography	4
Educational visit	4
Off-road cycling	3
Cycling on surfaced roads	2
Cycling on un-surfaced roads/tracks/trails	2
Nature/ natural history visit	2
Orienteering	2
Fishing	1
Day out/just relaxing*	1

* Specified by respondent as an 'other' activity as not included on list shown to respondents.

Compared to the average across all of the sites included in this programme of research, visitors to Garwnant Forest were less likely to take part in walking without a dog (36% at Garwnant compared to 47% overall) and any type of cycling (7% v 35%).

It is useful to compare levels of participation in the main activities amongst different user groups:

- *Visiting the cafe (56% overall)* – visitors in the Empty Nester lifecycle (60%) and those in Families (58%) were more likely than those in the Young Independent lifecycle (18%) to have visited the café.
- *Walking without a dog (36% overall)* – visitors in the Family lifecycle were more likely than those in the Empty Nester lifecycle to undertake this activity (44% and 29% respectively).
- *Hill walking/rambling (20% overall)* – approximately half of those on a day trip of 3 hours or more took part in this activity (52%), with Young Independents more likely than those in Families to undertake this activity (36% v 17%).
- *Dog walking (19% overall)* – women and those who visited at least once a month were more likely than male visitors and those visiting infrequently or for the first time to have walked a dog during their visit (25% and 26% v 12% and 15% respectively).

Due to the small sample size, results for Young Independents should be treated with caution.

Children's play area

As well as asking about their own participation in different activities, visitors were asked whether they were accompanied by any children who would use the play area during their current visit.

Overall, 42% of respondents indicated that they were with children who would use the play area. As might be expected, this proportion was considerably higher amongst those in the Family lifecycle group (75%) than amongst Empty Nesters (21%) and Young Independents (9%).

Favourite aspects of forest

When visitors were asked what they liked most about Garwnant Forest, the most frequently provided responses were peace, quiet and tranquillity (32%), the scenery, beauty and views (18%), the restaurant or café (18%), the activities for children (13%) and nice walks (12%). The table overleaf lists those mentioned by 2% or more of visitors.

Table B-10 – Most liked aspects of Garwnant Forest (%)
Base: All frequent respondents and self completion respondents (146)

	%
Peace/quiet/ tranquil	32
Scenery/ beautiful/ views	18
Restaurants/catering/café/coffee shop	14
Activities for children	13
Nice walks	12
Wildlife	9
Safe environment	8
Convenient/ easy to get to	5
Open spaces	5
Helpful/pleasant staff	4
Variety of trees	3
Good/well maintained pathways/trails	3
Fresh air	3
Easy access/more accessible	3
Good for walking dog	3
Lovely park	3
Cycling facilities/freedom to cycle	2
Variety of activities/lots of things to do and see	2
Car parking availability	2
Don't know/ not stated	10

Other responses related to the variety of things to do, the staff and the weather. Some of the specific answers provided were:

“Friendliness of staff in café - helpfulness of staff in café.”

“Something for everyone dogs - children and coffee.”

Use of café/restaurant

56% of visitors to Garwnant Forest used or planned to use the café or restaurant. Those who did use these facilities (169 respondents) were asked to rate these on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = poor and 5 = excellent. 31% of visitors to Garwnant rated the value for money of the catering facilities as 'good', while a further 33% described them as 'very good' and 16% as 'excellent'. 8% of visitors who used these facilities felt that the value for money was only 'fair' or 'poor'. Overall, the value for money of the catering facilities at Garwnant received a 'good' average satisfaction score of 3.61.

Table B-11 – Value for money (%)

Base: All who used/plan to use Café/Restaurant/other catering (169)

	%
Excellent	16
Very good	33
Good	31
Fair	4
Poor	4
Don't know/not stated	12
<i>Average score</i>	<i>3.61</i>

The reasons given by those who rated the catering facilities as 'fair' or 'poor' were as follows (13 respondents):

- *“Too expensive/could be cheaper”* - 10 respondents
- *“Limited choice”* – 1 respondent
- *Other/don't know* – 2 respondents

Respondents who used the café or restaurant were also asked to rate the quality of the food and drink served at Garwnant using the same scale as applied to value for money. 17% of those who used these facilities rated them as 'excellent', while 34% rated the food and drink as 'very good' and a further 34% as 'good'. A small proportion of café or restaurant users rated the food and drink supplied as 'fair' or 'poor' (3%). The average satisfaction score given quality was 3.74.

Table B-12 – Quality of food and drink (%)

Base: All who used/plan to use Café/Restaurant/other catering (169)

	%
Excellent	17
Very good	34
Good	34
Fair	2
Poor	1
Don't know/not stated	12
<i>Average score</i>	<i>3.74</i>

Again, those who rated the quality as 'fair' or 'poor' were asked to give reasons as to why they felt that this was the case (4 respondents), these included:

- *“Was not homemade”* – 1 respondent
- *“Not as good as it was before”* – 4 respondents
- *“Nothing special/mediocre”* - 1 respondent
- *“Limited choice”* – 1 respondent

Table B-13, overleaf, lists the types of food and drink that those using the catering facilities would like to see on offer and includes those mentioned by 5% of these respondents or more. Respondents were asked to specify both items already available and any respondents would like to see added in future. The most frequently mentioned refreshments that visitors using the café or restaurant would like to see included light snacks (29%), tea and coffee (17%) and sandwiches (14%). 25% felt that it was 'good' or 'fine as it was'.

Table B-13 – Food and drink would like on sale(%)

Base: All who used/plan to use Café/Restaurant/other catering (169)

	%
Light snacks (unspecified)	29
Tea/coffee	17
Sandwiches	14
Cakes/pastries	11
Soup	7
Hot drinks (unspecified)	7
Healthier options	7
Hot food (unspecified)	6
More vegetarian food	5
Good range already/fine as it is	25

Importance of Garwnant Forest

To help determine the influence of Garwnant Forest in the decision to visit the local area, visitors who did not live in the area were asked to indicate how important the site had been in their decision to come to the area:

Table B-14 – Importance of site and its facilities in decision to visit area (%)

Base: All respondents living outside of Garwnant Forest area (62)

	%
The only reason for coming	19
Very important	26
Quite important	19
Neither important nor unimportant	11
Not very important	5
Not at all important	6

- No responses

Approximately a fifth of visitors who lived outside of the area stated that Garwnant Forest was their 'only reason' for coming (19%), while a further 47% indicated that it was 'very' or 'quite important'. In contrast, 16% stated that the site was 'not very' or 'not at all' important.

Information sources used to plan visit

When visitors were asked about the sources of information they had used to plan their visit to Garwnant Forest, the majority had relied upon previous experience (59%). 18% cited road signs to the site, while 16% mentioned word of mouth recommendations.

Table B-15 – Information used to plan visit to Garwnant Forest (%)

Base: All respondents (302)

	%
Previous experience/ knowledge	59
Road signs to the site	18
Word of mouth recommendations	16
Leaflets picked up	6
Tourist board or other brochures	3
Maps	3
None of these sources of information	3
Information on the Internet	2
Leaflets or other information received in post	1

As might be expected, visitors who went to the site at least once a month were the most likely to rely upon previous experience (93%), as were those on a short trip of less than an hour from home (70%) and those walking a dog (73%). Visitors on holiday were more likely than the average to mention road signs to the site and word of mouth recommendations (32% and 30% respectively), with infrequent and first time visitors more likely than those visiting at least once a month to mention word of mouth recommendations (21% v 3%).

Other visitors

When asked which of a list of other users had been encountered during recent visits to Garwnant Forest, the vast majority had seen children (87%), walkers (83%) and cyclists (63%). 17% of visitors encountered vehicles driving in the forest, 14% encountered horse riders and one in ten encountered motorbikers or moto cross users (10%).

Respondents who encountered other users were asked to indicate the level of impact this had on their overall enjoyment. Mean scores were applied to results from +2 if a user group ‘increased enjoyment a lot’ to -2 if they ‘decreased enjoyment a lot’.

Table B-16 – Other visitors encountered (%) and impact on enjoyment (row %)

Base: All frequent visitors and self completion respondents (146)*

	%	Increased enjoyment a lot +2	Increased enjoyment a little +1	Made no difference 0	Decreased a little -1	Decreased a lot -2	Score
Children	87	8	11	76	4	1	0.21
Walkers	83	5	14	79	2	-	0.22
Cyclists	63	7	5	84	1	2	0.13
Vehicles driving in the forest	17	-	-	60	8	20	-0.55
Horse riders	14	-	10	70	10	-	0.00
Motorbikers/ moto cross	10	7	-	40	-	33	-0.67

* Base for responses regarding impact of encounters with visitors is smaller and varies by user type.

As the table above illustrates, while encounters with other walkers, children, cyclists, and horse riders usually had no impact or were predominantly positive, encounters with vehicles driving in the woods and motorbikers or moto cross users were more likely to be negative.

2 respondents stated that vehicles in the forest disturbed their enjoyment. These respondents stated that there were too many of them and that they were speeding. The respondent who stated that their enjoyment decreased due to motorbikers or moto cross users also cited speed as the reason for this.

Further negative comments regarding other users included comments relating children being loud and running about and cyclists with no bells on their bikes.

Disturbances to visit

Respondents were also presented with a list of potential negative disruptions and asked what impact, if any, each had on recent visits to Garwnant Forest. As the table below illustrates, the majority of respondents indicated that each of the potential impacts either 'didn't reduce their enjoyment' or that they did not know (suggesting the impact had not been encountered).

However, the disruptions most likely to have a more negative effect were dogs or dog dirt (decreased the enjoyment a lot amongst 12% of visitors) and litter or fly tipping (6%).

Table B-17 –Impact of potential disruptions on enjoyment (row %)

Base: All frequent visitors and self completion respondents (146)

	Didn't reduce enjoyment 0	Decreased a little -1	Decreased a lot -2	Don't know	Score
Muddy tracks	71	5	4	20	-0.16
Forest operations such as felling	73	1	-	25	-0.02
Noise from other users or motorised sports	69	3	3	24	-0.13
Vandalised, missing or damaged signposts	67	3	2	27	-0.10
Litter or fly tipping	63	5	6	25	-0.24
Dogs and dog dirt	64	6	12	18	-0.37

Respondents were asked to indicate what else, if anything had decreased their enjoyment. Encouragingly, most respondents could not think of anything or did not state any other issues (76%). However areas which were mentioned by small numbers of respondents were flies and midges, not enough shaded areas and/or seats, the café, the toilets, the car park, overcrowding and the condition of the paths.

Expectations V Reality

Respondents to the self completion questionnaire (55 respondents), who were either on their first ever visit to the site or visited less than once a month, were asked to indicate how their overall visit had compared with expectations.

29% of visitors stated that their visit to Garwnant was ‘much better’ than they had expected, while a 13% felt that it was ‘a little better’. 47% found their visit ‘as expected’ and 4% thought that it was a little worse.

Table B-18 – Overall rating of visit to forest compared to expectations (%)

Base: All self-completion respondents (55)

	%
Much better (+2)	29
A little better (+1)	13
As expected (0)	47
A little worse (-1)	4
Much worse (-2)	-
Don't know/not stated	7

- No responses; Percentages equal more than 100% due to rounding

When scores were applied to responses from +2 (‘much better’) to -2 (‘much worse’), an overall positive score of 0.73 was obtained, which is lower than the average recorded across all of the sites surveyed to date (0.83). This suggests that visits to Garwnant Forest were less likely than the ‘norm’ to be better than expected.

When asked to state why they found the forest better than expected, responses mainly related to the peace and quiet, the site not being too busy and better facilities than expected.

The respondent who found the forest to be worse than expected was also asked to state why. They felt that the adventure playground was not as good as it used to be.

Improvements

When asked what, if anything, needed to be improved at Garwnant Forest, a quarter of visitors either stated that nothing should be improved or that they ‘didn’t know’ what should be improved (25%).

The suggestions that were made by 2% or more of visitors are listed below. The most frequent suggestions related to providing or improving dog bins, more litter bins, improvements to the car park and more or better toilets (5% each).

Table B-19 – Suggested improvements (%)

Base: All frequent visitors and self completion respondents (146)

	%
Provide/improve dog bins	5
More litter bins	5
Improve car park (any mentions)	5
More/better toilets	5
Improve/better paths	3
Improve children’s play area	3
Provide/improve café	3
Safe and secure park for children	3
More/improved disabled facilities	3
Improve signposting	2
More/ better cycle tracks	2
Nothing/fine as it is	25

Some of the specific suggestions provided are listed below. Full listings of the responses to this question are appended.

“Sun shades over tables near cafe. Good to see water bowls for dogs.”

“The play area could do more as some little ones don’t have very much to go on. Area should be bigger. A few more things.”

“More parking spaces, parking for people with prams and children.”

Expenditure

To obtain an indication of the value of visitors to Garwnant Forest, respondents were asked to specify the amount they had personally spent during the day of their visit to the forest. Some 10% of all respondents stated that they did not spend anything during their visit. The table below presents the average expenditure per person for different elements of their visit based upon those who spent anything in each category (for example the average accommodation spend amongst those who stayed in commercial accommodation only, excluding day trippers and others who spent nothing on this area).

Table B-20 - Average expenditure per person per day (incl. day trip and overnight stay)

Base: All frequent visitors and self completion respondents (146)

	Average spend (Based on those who spent anything on each category)
Accommodation (incl. food and drink)*	£40
Food and drink (excl. at accommodation)	£11
Admission fees	£3
Shopping (non-routine, souvenirs)	£7
Transport (incl. petrol, taxis, public transport)	£5
Equipment (e.g. hire of boat, horse-riding)	£6
Miscellaneous	£3
Overall average spend	£17

*Small sample size

Overall, visitors to Garwnant Forest spent an average of £17 per person per day (this figure excludes those who did not spend anything). Excluding accommodation, admission fees and equipment hire were the aspects with the highest average expenditure amongst those who spent anything.

C. TRI*M Results

A key objective of this survey was to identify issues relating to the quality of visitor experiences at Garwnant Forest and priorities for improvements. In addition to the standard analysis of the responses to questions regarding satisfaction, the information collected from visitors to Garwnant Forest has also been analysed using TRI*M.

The TRI*M system has been developed by TNS to measure, manage and monitor customer relationships with products and services and, for the purposes of this study, it has been possible to adapt it to the ‘product’ offered by Forestry Commission sites.

The following sections provide details of the responses provided to the questions asked regarding the claimed importance of different aspects of the forest in decisions to visit, levels of satisfaction with these same elements and the results of the TRI*M analysis.

Claimed importance of different aspects of visit

To identify the drivers of quality, visitors were asked to rate how important different aspects were in their decision to visit the site. Visitors could rate each of a list of aspects as 'extremely important' (5), 'very important' (4), 'fairly important' (3), 'fairly unimportant' (2) or 'not at all important' (1). Scores were then applied to responses, allowing averages to be obtained across the whole sample - the higher the average score, the more important the aspect is across the sample as a whole.

It is important to note that these ratings are levels of *claimed* importance. The TRI*M analysis has also allowed the identification of which of these aspects have the greatest impact on overall levels of satisfaction, their real relevance to the overall quality of experience, as described later in this chapter.

Table C-1 – Importance of different aspects in decision to visit (mean score)

Base: All respondents (302)

	Importance score
Clean toilets	4.07
Being able to enjoy scenery and views	4.00
Feeling happy to leave your car in the car park	4.00
Feeling safe in the forest	3.97
Being able to spend time with family and friends	3.88
Enough car parking	3.87
Litter bins	3.81
Being able to enjoy the wildlife	3.76
Value for money of your whole trip or day out	3.72
Solitude, peace and quiet	3.72
A café	3.62
Friendliness of staff	3.59
Being able to get fit and healthy	3.54
Clear signposting on footpaths	3.51
Choice of paths for walking	3.44
Dog waste bins	3.38
Picnic areas	3.38
Children's play equipment	3.27
Leaflets and maps to help you find your way around	3.18
Printed information about the forest	3.12
Information provided by staff	3.04
Availability of staff at the site	2.99
Open grassy areas for ball games, sunbathing etc.	2.69
A shop	2.63
Choice of trails for cycling	2.30
Choice of trails for other activities	2.30
Baby changing	2.09
Availability of cycle hire on site	1.97

This analysis suggests that the aspects claimed to be of most importance amongst most visitors were clean toilets, being able to enjoy scenery and views, feeling happy to leave your car in the car park and feeling safe in the forest.

On the other hand, facilities claimed to be of less importance overall or only of importance to specific groups of visitors included the choice of trails for activities other than walking and cycling, choice of trails for cycling, baby changing facilities and the availability of cycle hire on site.

Respondents were also asked to specify in their own words what else, if anything, had influenced their decision to visit. The most frequently provided responses related to the site being a good/safe place for children to play (15%), the weather (9%), that they were passing en route to somewhere else (9%) or that they stopped to eat and drink (8%).

Table C-2 – Other influences on decision to visit (%)

Base: All respondents (302)

	%
Good/safe place for children playing	15
The weather	9
Passing en route to somewhere else	9
Stopped to eat and drink	8
Been before	7
Close to home/convenient	6
Spend time with friends/family	6
Scenery	6
Nice place for walking	6
Fresh air/just out for the day	5
Walk the dog	5
Peace and tranquillity	5
Recommended by family/friends	3
Good for cycling/bike hire	2
Good facilities – open-air concerts/café/toilets etc.	2
School trip	2
Activities for children	2
Nothing	27

Some of the specific responses provided are listed below. The full verbatim comments provided to all of the open ended questions are appended.

“Come here regularly to walk the dog. Near to home. Can go for longer walks here. Nice scenery driving here and back.”

“Grandchildren from Coventry. Nothing on this scale nearby. Kids ask to visit Garwnant every holiday.”

Performance of different aspects of visit

Visitors were next provided with the same list of elements of the site and asked to rate how satisfied they had been with each during their visit. Respondents could rate each of the elements on a five point scale which included 'excellent' (5), 'very good' (4), 'good' (3), 'fair' (2) and 'poor' (1). Also, if visitors had no experience of a specific element they were asked to indicate that they did not know.

Scores were then applied to responses, allowing averages to be obtained across the whole sample - the higher the average score, the more satisfied visitors were with this aspect. This analysis suggests that, overall, visitors were most likely to be satisfied with the scenery and views they could enjoy, being able to spend time with family and friends and the children's play equipment. Elements ranked lowest on average included information provided by staff and dog waste bins.

Table C-13 – Satisfaction with different aspects at forest (mean score)

Base: All frequent respondents and self completion respondents (302)

	Satisfaction score
Being able to enjoy scenery and views	4.15
Being able to spend time with family and friends	4.06
Children's play equipment	4.00
Enough car parking	3.97
Solitude, peace and quiet	3.94
Value for money of your whole trip or day out	3.93
Being able to enjoy the wildlife	3.90
A café	3.87
Feeling safe in the forest	3.85
Being able to get fit and healthy	3.84
Feeling happy to leave your car in the car park	3.78
Friendliness of staff	3.74
Picnic areas	3.63
Choice of paths for walking	3.57
Choice of trails for other activities	3.43
Choice of trails for cycling	3.40
Printed information about the forest	3.38
Baby changing	3.38
Clear signposting on footpaths	3.36
Leaflets and maps to help you find your way around	3.36
Availability of staff at the site	3.32
Clean toilets	3.29
A shop	3.29
Litter bins	2.78
Information provided by staff	2.40
Dog waste bins	2.21

When comparing these scores it is important to bear in mind that not all variations are statistically significant. This ranking should therefore be treated as providing an indication of what visitors are most and least satisfied with.

Visitors who stated that they were dissatisfied with any aspects of their visit were asked to indicate why. Key reasons provided and the numbers of respondents providing each comment were as follows:

- Lack of dog waste bins (28 respondents)
- Lack of litter bins (18 respondents)
- Unclean toilets (10 respondents)
- Not safe to leave car anywhere (4 respondents)
- Car parking too expensive (3 respondents).

TRI*M Index

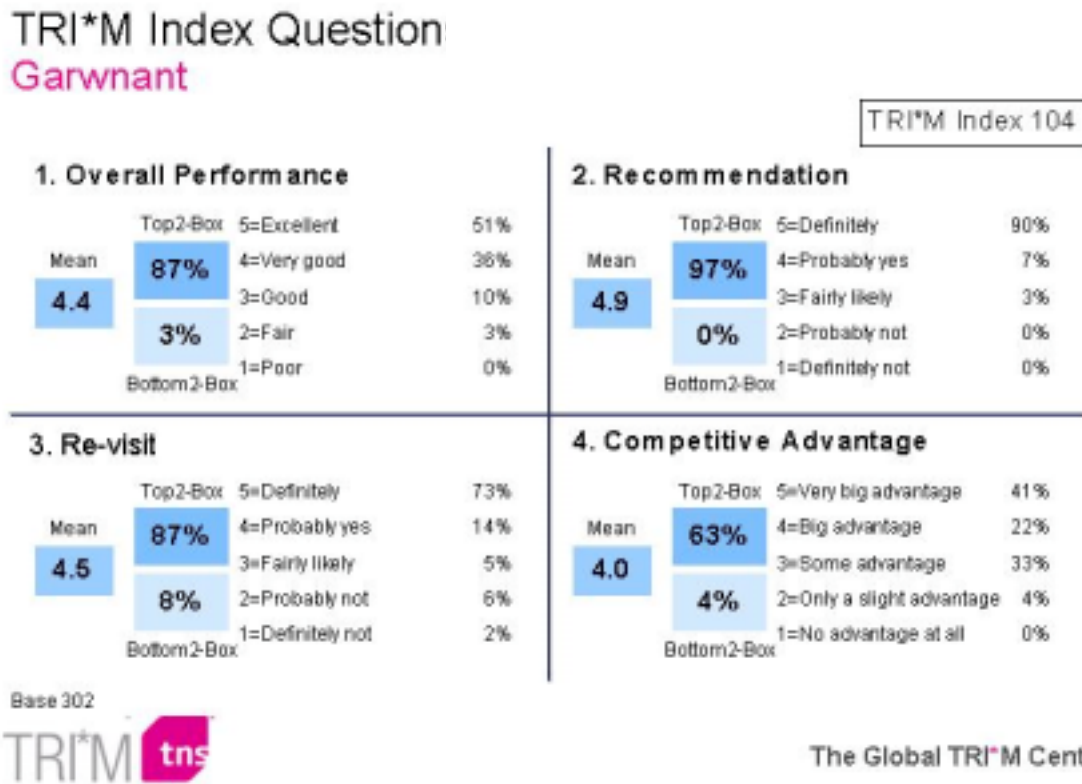
The TRI*M Index is a weighted calculation based on responses to the following four questions:

- How would you rate your visit to Garwnant Forest overall? (*Overall performance*)
- Based on your experience, would you recommend Garwnant Forest as a place to visit to a friend or relative? (*Recommendation*)
- Based on your experiences on this trip, how likely are you to visit Garwnant Forest again in the next few months? (*Repurchase*)
- How would you rate Garwnant Forest as a place to visit compared to the other forests, parks or outdoor recreation sites you could have gone to today instead? (*Competitive advantage*)

These four questions provide the TRI*M index score for overall visitor satisfaction with Garwnant Forest (and the context within which all of the detailed satisfaction ratings are placed). It has been used in this report to benchmark Garwnant Forest against other forest sites included in the 2006 survey programme and could also be used as a benchmark score for future comparison.

Figure C-1 shows the overall results for each of these questions, as illustrated by the 4 quadrants in the diagram.

Figure C-1 – Overall satisfaction with Garwnant Forest



The overall TRI*M index figure for Garwnant Forest was **104**, a very high index that suggests overall satisfaction with visits to the forest was very high. By comparison, the TRI*M index figures obtained at the other sites included in the 2006 survey were as follows:

- Sherwood Pines Forest Park - 108
- Nant yr Arian – 107
- Hamsterley Forest - 106
- Delamere Forest Park – 104

The overall satisfaction data shows that the majority of visitors rated their trip very highly, with around half (51%) claiming it was ‘excellent’ and 36% claiming that it was ‘very good’. In addition to this high satisfaction with their trip, the vast majority of visitors (90%) would ‘definitely’ recommend a visit to Garwnant Forest. This is a very good

indicator of the enjoyment of a visit and friends and family are one of the most cited sources of information when visitors are planning to visit this location.

Most of the respondents would return to Garwnant Forest for a repeat trip – nearly three quarters (73%) would ‘definitely’ return for a repeat visit. When asked how the forest compared to other outdoor recreation sites, most of the sample stated that Garwnant Forest does have an advantage over alternative sites, with two-fifths (41%) claiming the site had a ‘very big’ advantage and 22% claiming that it had a ‘big’ advantage. A further third of the sample (33%) saw Garwnant Forest as having only ‘some’ advantage over other sites which could have been visited.

All of the scores are very high which is encouraging and suggests that most people enjoy their visits to Garwnant Forest, they would highly recommend it as a place to visit to friends and family, would return for another visit and are likely to perceive it as a better place to visit than other, alternative outdoor recreation sites.

TRI*M Typology

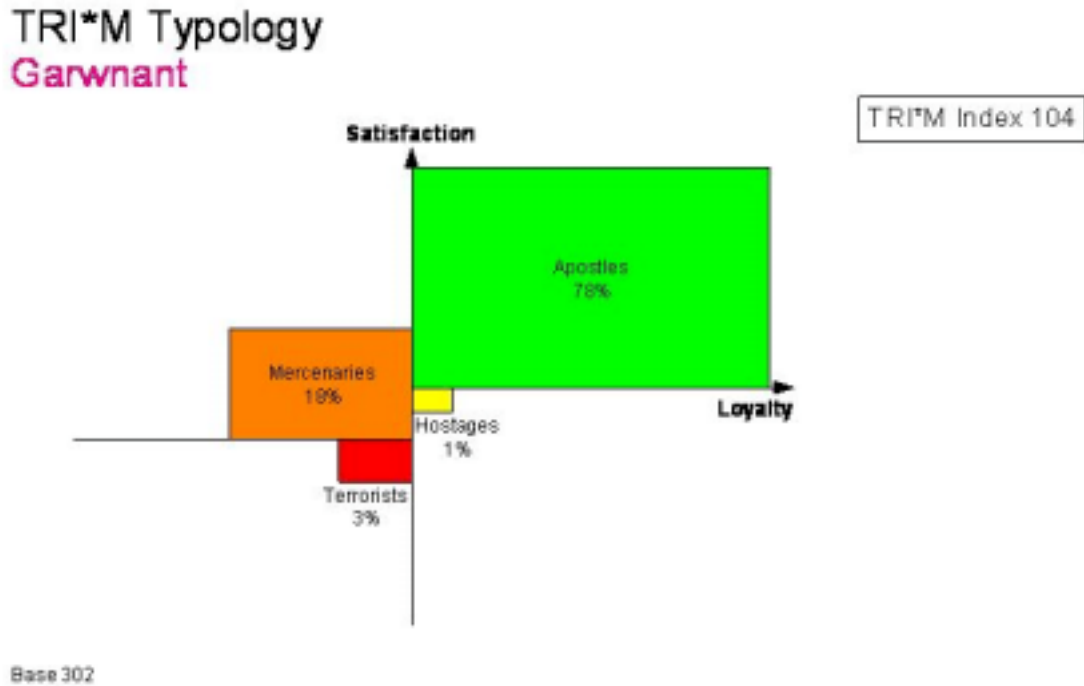
The next stage of the TRI*M analysis involved the categorisation of all respondents into four different groups. This categorisation is based upon responses to the four key questions described previously with respondents classified by level of satisfaction, based upon their overall performance and recommendation responses, and levels of loyalty, based upon their repeat visit and competitive advantage responses.

The four groups are as follows:

- *Apostles* – visitors with high levels of satisfaction and loyalty. Visitors essential to the long term success of the site. The focus should be on how to retain these visitors.
- *Hostages* – visitors with low levels of satisfaction but high levels of loyalty. These visitors may be visiting the site due to a lack of alternatives or barriers to travel elsewhere. The focus should be on how to satisfy these visitors, to ‘move’ them to the Apostles group.
- *Mercenaries* – visitors with high levels of satisfaction but low levels of loyalty. Typically these types of visitors are always looking for better options and are likely to visit a range of different locations to take part in outdoor recreation. The focus for this type of visitors should be to identify what will engender loyalty.
- *Terrorists* – visitors with low levels of satisfaction and low levels of loyalty. These types of visitors are actively disruptive via negative word of mouth.

As Figure C-2 overleaf illustrates, the majority of visitors to Garwnant Forest (78%) were categorised into the Apostles grouping i.e. both satisfied and loyal. Most of the remainder (18%) were classified as Mercenaries (satisfied but not loyal), 3% were classified as Terrorists (neither satisfied nor loyal) and 1% were classified as Hostages (not satisfied but loyal).

Figure C-2 – Visitors to Garwnant Forest by TRI*M Typology



It is notable that visitors classified as having lower levels of loyalty (the Mercenaries and Terrorists) were much more likely than the Apostles to be on holiday (35% and 4% respectively). This variation in profile is likely to be one of the reasons for the relatively large proportion classified as Mercenaries – visitors with high levels of satisfaction but a lower likelihood of repeat visit as they do not live within the local area.

TRI*M Grid

The third stage of the TRI*M analysis combined responses to the series of importance and satisfaction ratings (as detailed in Tables C-1 and C3) with the TRI*M index which was derived for each respondent on the basis of the four key questions described previously.

To produce each TRI*M grid each of the aspects of Garwnant Forest was given a relative value in terms of the following three dimensions:

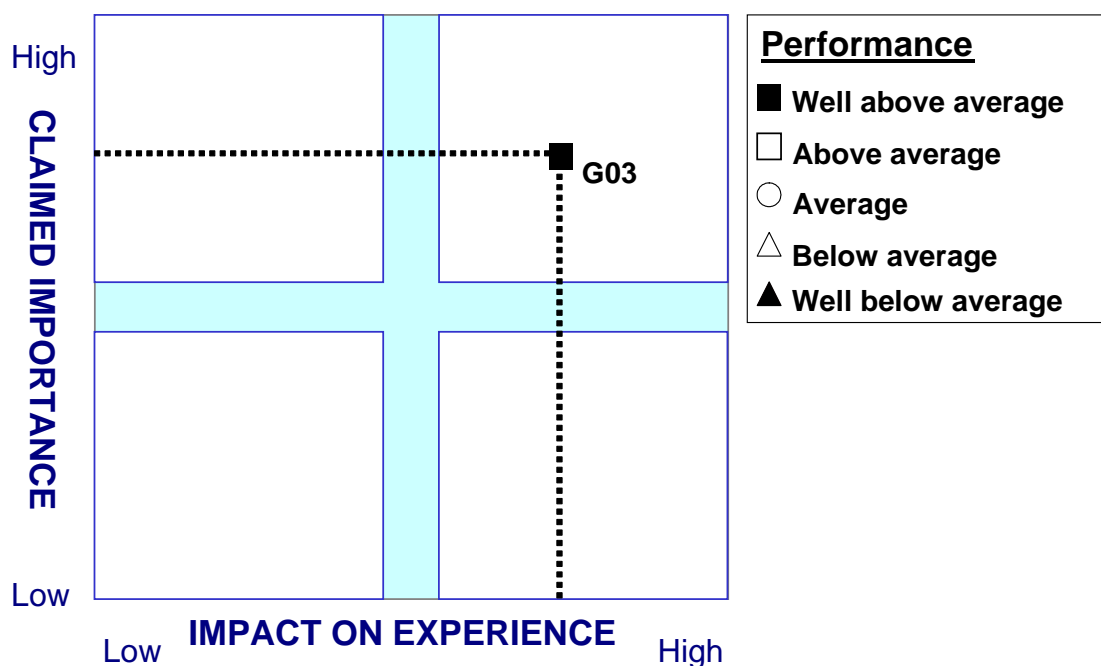
- *Levels of claimed importance* – as reported in Table C-1. This measurement provides an indication of the aspects that visitors believe to most important in their decision to visit Garwnant Forest, those which should be reinforced in marketing communications.
- *Impact on experience* – this measurement is statistically derived from an analysis of the correlation of each aspect's performance (i.e. levels of satisfaction reported) with the TRI*M index. If there is positive correlation between the TRI*M index and the performance of a particular aspect it is rated as having a high impact on quality of experience. Conversely if there is no correlation between the TRI*M index and the performance of an aspect, it is rated as having a low of impact on quality of experience.
- *Levels of satisfaction* – as reported in Table C-3. This measurement provides an indication of the relative performance of each of the aspects which were rated. This measurement provides an indication of areas which require improvement.

In the following TRI*M grids, each of these three dimension is plotted as follows:

Levels of claimed importance - this score is displayed on the vertical axis which runs along the left hand side of the grid. The closer to the top of the grid, the higher the claimed importance and the closer to the bottom of the grid, the lower the claimed importance.

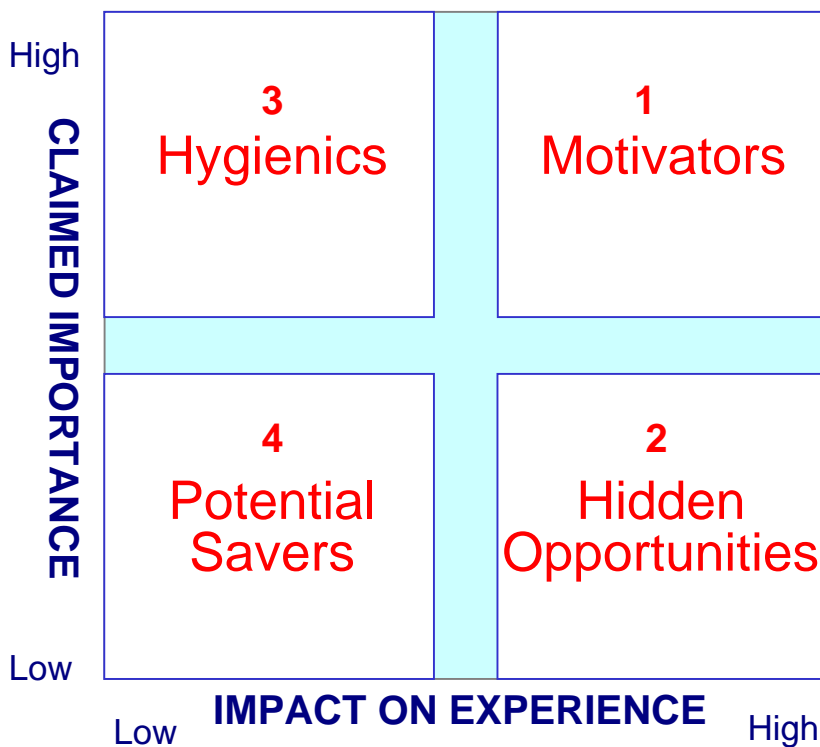
Impact on experience - this measurement is displayed on the horizontal axis which runs along the bottom of the grid (see below). The further to the right of the grid, the higher the impact on the quality of experience and the further to the left of the grid, the lower the impact on quality of experience.

Levels of satisfaction – the previous two dimensions (claimed importance and impact on experience) tell us where on the grid each attribute falls. On the example below these are represented by the dotted lines. Where the two dotted lines cross is where on the grid the aspect of the forest is located. The third dimension is levels of satisfaction, the measurement of performance. The average satisfaction score respondents gave to each aspect is displayed by the shape plotted on the grid, for example the filled in square on the grid below. This tells us how well the forest is performing on each attribute. In the hypothetical example below the attribute **G03** has fairly high claimed importance (because it is near the top of the grid), a fairly high impact on experience (as it is to the right of the grid) and its performance is well above average (because it has a filled in square).



As illustrated in Tables C-1 and C-3, a total of 28 aspects of Garwnant Forest have been rated by respondents. The results of the TRI*M Grid analysis can provide an insight into which ones should be priorities for improvement or marketing. Each aspect's impact on experience rating should be considered to be a higher priority than the claimed importance rating as this measure has a direct relationship to overall levels of satisfaction. As such, aspects that are further to the right on the grid should be considered as higher priorities. However, claimed importance also has some bearing so things that are towards the top of the grid also have some priority. To help identify which aspects to prioritise, each of the four quadrants has been given a name indicating its relative priority.

The top priorities should be those that fall into the Motivators quadrant (top right hand corner of the grid) because these have both a high impact on experience and high claimed importance. Second priority should be any aspects in the Hidden Opportunities quadrant (bottom right hand corner) because these also have a high impact on experience. Third priority is aspects in the Hygienics quadrant (top left hand corner) because although these have high claimed importance they are less motivating and therefore have less influence on the quality of experience. The last priority is the Potential Savers quadrant (bottom left hand corner) where aspects have both a low impact on experience and low claimed importance.



*TRI*M Grids for Garwnant Forest*

Over the following pages the strengths and priorities for Garwnant Forest have been identified. Strengths and priorities are defined as those aspects which fall in or on the boundaries of the Motivators quadrant. The crossbars on the grid are there to remind us that there are no hard and fast dividing lines between quadrants. Each aspect must be interpreted in relation to the position of the other aspects in order to determine its relative priority in the overall assessment of quality of experience.

The TRI*M grids illustrating the results obtain across all visitors to Garwnant Forest are presented on page 37. For clarity the results are presented across 4 grids but all of these findings should be considered together.

Strengths - strengths are classified as attributes in or on the boundaries of the Motivators quadrant, in the top right hand corner of the grids, that are represented by squares. An unfilled square denotes above average performance and a filled square means well above average performance.

At this overall level, 7 of the 28 attributes were considered as strengths for Garwnant Forest. Of these those with the greatest impact on experience were the café (F15), being able to enjoy wildlife (G04), being able to enjoy scenery and views (G03) and value for money of the whole day out (G05).

Priorities - priorities, like strengths, are also found in or on the boundaries of the Motivators quadrant. They are indicated by triangles (below average performance) and circles (average performance). Three aspects were identified as priorities for Garwnant Forest – clear signposting on footpaths (F02), picnic areas (F17) and the choice of paths for walking (F08).

Hidden Opportunities - hidden opportunities are indicated by any aspect that appears in or on the borders of the quadrant in the bottom right of the grid. These attributes have a high impact on quality of experience but have lower claimed importance than attributes in the Motivators quadrant. 5 of the 28 aspects are in this quadrant – the availability of staff on site (F11), the shop (F03), printed information about the forest (F16), the choice of trails for activities other than walking and cycling (F10) and the choice of trails for cycling (F09). Of these aspects, two (availability of staff and the shop) were performing

below average. Improving the quality of these aspects could be the driver for further improving overall levels of quality of experience at Garwnant Forest.

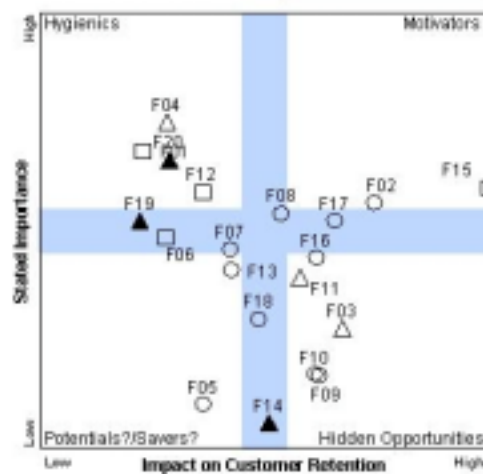
Hygenics – while the performance of aspects in this quadrant are important to the viability of the site, high levels of satisfaction will not improve retention in themselves. Aspects included in this quadrant or close to boundaries are enough car parking (F01), clean toilets (F04), the friendliness of staff (F12), dog waste bins (F19), litter bins (F20), feeling happy to leave your car in the car park (A02), feeling safe in the forest (A01), being able to spend time with family and friends (G01), solitude, peace and quiet (G02) and being able to get fit and healthy (G06). Notably three of these aspects are performing below average – the cleanliness of toilets, dog waste bins and litter bins.

Potential savers - aspects in this quadrant receive lower than average levels of claimed importance and have a lower than average impact upon the quality of experience. These aspects may be considered as lower priorities at the 'all visitors' level, although they may be of more importance to smaller groups of visitors. Aspects included in this quadrant are the provision of leaflets, maps and interpretation panels (F07), information provided by staff (F13), open grassy areas for ball games, etc. (F18) and baby changing facilities (F05).

FACILITIES IN DECISION TO VISIT SITE

- F01 Enough car parking
- F02 Clear signposting on footpaths
- F03 A Shop
- F04 Clean toilets
- F05 Baby changing facilities
- F06 Children's play equipment
- F07 Leaflets, maps and interpretation panels to help you find your way around
- F08 Choice of paths for walking
- F09 Choice of trails for cycling
- F10 Choice of trails for other activities (e.g. horse riding)
- F11 Availability of staff at the site (e.g. rangers)
- F12 Friendliness of staff
- F13 Information provided by staff
- F14 Availability of cycle hire on-site
- F15 Cafe or restaurant
- F16 Printed information about the forest
- F17 Picnic areas
- F18 Open grassy areas for ball games, sunbathing, etc
- F19 Dog waste bins
- F20 Litter bins

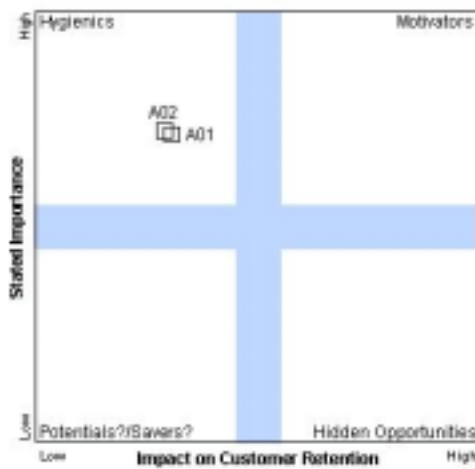
Base 302



ASPECTS OF PERSONAL SAFETY AND SECURITY IN DECISION TO VISIT

- A01 Feeling safe in the forest
- A02 Feeling happy to leave your car in the car park

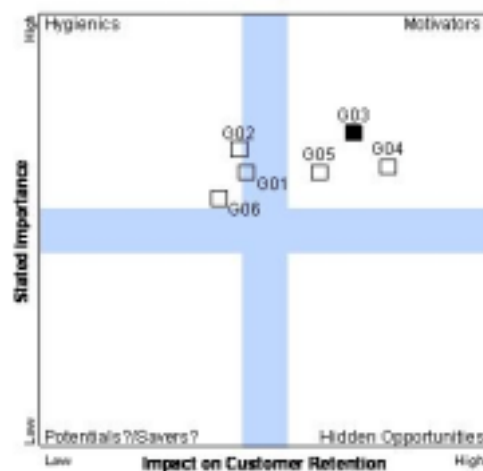
Base 302



GENERAL ASPECTS IN DECISION TO VISIT

- G01 Solitude, peace and quiet
- G02 Being able to spend time with family and friends
- G03 Being able to enjoy scenery and views
- G04 Being able to enjoy the wildlife
- G05 Value for money of your whole trip or day out
- G06 Being able to get fit and healthy

Base 302



Summary of key TRI*M Grid findings

The TRI*M Grid analysis for Garwnant Forest has highlighted the following key drivers of quality of experience and potential areas for improvement:

Strengths – these are the attributes of the site which are considered as important amongst most visitors, are proven to have a high impact on overall levels of satisfaction and are currently performing well. At Garwnant Forest the main strengths are the scenery and views, the café, being able to enjoy wildlife and value for money of the whole day out.

It is vital that these strengths are maintained and communicated in promotional materials.

Immediate, top priority issues – these are attributes of the site which are considered to be important amongst most visitors, have an impact on overall levels of satisfaction but are currently performing below average. At Garwnant Forest clear signposting on footpaths, picnic areas and the choice of paths for walking received lower performance ratings so should be considered a priority in the site's management and maintaining current levels of satisfaction.

Second priority issues – there are a number of attributes at this site which, although most visitors rated them as important, were found to have less impact on overall levels of satisfaction. Of these attributes, three were found to be performing below average – clean toilets, dog waste bins and litter bins. These should be considered as second priorities in maintaining levels of satisfaction at Gawnant Forest.

Future opportunities – these are attributes which, although most visitors do not perceive them as important in their decision to visit, have been proven to have an impact on the overall quality of experience of those who rated them. At Garwnant Forest the aspects included in this category are the availability of staff on site, shop, printed information about the forest, choice of trails for activities other than walking and cycling and the choice of trails for cycling.

Investing and improving these facilities in the future will provide opportunities to develop levels of satisfaction beyond those currently achieved.

D. Appendices

Questionnaires

Results obtained at other Forestry Commission sites

Responses to open-ended questions

What else influenced your decision to visit today?

Access and sign posting/well manicured access and a well manicured forest.
Adventure playground - not as good or adventurous as it used to be.
All been covered.
Art exhibition.
Beautiful place. Easy to find. Convenient. Park for children.
Because it's cloudy and a bit windy - good for walking.
Been before.
Been here before and it is nice place. Well looked after.
Being a hot day the paths are dry.
Being able to bring groups of children.
Blackberries in season - nice weather.
Boy at local sports centre, 2 hours to kill, good place to come and coffee.
Bring dog out and local.
Bring my small son to play area.
Bring the children.
Brought a group of 1st year uni students for orienteering.
Brought a visitor to experience the place.
Brought friend.
Brought school trip to site.
Brought visitors with me, good facilities, nice walks without being too strenuous.
Café, Sunday lunch.
Came here with college.
Came to buy Halloween tickets, also going to cafe and play area.
Came for a snack and walk.
Children are off school. Nice site to come with the family.
Children insisted.
Clean toilets. Somewhere to let dogs out and get off road. Peace and quiet for a few minutes.
Close to home. Fresh air. Children's area.
Coffee stop on route elsewhere.
Combination of everything that is here – convenience.
Come here regularly to walk the dog. Near to home. Can go for longer walks here. Nice scenery driving here and back.
Coming back from brecon. Convenient stop off.
Convenience.
Convenient stopping point on journey we make frequently from Cornwall to Mid Wales.
Covered it already.
Curiosity. Looking for somewhere to have a coffee.
Do something different.
Dog walking.
Don't have opportunity to walk in woods in Cardiff-very safe-no nasty dogs, good owners - have a puppy - very safe.
Drive round.
Dry cool and bright weather ideal for photography.
Duke of Edinburgh group.
En route elsewhere.
Enjoy the countryside.
Enjoyed last visit bringing my niece.
Enjoyed our first visit.
Escape from modern world.
Explore the area.
Familiarity my child enjoys it.
Family day in fresh air.
Family fishing came to visit and use children's play area.
Farm - from Hungary wanted to go fishing.
Felt like a walk and maybe some lunch.
Followed signs on route to somewhere else.
Fresh air exercise.
Fresh air. Beauty spots.

Friend advised us.
Friends.
Friends brought us.
Friends haven't been before. Bought them to have a look around.
Friends with older children good place for all the kids bring all my friends here.
Getting some maps for orienteering.
Give the boys and word of mouth.
Good food. Nice area to play.
Good forecast for the weather, dry prefer it.
Good place to bring the grandchildren. Something we haven't got back home. Very good facilities for children to play.
Good way to keep fit and healthy.
Good weather. Not raining. Nice and safe place to leave older relatives in the car.
Grandchild off school. Bring dog - good exercise for all.
Grandchildren from Coventry. Nothing on this scale nearby. Kids ask to visit Garwnant every holiday.
Had a day off. Love the drive - very scenic. Tranquility here. Never crowded. People who come here keep kids under control.
Had family down. Nice view over Brecon Beacons.
Had heard about brecon park and as I was passing by it was a good opportunity to explore. Been to forestry sites before and enjoyed them. Good to know how long the walks are.
Happy memories of coming here when I was younger.
Have a day off. Come to walk the dog.
Have a walk.
Have been promising the kids we would come.
Have lunch..
Haven't seen many.
Heading for brecon. Saw it on map looking for somewhere to let dogs have a run. Go to forestry sites regularly.
Husband wanted to walk up the mountain, good place to wait.
I had heard about the outdoor play area.
It is safe quiet and peaceful. Too far for the yobs to come - no boy racers. Forester checks.
It was on the route I was taking.
It's somewhere we come on a regular basis, the weather is fine. It helps to keep my wife and myself fit, also something we read about.
I've brought the grandchildren.
Just bored in the house wanted some fresh air.
Just cycling.
Just for my daughter in playgroup.
Just like it here.
Just see views.
Just somewhere to stop for lunch.
Just the peace and quiet. Disabled - can't walk far. Enjoy sitting by the café.
Just to go cycling.
Just walking and scenery.
Just wanted to get the children in the forest and to look at the reservoir.
Lady on campsite recommended it and gave maps. Nice and quiet.
Like it and had a day off. Healthy.
Like it last time. Enjoy countryside.
Like the trees - outdoors – wildlife.
Like to be out away from the problems of work.
Live so close convenience.
Local food.
Local food.
Location.
Looking for a day out good and close accessible – nice, sunny day.
Maps.
Meals and snacks.
Meeting family for lunch and let kids play – swings. All ages.
Memories of it when it was being set up tranquility and availability accessibly.
My daughter recommended it to me.
My niece visiting from England so I brought her to see the nice scenery.
My past experience.
Near to campsite. Dogs - needed walking.
Near to home-weather.

Near to our camp site.
Neighbour recommendation.
Nice meal and children's play area.
Nice sunny day, husband recouping from fall, good short walk - came for a meal.
Nice weather. Wouldn't care if it was raining.
Not sure really.
Not too busy. Far enough to be different from local park. Only just discovered this place. Intend to visit more often. Easy to get to. Well signposted. Recommended by a friend.
Not too hot. Would have gone to beach if hotter. Proximity. Within catchment area.
Nothing really. Just a nice place to come.
Occupy my daughter.
On a day tour.
On a journey. Good place to break the journey because of age and toilets.
On map. Enjoy walking.
On our way somewhere else thought we'd pop in to let the children have a run around.
On our way to Brecon seen the signs and popped in for a coffee.
On our way to visit family. Popped in for a coffee in the restaurant.
On route to Brecon.
On the way to Brecon. Stopped for picnic and to let kids let off steam.
On way to brecon a year since last visit popped in.
On way to brecon saw road sign.
On way to Cardiff. Good place to stop for refreshments.
On way to parents house good place to stop.
Organised group.
Out for a ride, friend staying never been before.
Out of doors, countryside.
Out relaxing saw the sign.
Part of a rally organized.
Peaceful - staff lovely.
Plan walks for the children, used to visit more regularly.
Play area.
Play area.
Play area - to meet with friends.
Play area - we come here quite a lot. It's a nice drive.
Play area for children.
Previous experience.
Previous experience.
Previous experience.
Previous, good for boys.
Quality of lunch in the café.
Quick and easy to get to. Lots of things to do for the kids. Don't get bored.
Quiet and convenient.
Recommendation.
Restaurant sign.
Road map and AA guide book.
Safe cycling, where you can bring the dog.
Safety. People walking around so you feel safe.
Saw road signs.
Saw sign as we were driving by. -Being able to let dogs run free.
Saw signs on the road. Not enough dog waste bins haven't see any.
Scenery.
Scenery.
Scenery, wildlife. Recommendation from friends.
Scenery. Spare day. Came to see Brecon.
School holiday.
School trip - doing Duke of Edinburgh course.
School trip and local – safe.
Season ticket.
See the woodland.
Shaded area for children.
Signs outside.
Something different for the children.
Son in law recommendation.

Soup.
Spur of the moment when we saw the sign.
Staying nearby. Saw the road sign. Way back from trip.
Staying with friends in Cardiff. Recommended it as a good place to bring the children.
Stop off where children can play.
Stop on route to Brecon Beacon.
Sunny day and play area.
Sunshine.
Take dog for walk, bike riding.
The boys wanted to. New arrows, collect wood to make the arrows.
The food in the restaurant.
The restfulness of the place.
The setting and location.
The walks and safe for the dogs.
The weather.
Thought it would be a change to go out together (with wife) - usually working. Good place to bring grandson.
To cheer up my daughter and enjoy peace and quiet, see the wildlife.
To get a bit of peace and quiet. To get away from it all. Nice environment.
To have a change. Haven't been here for a while. Not too far from home. Something for grandkids to do.
Touring round, good place for a dog walk, familiar, can get a drink, know our way around nice shop.
Two groups met up halfway along journey. Easy to find on internet.
Use toilets and café.
Used before.
Views. Quiet.
Visited last week, brought children this week.
Walking.
Walking.
Walking holiday. Go to beach in better weather. Raining today.
Wanted a relaxing day out.
Wanted day trip.
Wanted something at lunchtime, having a day out.
Wanted to go for a walk. One of the favourite places for walking.
Wanted to walk.
We have come out for the weekend.
We took wrong turning at reservoir.
We were coming this way anyway.
Weather.
Weather.
Weather - long time since last visit- easy to get to.
Weather forecast.
Weather is good. Grandchildren for the day. They enjoy coming here and come here frequently.
Weather is nice and have Sunday lunch.
Weather, sunny - it was on our route.
Weather, thunder showers reported so did not travel further.
Weather. Flexibility. Facilities. It's easy to get to. Accessibility.
Weather. It rained in Brecon.
Weather. The fact I bring grandchildren here. They enjoy coming here.
Weather - need to be good, near to Cardiff.
Where the children can enjoy playing in a natural surrounding.
Word of mouth. Not happy about price of car park.
Working. Coach driver.
Weather.
Younger children. Play should be improved.

Suggestions for improvements

Better disabled facilities on toilets, for example separate toilets for disabled.
Bigger park for 6 years and above.
Bigger play area for older children.
Cafe opening hours - more activities something everyday painting learning about animals.
Cafe price and quality.
Car parking fees.

Car parking fees.
Car parking paid per hour not per day.
Cleaner toilets and more space.
Clearer sign posts.
Completely satisfied since they have put more benches and seating area.
Disabled access.
Don't commercialise, it will spoil it.
Heating in toilet - baby changing area.
I can't think of anything. We always comes here to have a good time.
I don't think it needs anything.
I think if it was open longer in evening. A swimming pool would be a good idea.
Increase security. Increase start levels during school holidays.
Just keep as a natural environment.
Just more dog litter bins.
Like it the way it is.
Like it when quiet, very good walks.
Longer hours for the cafe. Just tea and biscuits. Reduced short stay tickets on car park.
Make access for disable to cafe bigger, make a shelter for children in bad weather.
More signs.
More activities going on. Both seasonal and on daily basis.
More benches. Cleaner toilets.
More covered areas for tables outside (for dog owners using cafe).
More dog bins. More litter bins.
More dog waste bins lower parking fee.
More for children.
More info about the trees and animals readily available.
More ladies toilets.
More litter bins and dog bins. Toilets have sometimes been closed. Also would like extended opening hours of toilets.
More parking spaces, parking for people with prams and children.
More paths for walking.
More speed bumps on roads in national park.
Nice as it is do not want it too comercialised.
No felling in visitors area (tend to do so in past) - more maintenance on orienteering course.
No information about wildlife and no rides.
Nothing not mentioned.
Notice of opening hours.
Open up more trails.
Parking season ticket.
Pushchair paths.
Rangers not often available.
Reduce cost of parking to a £1 instead of £2.
Remove car parking charge- Bring back cycle hire.
Signposting.
Stay as it is please.
Stopped the bikes with seats on back for children.
Sun shades over tables near cafe. Good to see water bowls for dogs.
The entrance has a blind spot off the main road (obscured by trees) - add some log cabins for overnight stays- add more walkways -bike tracks etc.
The play area could do more as some little ones don't have very much to go on. Area should be bigger. Few more things.
To provide more litter bins and more dog bins.
Upgrade the toilets.
Upgrade toilets and café.
Very happy. Nothing to improve.
Wash their muddy boots.
When having children's groups - more signs to show where they were on the map. Met some schoolkids who were not sure where they were. More wildlife info for kids. Expected to see badgers - deer and frogs.

What do you like most about the forest?

Able to walk free no restrictions.
Accessibility from home.
Attractive countryside.
Beautiful scenery.
Beautiful trees etc.
Beautiful. Always get food after walk.
Being able to relax.
Beautiful and tranquil place.
Can just sit and enjoy views and wildlife especially birds.
Children enjoy play area.
Children's facilities.
Close to home. Clean and tidy.
Close to where I live.
Convenient to home.
Countryside. Trees. Views. Flora and fauna. Solitude and quietness.
Different types of walks.
Easy for me on road on way home. Good car parking.
Easy to get to. Access is good. Pleasant environment.
Environment trees and open spaces.
Facilities for small children. Café.
Fishing facility.
Food - staff in café.
Freedom. Very large. Lots of different activities - cycling - horse riding. Can do what you want as long as you respect other users. Encourages young people to understand and use the countryside appropriately.
Fresh air serve food in café.
Fresh air. Greenery. Trees. Cleanliness. Back to nature.
Friendliness of staff in café - helpfulness of staff in café.
Good family outing.
Good for children in safe atmosphere - kids not bored.
Good walks. Wildlife and the quiet.
Handy for children lovely food nice walks ambiance just right.
I enjoy the walks through the forest. The getting healthy. Being able to great people. More of sociable thing really.
It got somewhere to play. I can have cup of tea and sit down. It's nice quality environment.
It is clean and fresher. Staff are mannerly and very helpful.
Lack of people on the walks.
Nature, out of the way, no traffic.
Nice area.
No motor bikes.
Open area - fresh air.
Open spaces. Nice place to bring children and dogs. Nice for a change. Play area good for grandchild.
Outdoor areas for children and coffee.
Overall atmosphere.
Peace – walks.
Peace and quiet.
Peace and quiet.
Peace and quiet.
Peace and quiet.
Peace and quiet. Safe for children.
Peace and quiet. Weather and shade. Catering facility. Open all year round.
Peace solitude and quiet within a short walk from the kids. Love to see the kids out here but nice to get away from them. Flora and fauna - found some wild raspberries. Have had a season ticket every previous year but been in hospital so wasn't worth it this year. Will again when better. Can't get away from the cars.
Peaceful - close to home.
Peaceful can bring a picnic. Kids can enjoy the playground. Lots to do.
Peaceful. Chance to let the dogs run.
Peaceful. Things for the children to do.
Play area.
Restaurant.
Restaurant and children's play area.
Restaurant and children's play area.
Safe.

Safe, child friendly.
Safe peaceful. Wildlife.
Scenery.
Scenery.
Scenery – quiet.
Scenery - views. Plenty of versatile walks. Not restricted to paths. Plenty of different routes. Good for dog walking.
Scenery, vicinity.
Scenery. Family friendly.
Scenery. Solitude. Watching the birds - had them feeding out of our hands.
Scenery peace and quiet.
Solitude.
Solitude - natural woodland park.
Solitude and feeling safe.
Solitude, enjoying countryside.
Something for all ages. Old to young children. Atmosphere.
Something for everyone dogs-children and coffee.
The children's play area.
The cup of tea.
The ease of walking away into solitude and peace.
The forest.
The forest, wildlife, facilities for children.
The park. Walks. Cafe. Shop. Staff very polite.
The walking and the beautiful scenery.
Tranquility. Walking. Wildlife - seen redstart for first time. Scenery.
Tranquility.
Trees. The children's play. It's in nice safe area.
Walking. Cup of coffee in good surroundings.
Walks.
