

FOREST VISITOR SURVEYS 2009

Jackie Watson & Sheila Ward
Economics & Statistics
Forestry Commission
November 2010



CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. LOCAL VISITOR SURVEYS.....	4
2.1. SCOTLAND	4
EVENTS EVALUATION	4
CHRISTMAS QUESTIONNAIRE	6
GLEN AFFRIC.....	7
FORT WILLIAM	8
7STANES USER SURVEY	9
2.2. WALES.....	10
AFAN FOREST PARK	10
WALES FOREST PARK	11
3. OTHER SURVEYS	12
3.1. QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE SURVEYS	12
KIELDER WATER AND FOREST PARK (QoE)	12
DALBY FOREST (QoE).....	13
HALDON FOREST (QoE).....	14
3.2 MONITORING AND EVALUATING QUALITY OF LIFE FOR FC ENGLAND	15
3.3 MONITOR OF ENGAGEMENT WITH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.....	16
3.4 SCOTTISH RECREATION SURVEY 2008 & 2009	17
3.5 WOODLANDS IN AND AROUND TOWNS (WIAT) LONGITUDINAL STUDY	18

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents a summary of results from surveys of visitors to woodland in 2009, covering both on-site and household surveys.

Section 2 of this report presents results from local visitor surveys that are carried out as required by forest districts. These types of surveys address local management issues, with questions designed to obtain information that varies from site to site. Some surveys are targeted at specific events or projects, for example one survey was part of a report to evaluate the 7stanes Mountain Bike Trails project in the Scottish Borders and Galloway. Other surveys monitor visitor experience of events and satisfaction at visitor centres. Results should be interpreted with caution when sample sizes are small.

Section 3 presents details of other surveys that provide information about forest visitors. These include results from three Quality of Experience Surveys carried out in 2009, and results from household surveys of recreation results from the Scottish Recreation Survey carried out over 2008 and 2009 and also first year results from the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey which started in March 2009.

For more information about this or other visitor survey work please contact Forestry Commission Statistics at the address below.

Prepared by: Jackie Watson & Sheila Ward
Economics & Statistics, Forestry Commission,
231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh, EH12 7AT

Enquiries: Jackie Watson 0131 314 6171
statistics@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Statistician: Sheila Ward

Website: www.forestry.gov.uk/statistics

2. LOCAL VISITOR SURVEYS

2.1. SCOTLAND

EVENTS EVALUATION

General Information

The Events Evaluation survey took place in five forest districts within Scotland; Cowal and Trossachs (107 completed questionnaires), Fort Augustus¹ (5), Galloway (113), Moray and Aberdeenshire (82), and Tayside (40). Across the five districts a total of 347 questionnaires were completed.

Summary

Almost all visitors were satisfied with both the quality of the event they attended (98%) and the service provided by the staff at the event (99%). Almost all respondents (99%) said they would recommend a Forestry Commission Scotland event to family and friends.

Results²

	Total
Number of completed questionnaires	347
Visit details	
% who had attended an event before	38
% who had visited an event once a year or more (only those who had attended an event before)	24
% who were aware of the Events guide	59
% who had visited the FC website	38
% who had seen the event advertised in the FCS Events Guide	26
% who would recommend a FCS event to family and friends	99
Ratings³	
% satisfied with quality of the event	98
% satisfied with the service provided by our staff	99

Timing of survey: March - October 2009.
 Type of survey: Self-completion questionnaire.
 Data Tables: Information available on request.

¹Fort Augustus Forest District is now part of Inverness, Ross & Skye Forest District.

²Results are based only on those who responded to the question.

³ Satisfaction rating expressed as a proportion of those who rated the facility. Visitors are classed as satisfied if they give a rating of excellent or good.

VISITOR CENTRE FEEDBACK

General Information

The Visitor Centre Feedback Survey was carried out at the Clatteringshaws Visitor Centre (117 completed questionnaires), Glentrool Visitor Centre (174), Kirroughtree Visitor Centre (59), David Marshall Lodge (125) and Glenmore Forest Park (55). A total of 530 surveys were completed across the five sites.

Summary

Almost two thirds of respondents (64%) were female. Around one quarter of groups included someone with a long-term illness, health problem or disability.

Results¹

	Total
Number of completed questionnaires	530
Visitor Profile	
% of male visitors	36
% of female visitors	64
% of senior citizens (aged 65+)	17
% of adults aged 45 – 64	37
% of adults aged 25 – 44	30
% of young adults and children (aged 24 and under)	17
% of non-white visitor	3
% of groups including someone with a long-term illness, health problem or disability	28
Ratings²	
% satisfied with the parking facilities	95
% satisfied with the signage	96
% satisfied with the children's play area (David Marshall Lodge & Kirroughtree)	97
% satisfied with the toilet facilities	88
% satisfied with the baby changing facilities	87
% satisfied with quality of food	97
% satisfied with the quality of service	98
% satisfied with the value for money of food	94
% satisfied with the cycling facilities	97
% satisfied with the walking facilities	98
% satisfied with the visitor information	95
% satisfied with the go ape facilities (David Marshall Lodge only)	97

Timing of survey: March – November 2009.
 Type of survey: Self-completion questionnaires.
 Data Tables: Information available on request.

¹Results are based only on those who responded to the question.

²Satisfaction rating, as a proportion of those who rated the facility. Visitors are classed as satisfied if they give a rating of very good or good.

CHRISTMAS QUESTIONNAIRE

General Information

Christmas Surveys were carried out in 2009 at seven sales centres within Scotland; David Marshall Lodge (47 completed questionnaires), Galloway (31), Glenbranter (121), Glentress (26), Perthshire (779), Tyrebagger (836) and West Bay (71). Across all sites a total of 1,911 questionnaires were completed.

Summary

Nearly four fifths (78%) of visitors were returning customers. More than half of the respondents (58%) had heard about the centre through word of mouth and one quarter (26%) had heard about the centre from roadside signs. Three fifths (60%) of visitors came to buy a tree from the centre because of the tree quality while over half of visitors (52%) wanted a sustainably grown tree.

Results¹

	Total
Number of completed questionnaires	1,911
Visit details	
% of visitors who heard about the Christmas tree centre via word of mouth	58
% of visitors who heard about the Christmas tree centre from road signs	26
% of visitors who heard about the Christmas tree centre in the local newspaper	12
% of visitors who heard about the Christmas tree centre from the FC website	7
% of visitors who came to buy a tree because of the quality of tree	60
% of visitors who came to buy a sustainably grown tree	52
% of visitors who came because of the atmosphere of the forest/sales centre	34
% of visitors who came to buy a tree because of the value for money	31
% of visitors who had visited sales centres before	78

Timing of survey: Christmas 2009.
 Type of survey: Self-completion questionnaires.
 Data Tables: Information available on request.

¹Results are based only on those who responded to the question.

GLEN AFFRIC

General Information

The Glen Affric visitor survey was carried out in April, June and July 2009 across five locations within Glen Affric: Dog Falls, River Affric, Loch Beinn A Mheadhoin, River Affric car park and at Dog Falls car park. A total of 60 questionnaires were completed.

Summary

Two fifths (40%) of respondents were previous visitors. Around one fifth (22%) had travelled from home. Almost two fifths of the visitors (37%) had heard about Glen Affric through a local guide book. Walking was the main purpose for visiting for almost one half of visitors (47%). Visitors to Glen Affric commented that they enjoyed the scenery the most.

Results¹

	Total
Number of completed questionnaires	60
Visitor Profile	
% of male visitors	53
% of female visitors	47
% of senior citizens (aged 60+)	16
% of adults aged 40 – 59	30
% of adults aged 25 – 39	39
% of young adults (aged 16 – 24)	16
% of groups including someone with a disability or special needs	10
Visit details	
% of visitors who had visited Glen Affric before	40
% of visitors who had travelled from home	22
% of visitors who had travelled more than 15 miles	78
% of visitors who found out about Glen Affric through a local guide book	37
% of visitors who said their main purpose for visiting was for walking	47
% of visitors who had ever used the waymarked routes	60
% of visitors who had ever used the Dog Falls walk (2 miles)	37
% of visitors who read any of the information panels	80
% of visitors from outside the UK	43

Timing of survey: June and July 2009.
 Type of survey: face-to-face questionnaires.
 Data Tables: Information available on request.

It should be noted that as this survey has a relatively low sample size, the interpretation of any results should be treated with caution.

¹Results are based only on those who responded to the question.

FORT WILLIAM

General Information

A total of 150 interviews were carried out in 2009 at three locations around Fort William. The interviews took place at Braveheart (75 interviews), Nevis Range (45) and North Face Car Park (30).

Summary

Two thirds (66%) of visitors were returning customers and almost a third (30%) were visiting alone. Mountain biking was the main purpose of visiting for over one third (36%) of visitors.

Results¹

	Total
Number of completed questionnaires	150
Visitor Profile	
% of male visitors	70
% of female visitors	30
% of senior citizens (aged 60+)	8
% of adults aged 40 – 59	40
% of adults aged 25 – 39	33
% of young adults and children (aged 24 and under)	19
% of non-white visitors	1
% of groups including someone with a disability or special needs	2
Visit Details	
% of visitors who had travelled from home	56
% of visitors who travelled up to 15 miles	67
% of visitors who had visited alone	30
% of visitors who had visited before	66
% of visitors who visited at least once a month	43
% of visitors whose main purpose of visit was walking or climbing	42
% of visitors whose main purpose of visit was mountain biking	36
% of visitors who had used any of the waymarked routes	65
% of visitors who had ever read any of the information panels	68
% of visitors who had ever used the Witch's Mountain bike leaflet	41
% of visitors who would like to know more about walking and cycling routes	32

Timing of survey: July – August 2009.
 Type of survey: Face-to-Face questionnaires.
 Data Tables: Information available on request.

¹Results are based only on those who responded to the question.

7STANES USER SURVEY

General Information

A total of 180 questionnaires were completed using an on-line web-based survey. The 7stanes survey is being carried out by Tourism Doctor.com from 2008 to 2010. The summary data below presents the results for the first two years.

Summary

44% of visitors found out about 7stanes from other mountain bike users. Over four fifths (85%) of visitors used the café facilities and almost three quarters (72%) were satisfied with the facilities available.

Results¹

	Total
Number of completed on-line questionnaires	180
Visitor Profile	
% of groups with adults (aged 50+)	12
% of groups with adults (aged 41 – 50)	39
% of groups with adults (aged 31– 40)	59
% of groups with young adults (aged 21 – 30)	32
% of groups with children to young adults (aged 10 – 20)	17
% of groups with children (aged < 10)	7
Visit Details	
% of visitors who were recommended 7stanes by other mountain bikers	44
% of visitors who used GOOGLE search engine	51
% of visitors who travelled to the venues by own transport	90
% of visitors who cycled to the venues	8
% of visitors who were day visitors	41
% of visitors who used café facilities	85
Ratings²	
% satisfied with various sources of information	87
% satisfied with information available on 7stanes	91
% satisfied with facilities available	72
% satisfied with standard of accommodation	80
% satisfied with accommodation value for money	78
% satisfied with accommodation booking process	75

Timing of survey: January 2008 – December 2009.
 Type of survey: On-line Web-based.
 Data Tables: Information available on request.

¹Results are based only on those who responded.

²Satisfaction rating, as a proportion of those who rated the facility. Visitors are classed as satisfied if they give a rating of very good or good.

2.2. WALES

AFAN FOREST PARK

General Information

Every two years an in depth survey is carried out at Afan Forest Park to help understand the requirements of visitors. A total of 456 face to face interviews were achieved with visitors at three sites; Afan Visitor Centre (196 interviews), Glyncorrwg Mountain Bike Centre (168) and Rhyslyn Car Park (92).

Summary

Around three quarters of respondents surveyed were male (76%); this ratio has not altered significantly since 2006. Almost all respondents (98%) were satisfied with the overall quality of the park.

Results

	Total
Number of Face to Face Interviews	456
Visitor Profile	
% of male visitors	76
% of female visitors	24
% of senior citizens (aged 60+)	13
% of adults aged 40 – 59	36
% of adults aged 25 – 39	41
% of young adults (aged 16 – 24)	10
% of visitors in social grades ABC1	65
Visit Details	
% of visitors who have visited before	80
% of visitors whose main purpose for visiting is cycling and mountain biking	62
% of visitors who were on a day trip from home	70
% of visitors staying on a short break up to 3 nights	20
% of visitors who stayed at the park for 3 hours or more	55
Average spend per group	£58
Ratings of Aspects of Afan Forest Park¹	
% satisfied with overall quality of the park	98
% satisfied with overall aspect of Feeling Welcome	95
% satisfied with information provided	95

Timing of survey: Between 15th August & 6th September 2009.

Type of survey: Face to Face.

Publication: Research Document, prepared by Beaufort Research for Neath Port Talbot CBC.

¹Satisfaction rating, as a proportion of those who rated the facility. Visitors are classed as satisfied if they give a rating of very good or good.

WALES FOREST PARK

General Information

Feedback surveys forms were placed at the visitor centres at Bwlch Nant yr Arian and Coed y Brenin in Wales during 2009. A total of 278 questionnaires were completed: 196 at Bwlch Nant Yr Arian Forest Park and 82 at Coed y Brenin.

Summary

Respondents were generally satisfied with the sites. Of those who expressed an opinion, 96% were satisfied with the quality of service, 94% were satisfied with the leaflets, maps and interpretation panels and 92% were satisfied with the signposting on trails.

Results

	Total
Number of completed questionnaires	278
Ratings¹	
% satisfied with the food	98
% satisfied with the gift items	84
% satisfied with the quality of service	96
% satisfied with the bike shop/hire (Coed y Brenin only)	90
% satisfied with the choice of paths for walking	97
% satisfied the children's play equipment	97
% satisfied with the choice of trails for cycling	95
% satisfied with the easy access/wheelchair friendly trails	92
% satisfied with the choice of trails for other activities	97
% satisfied with the leaflets, maps and interpretation panels	94
% satisfied with the sign posting on trails	92
% satisfied with the information provided by staff	95

Timing of survey: Seasonal 2009.
 Type of survey: Self-completion questionnaire.
 Data Tables: Information available on request.

¹Satisfaction rating expressed as a proportion of those who rated the facility. Visitors are classed as satisfied if they give a rating of excellent, very good, or good.

3. OTHER SURVEYS

3.1. QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE SURVEYS

KIELDER WATER AND FOREST PARK (QoE)

General Information

This survey took place at Kielder Water and Forest Park in 2009. A total of 306 visitors were interviewed face to face at the end of their visit.

Summary

Around two fifths of visitors to Kielder Water and Forest Park (43%) were in the Empty Nesters lifecycle group. Over one half of respondents (56%) had visited the forest before. The average spend per day of those visitors who spent anything was £41.

Results

	Total
Number of interviews	306
Visitor Profile	
% of senior citizens (aged 65+)	11
% of adults aged 45-64	42
% of adults aged 25-44	43
% of young adults (aged 16-24)	4
% who were in Empty Nesters lifecycle (aged 45+, no children in household)	43
% of visitors in social grades ABC1	69
Trip Details	
% who were on a short day trip from home (less than 3 hours)	38
% who were on a longer day trip from home (3 hours or more)	9
% who were on holiday away from home	52
Visit Details	
% of visitors who have visited before	56
% who visited at least once a month	18
% of visitors who took part in walking	45
% of visitors who took part in cycling	38
Average length of stay on site	3 hrs 34 m
Average spend for those who spent anything	£41
Most important aspects in decision to visit¹	
Being able to enjoy scenery and views	4.06
Clean toilets	3.97
Being able to spend time with family and friends	3.84
Aspects of visiting given top satisfaction rating^{2,3}	
Being able to enjoy scenery and views	4.23
Being able to spend time with family and friends	4.15
Solitude/tranquillity/peace and quiet	4.06

Timing of survey: 25th July - 27th October 2009.

Type of survey: On site face to face interview.

Publication: 'Monitoring the quality of experience in forests – Kielder Water and Forest Park' by TNS Research International

¹Ratings based a scale from 1 to 5; e.g. 5 extremely important, 4 very important, 3 fairly important, 2 fairly unimportant, 1 not at all important.

²Satisfaction ratings based on those who rated aspect.

³Ratings based a scale from 1 to 5; e.g. 5 excellent, 4 very good, 3 good, 2 fair, 1 poor.

DALBY FOREST (QoE)

General Information

This survey took place at Dalby Forest in 2009. A total of 324 visitors were interviewed face to face at the end of their visit.

Summary

Around one half of visitors to Dalby Forest (52%) were in the Family lifecycle group. Almost two thirds of visitors (63%) had previously visited the forest with around two fifths (39%) visiting while on holiday away from home. The average overall spend of visitors who spent anything was £47.

Results

	Total
Number of interviews	324
Visitor Profile	
% of senior citizens (aged 65+)	11
% of adults aged 45-64	33
% of adults aged 25-44	52
% of young adults (aged 16-24)	4
% who were in the Family lifecycle (children in household)	52
% of visitors in social grades ABC1	65
Trip Details	
% who were on a short day trip from home (less than 3 hours)	23
% who were on a longer day trip from home (3 hours or more)	38
% who were on holiday away from home	39
Visit Details	
% of visitors who have visited before	63
% who visited at least once a month	27
% of visitors who took part in walking	50
% of visitors who took part in cycling	30
Average length of stay on site	3 hrs 37 m
Average spend for those who spent anything	£47
Most important aspects in decision to visit ¹	
Clean toilets	4.15
Being able to enjoy scenery and views	4.07
Feeling happy to leave car in the car park	4.00
Aspects of visit given top satisfaction rating ^{2, 3}	
Being able to enjoy scenery and views	4.13
Being able to spend time with family and friends	4.08
Clean toilets	4.03

Timing of survey: 25th July - 27th October 2009.

Type of survey: On site face to face interview.

Publication: 'Monitoring the quality of experience in forests – Dalby Forest' by TNS Research International.

¹Ratings based a scale from 1 to 5; e.g. 5 extremely important, 4 very important, 3 fairly important, 2 fairly unimportant, 1 not at all important.

²Satisfaction ratings based on those who rated aspect.

³Ratings based a scale from 1 to 5; e.g. 5 excellent, 4 very good, 3 good, 2 fair, 1 poor.

HALDON FOREST (QoE)

General Information

This survey took place at Haldon Forest in 2009. A total of 304 visitors were interviewed face to face at the end of their visit.

Summary

The majority of visitors were in the Family lifecycle group (64%). Two thirds of visitors (67%) had been to the forest before while three quarters (75%) were on a short day trip from home. The daily average spend of those who spent anything during their visit was £31.

Results

	Total
Number of interviews	304
Visitor Profile	
% of senior citizens (aged 65+)	5
% of adults aged 45-64	25
% of adults aged 25-44	65
% of young adults (aged 16-24)	5
% who were in the Family lifecycle (children in household)	64
% of visitors in social grades ABC1	72
Trip Details	
% who were on a short day trip from home (less than 3 hours)	75
% who were on a longer day trip from home (3 hours or more)	11
% who were on holiday away from home	14
Visit Details	
% of visitors who have visited before	67
% who visited at least once a month	51
% of visitors who took part in walking	42
% of visitors who took part in cycling	52
Average length of stay on site	2 hrs 30 m
Average spend for those who spent anything	£31
Most important aspects in decision to visit ¹	
Being able to spend time with family and friends	4.16
Clean toilets	4.11
Feeling happy to leave car in car park	4.07
Aspects of visit given top satisfaction rating ^{2, 3}	
Value for money of trip/day out	4.18
Being able to spend time with family and friends	4.17
Being able to enjoy scenery and views	4.07

Timing of survey: 25th July - 27th October 2009.

Type of survey: On site face to face interview.

Publication: 'Monitoring the quality of experience in forests – Haldon Forest' by TNS Research International.

¹Ratings based a scale from 1 to 5; e.g. 5 extremely important, 4 very important, 3 fairly important, 2 fairly unimportant, 1 not at all important.

²Satisfaction ratings based on those who rated aspects.

³Ratings based a scale from 1 to 5; e.g. 5 excellent, 4 very good, 3 good, 2 fair, 1 poor.

3.2 MONITORING AND EVALUATING QUALITY OF LIFE FOR FC ENGLAND

A 3-year project to monitor and evaluate quality of life is being undertaken at 3 sites in England:

- Bentley Community Woodland, Doncaster
- Birches Valley Visitor Centre, Cannock Chase
- Ingrebourne Hill Community Woodland, South Hornchurch London.

The project incorporates on-site surveys, and site management data on activities and events and on facilities and incidents. It also makes use of national data from the Public Opinion of Forestry survey.

Reports for the 1st two years of the project (2008-09 and 2009-10) and further information are available on the Forest Research website at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-7TGBUC>

3.3 MONITOR OF ENGAGEMENT WITH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

General Information

The first year of fieldwork for the "Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment" (MENE) survey started in March 2009, with information on visits to the outdoors collected in England. The survey was commissioned from TNS Research International by Natural England with support from Defra and the Forestry Commission. A total of 48,514 interviews were conducted in English homes between March 2009 and February 2010.

Summary

It is estimated that in 2009 there were 317 million trips made in England that included a visit to a woodland or forest.

Results

	Total
Number of visits made to woodland or forest (millions)	317
Woodland visit characteristics¹	
Activities	
% whose activities included walking with a dog	66
% whose activities included other walking	21
% whose activities included wildlife watching	6
% whose activities included playing with children	6
% whose activities included to eat/drink out	4
% whose activities included cycling	3
Main transport	
% whose main means of transport was on foot	61
% whose main means of transport was by car / van	35
% whose main means of transport was by bicycle	2
Distance travelled (one way)	
% who travelled less than 1 mile	38
% who travelled 1 to 2 miles	25
% who travelled 3 to 5 miles	19
% who travelled 6 to 10 miles	7
% who travelled over 10 miles	11
Duration of visit (round trip)	
% who made visits up to 1 hour	26
% who made visits of 1 hour - less than 2 hours	42
% who made visits of 2 hours – less than 3 hours	15
% who made visits of 3 hours or more	17

Timing of survey: March 2009 – February 2010.

Type of survey: Face to face as part of an in-home omnibus survey, conducted using CAPI software.

Publication: First annual report, technical report and data summary tables.

Topics covered: People's visits to the natural environment, type of destination, duration of the visit, mode of transport, distance travelled, spend, main activities and motivations for the visit. Data on people who do not visit the natural environment and the reasons for not visiting are also collected.

¹Per cent of visits that included woodland.

3.4 SCOTTISH RECREATION SURVEY 2008 & 2009

General Information

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and Forestry Commission have jointly commissioned the Scottish Recreation Survey since 2003, to measure participation in outdoor recreation. Over a 12 month period questions were inserted into the Scottish Opinion Survey – a monthly Computer Aided Personal interview (CAPI) omnibus. A total of 12,174 interviews were conducted in Scottish homes in 2008 and 12,200 in 2009.

Summary

It is estimated that there were 351 million visits to the Scottish outdoors in 2009, of which 57 million included visits to woodland.

Results

	2008	2009
Number of Interviews	12, 174	12,200
Number of visits (millions)		
Number of visitors to all destinations	384.2	351.2
All visits including woodland	62.2	56.5
All visits of which FC woodland	25.0	18.1
Number of visits to woodlands as main destination	43.2	36.7
Number of visits to woodlands as main destination of which FC woodland	18.5	13.0
Woodland visit characteristics¹		
Main activity		
% whose main activity was walking	83	85
% whose main activity was cycling	6	4
% whose main activity was family outing	5	4
Main transport		
% whose main means of transport was on foot	53	63
% whose main means of transport was by car / van	40	36
% whose main means of transport was by bicycle	5	0
Distance travelled (round trip)		
% who travelled up to 2 miles	22	35
% who travelled over 2 miles, up to 5 miles	41	35
% who travelled over 5 miles, up to 20 miles	26	21
% who travelled over 20 miles	11	9
Duration of visit (round trip)		
% who made visits up to 1 hour	20	24
% who made visits of 1 hour - less than 2 hours	41	39
% who made visits of 2 hours – less than 3 hours	15	19
% who made visits of 3 hours or more	24	18

Timing of survey: January – December 2008 and 2009.

Type of survey: In-home interviews conducted using CAPI hardware.

Publication: TNS Research International (2010) Scottish Recreation Survey: annual summary report Report. Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No. 358 (ROAME No. F02AA614/7) and No. 395 (ROAME No. F02AA614/8).

Topics covered: Number, frequency and location of visits to the outdoors, activities, transport and distances travelled to visit, party composition, expenditure on visit, awareness and understanding of the SOAC and access to the countryside.

¹Per cent of visits where the main destination was woodland

3.5 WOODLANDS IN AND AROUND TOWNS (WIAT) LONGITUDINAL STUDY

General Information

A longitudinal study was carried out by OPENspace for Forestry Commission Scotland in 2006 (before intervention) and in 2009 (after), to compare perceptions and use of woodlands at three sites. It ran at two sites with WIAT interventions (Drumchapel in Glasgow and various locations in Aberdeen) and one control site (Milton in Glasgow), with around 110 responses for each site. The 2009 survey replicated the 2006 baseline survey, and also included additional questions on health.

Results

- Substantial evidence of change in attitudes, perceptions and values associated with local woodlands, particularly in Drumchapel, but with opposite direction of change in Aberdeen.
- Motivation for use (physical activity, seeing wildlife, etc) varies considerably by location.
- Dramatic change in pattern of overall woodland use in Drumchapel, particularly summer frequency and type of visit, but with opposite direction of change in Aberdeen.

Timing of survey: November 2009

Type of survey: Household face-to-face survey in home, by Progressive Partnerships.

Publication: Woodlands in and Around Towns (WIAT): a longitudinal study comparing perceptions and use of woodlands pre- and post-intervention (2006-2009), Final Report April 2010, by Catherine Ward Thompson, Jenny Roe and Peter Aspinall, OPENspace research Centre, Edinburgh College of Art.

Topics covered: Regarding their open space/woodlands: Local people's attitudes, perceptions and values, how and how often used, possible changes to increase use and quality, links to general health, mental and social well-being.