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## **BACKGROUND**

The *Progress* Project, under the auspices of the Forestry Commission, seeks to reconcile the need to conserve the New Forest with the recreational demand. The project is involved with a number of initiatives to establish baseline information designed to inform the future management of the new National Park.

Surveys are under way to establish the number of people using the area for recreation and to note the various types of activities undertaken. One of these is dog walking, but the impact of this activity is not known, especially the problems of fouling and poorly controlled dogs. There is a need to identify the actual number of dogs using the National Park area, the patterns of behaviour and the attitudes of both dog walkers and non-dog walkers.

England Marketing was commissioned by the Progress project in September 2004 to undertake this study.

## **RESEARCH AIM**

To obtain baseline information on the recreational use of the New Forest National Park by dog walkers.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

1. To estimate the number of dogs that make use of the New Forest National Park area, broken down by three sub regions.
2. To assess the extent of usage of the National Park for dog walking.
3. To estimate the amount of dog faeces and urine deposited within the Park.
4. To identify how better provision could be made within the Park for dog walkers, e.g. dog bins or specific dog walking areas.
5. To assess the problems of dog walking in order of priority as perceived by both dog owners and other forest users.
6. To make recommendations for the management of dog walking in the National Park area.
7. To identify any further research in the context of dog walking that may help the management of the recreational use of the New Forest National Park.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The area for the study was specified as that of the New Forest National Park, comprising around 57,000 hectares. This is a very large area and clearly some sampling needed to be undertaken to form an estimate of the number of dogs being walked within the National Park boundaries.

As a first step, the Progress project directed the author to the New Forest Dog Owners Group (NFDog) which is reported to have around 2,000 members. Although initially somewhat reluctant to co-operate with this study until they were fully aware of the questions to be asked, NFDog did eventually agree to assist with this work. It was agreed that England Marketing could conduct a focus group with members of NFDog and also that the committee would help with a postal questionnaire to members. This was sent to 1,000 NFDog members and a total of 627 (63%) responses were received.

In addition to the specific dog owners questionnaire, a general questionnaire was sent to a sample of households across the National Park area. This sample was randomly selected based on a representative distribution of households by postcode across the New Forest area, including areas on the edge of the Forest itself, covered by New Forest District Council. Over 6,000 questionnaires were sent out and the response rate was 21%, or, 1,276 responses.

The findings from both surveys have been used in this report. The questionnaires are included as appendices 1 & 2.

In addition, the findings of the focus group, together with desk research and telephone interviews have been used to enhance the report.

The report is presented in a format to reflect the objectives. The question-by-question analyses of the two surveys are available as separate documents. A few questions were used simply to “warm up” respondents and encourage them to respond. In both surveys there were an enormous number of comments made, respondents often made several points in response to the few open ended questions. These have extensively analysed in the preparation of the report.

## OBJECTIVE 1

*To estimate the number of dogs that make use of the New Forest National Park area broken down by sub-regions.*

Note that this report focuses on owners/dogs who are resident in the New Forest area rather than visitors. Visitors are covered by a separate survey which has been undertaken by Tourism South East.

In the New Forest District Council area there are some 71,985 households (source: 2001 Census). The New Forest District Council area has boundaries extended beyond the National Park itself but those living close to edge of the Park were assumed to have easy access to the Forest.

The household survey returned by 1,276 respondents showed that 493 people owned dogs. This represents 38.6% of the households surveyed and, although higher than the 22% of dog owning households nationally (source: latest figures provided by the Pet Food Manufacturers Association), is not a surprising figure given the ideal conditions for dog owners.

Based on these figures there are 27,786 dog owning households in the New Forest area.

The survey also asked how many dogs they owned.

Further analysis of the number of dogs owned (using the Household Survey rather than the NFDog owners which might skew the results too far upwards), suggests that of those 27,786 households, 25% own two dogs (adding 6,949 additional dogs) 5% of households own three dogs (adding a further 2,778 dogs) and 0.12% households own four or more dogs (adding a further 99 dogs).

Thus, a total number of dogs is reached by the sum of these figures:-

27,786
6,946
2,778
99
-----
<b>37,609</b>
=====

Thus, the total number of dogs resident on the New Forest survey area is estimated as 37,600.

In terms of where they are located, the figures are based again on the part of the household survey which was completed by dog owners and the NF Dog Survey where respondents were asked to provide the first four digits of their post code. The New Forest has been split into three main areas, as shown on the map (figure 1, page 12), North, West and South. The areas are roughly dissected by the A35 with Lyndhurst forming the point at which the three areas converge. Based on the population of respondents in each area, it is concluded that the South is the most popular for dog owners, followed by the West and then the North. It should be noted, however, that the South covers a larger physical area and is also more densely populated.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Household Survey</b>	<b>NFDog Survey</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>No. of Dogs</b>
South	66%	50%	58%	21,808
West	22%	27%	24.5%	9,212
North	12%	23%	17.5%	6,580
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%	100%	100%	37,600

The popularity of areas in which to walk, covered in Objective 2 will also provide detail on the spread of dogs.

**OBJECTIVE 2**

*To assess the extent of usage of the National Park for dog walking.*

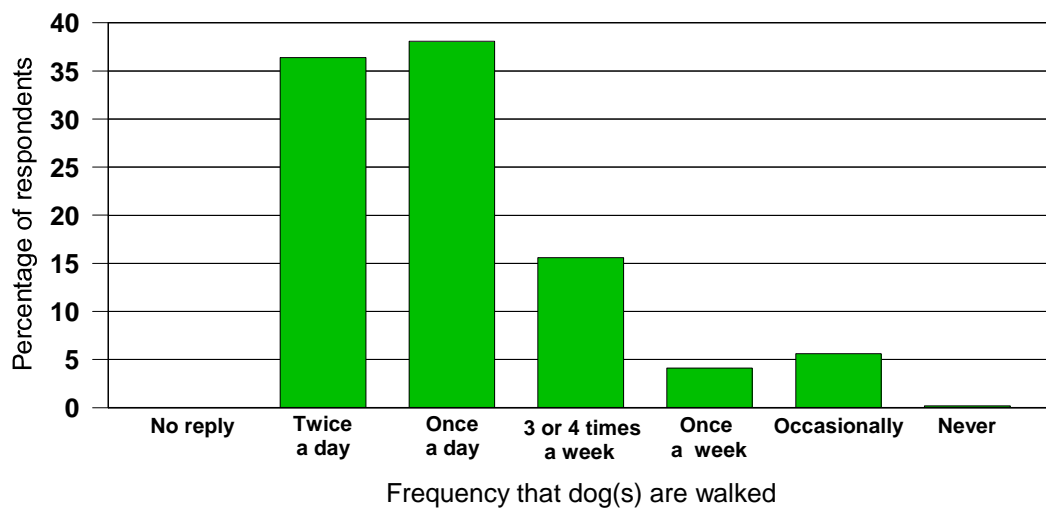
In both the NFDog Survey and the Household Survey respondents were asked how many dogs they walk at one time, how often they walk in the New Forest and how long each of their walks generally tends to last.

The results are shown in the tables below and illustrated with charts.

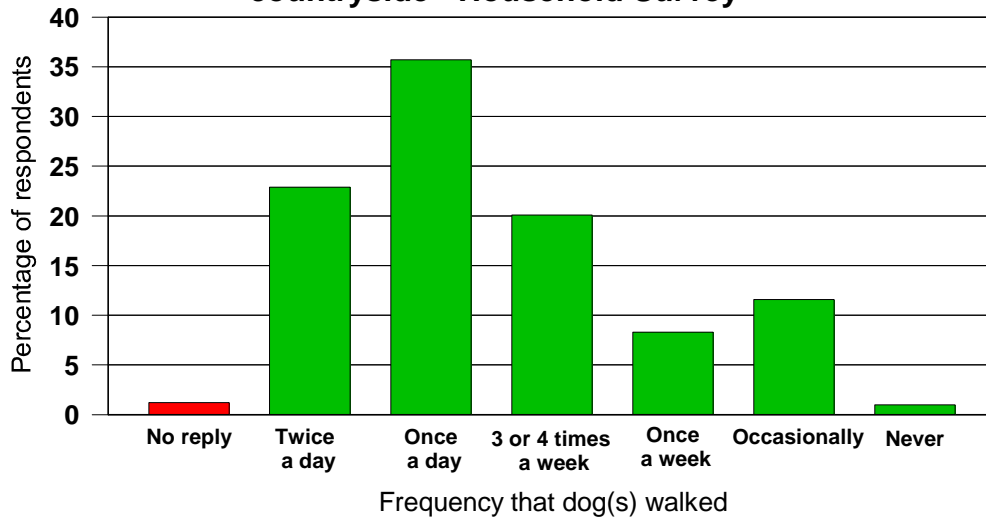
**Frequency of Dog Walking**

How Often	NFDog Survey	Household Survey	Average
Twice a Day	36.0%	23.0%	29.5%
Once a Day	38.0%	36.0%	37.0%
3 – 4 times per week	16.0%	20.0%	18.0%
Once per week	0.5%	8.0%	4.25%
Occasionally	0.5%	12.0%	6.25%
Never	0.01%	0.01%	0.01%

**How often do you walk your dog(s) in the New Forest countryside - NFDog Survey**



### How often do you walk your dog(s) in the New Forest countryside - Household Survey

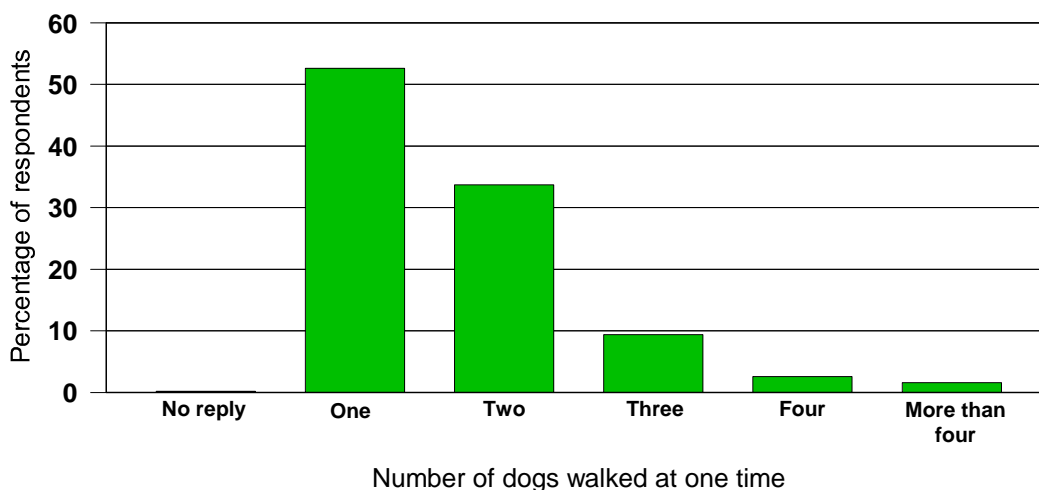


**How many dogs are normally walked?**

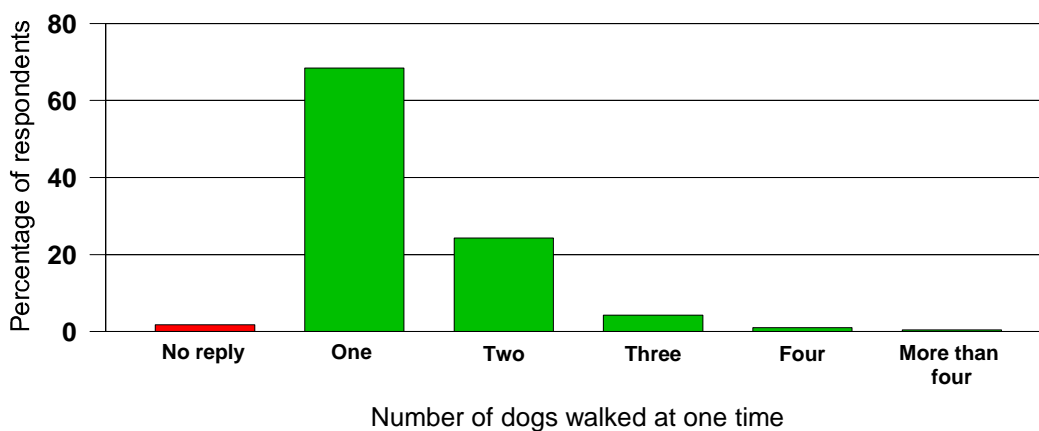
No. of Dogs	NFDog Survey	Household Survey	Average
One	53%	68%	60.5%
Two	34%	25%	29%
Three	9.4%	5%	6.85%
Four	2.3%	0.012%	1.15%
Four+	0.2%	0.004%	0.1%

NB Figures do not add up to 100% as some respondents did not answer this question

**How many dogs do you normally walk at one time? - NFDog Survey**



**How many dogs do you normally walk at one time? - Household Survey**

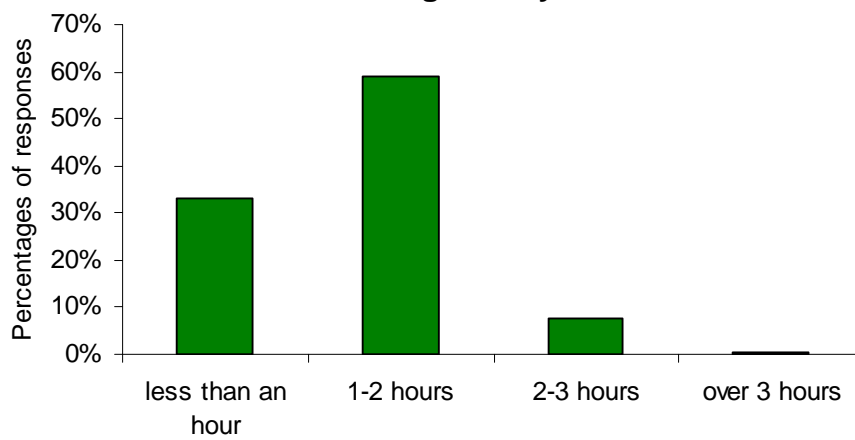




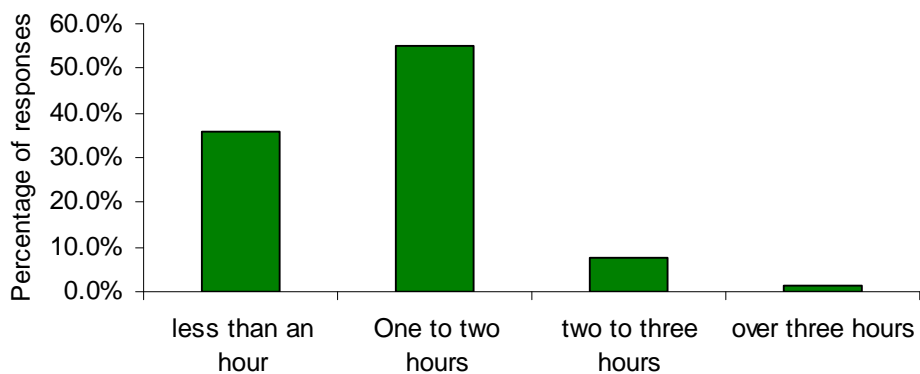
**How long does the average walk last?**

How Long	NFDog Survey	Household Survey	Average
< 1 hour	33.0%	36.0%	34.5%
1 – 2 hours	59.0%	55.0%	57.0%
2 – 3 hours	7.5%	7.5%	7.25%
3+ hours	0.5%	1.5%	0.3%

**How long does each of your walks last  
- NFDog Survey**



**How long does each of your walks last  
- Household Survey**



The figures show that NFDog Members are likely to walk more dogs more frequently and their walks last a little longer than the average dog owning household. Taking a mean score, at least two thirds of the resident population walk in the Forest every day, although only a very small minority walk more than two dogs. The majority of dogs are walked for between one and two hours.

Thus, based on a resident dog population of 37,600, it is concluded that 25,000 dogs are walked in the New Forest for about an hour a day. This figure is reached by taking the fact that 66.5% of dogs are walked in the forest at least once a day.

Of the NFDog respondents, 37% have direct access to the Forest from their homes and 62% have to travel to an appropriate car park or access point. These figures are quite similar to the complete Household Survey figures, showing 43% with direct access to the Forest and 56% who do not have direct access.

The twenty most popular places to walk for NFDog walkers were:

Location	No. of Responses
Wilverley	191
Longslade	90
Burley area	61
Brockenhurst area	57
Longslade Bottom	57
Yew Tree Bottom	50
Horseshoe Bottom	47
Holmesley	44
Setthorns	41
Lyndhurst area	40
Fritham area	31
Dibden Inclosures	29
Clay Hill	26
Boltons Bench	24
Linford Bottom	22
Norley Wood	22
Puttles Bridge	22
Stoney Cross	22
Beaulieu Heath	21
Burbush	21
Deerleap	21
Pig Bush	21

The top twenty locations for all respondents in the household survey mentioned 12 of the favourite places to walk by NFDog members. The table below shows the top twenty most popular places to walk according to the household survey.

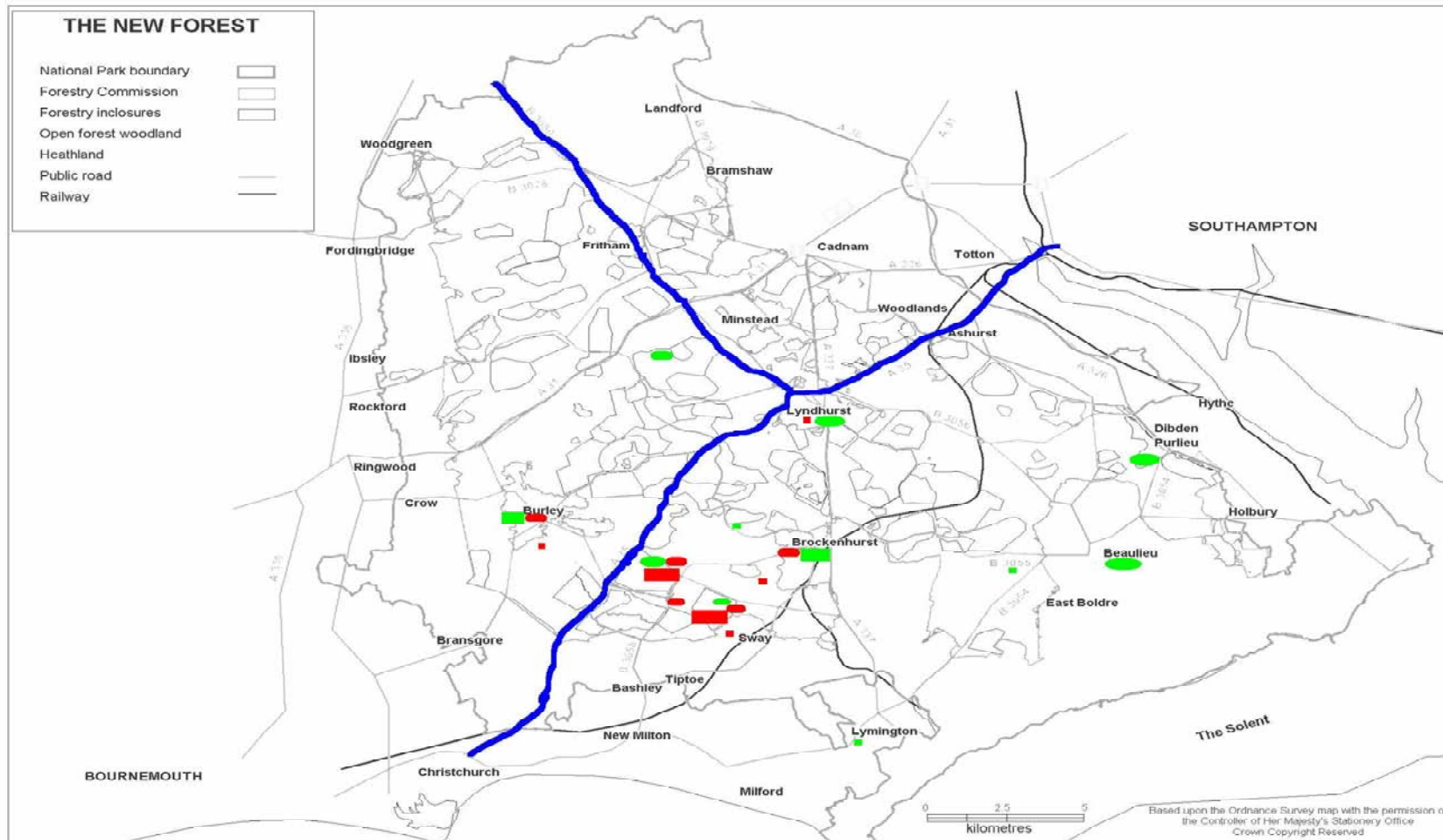
Location	Number of Responses
Wilverley area	186
Burley area	177
Brockenhurst area	169
Beaulieu area	133
Lyndhurst area	127
Dibden Inclosure	116
Longslade	80
Bolderwood	73
Hatchet Pond	69
Lymington area	69
Rhinefield area	65
Linford Bottom	62
Setthorns	59
Sway area	59
Horseshoe Bottom	54
Longslade Bottom	49
Fritham	48
Holmesley	47
Hill Top	43
Pig Bush	43

The attached map (figure 1, page 12) shows the most popular locations and this is where there is likely to be most pressure on the Forest through number of dog walkers.

Appendix 2 shows the complete alphabetical list of places walked for both the NFDog members and the householders.

These figures relate only to the dogs which are resident in the New Forest. It should be borne in mind that usage of the Forest increases significantly in the summer during the main tourist season. Tourism South East, has recently undertaken a study and have estimated that there are 1.5 million visitor days by holiday makers staying in the Park, 1.4 million visitor day trips by holiday makers from outside the Park and 4.6 million visitor day trips from places distant to the Park. Of the 7.5m visits made in a year, Tourism South East estimates that 8% bring their dogs. Thus, in addition to the 37,600 dogs which regularly walk in the New Forest, it is estimated that there are a further 600,000 dog visits per year.

Figure 1



Key - Frequency of Times Mentioned By Dog Walkers

80-110

48-54

55-79

40-47

Frequency of Times Mentioned By Householders

150-180

70-99

100-149

63-69

**OBJECTIVE 3**

*To estimate the amount of dog faeces and urine deposited within the New Forest.*

Using estimates of output of faeces and urine based on dog size, and the number of dogs walked in the Forest and with what frequency, it is possible to estimate the amount of dog faeces and urine in the Park.

**Estimate of Average Dog Output**

Using measurements of the research team's dogs (which included Labradors, and several terriers), an estimated output has been created according to size of dog.

<b>Types of Dog</b>	<b>Faeces (Kgs) per day</b>	<b>Urine (Ltrs) per day</b>
Giant Breeds e.g. St Bernard	1.0	1.2
Large Breeds e.g. Labrador	0.75	0.8
Medium Breeds e.g. Spaniel	0.5	0.6
Small Breeds e.g. Border Terrier	0.25	0.3
Toy Breeds e.g. Yorkshire Terrier	0.1	0.2

It is stressed that these figures are simple estimates based on crude measurements. The market research team were unable to access figures from a more reliable scientific source and accurate measurement was beyond the scope of this study. However, if the Forestry Commission is aware of any more accurate figures, these could equally be applied to the following analysis.

The next step was to apply the national figures which exist for dog sizes and extrapolate these to the dog population in the New Forest:-

<b>Size of Dog</b>	<b>National % of dogs owned by size</b>
Giant	4.6%
Large	21.5%
Medium	39.4%
Small	23.5%
Toy	10.9%

Source: Pet Food Manufacturers Association. Figures broken down by region do not exist, so the national figures have been applied to the New Forest.

Thus, based on our estimates of the dog population, the following table shows the likely number of dogs of each size and thus the potential faeces and urine output.

<b>Type</b>	<b>Resident Dogs in the New Forest by Size</b> (figures are national figures by % breed sizes)	<b>Amount of Faeces produced per day Kgs.</b>	<b>Amount of Urine produced per day Ltrs.</b>
Giant	1730	1730.0	2076.0
Large	8100	6075.0	6480.0
Medium	14825	7412.5	8895.0
Small	8845	2211.25	2653.5
Toy	4100	410.0	820.0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>37600</b>	<b>17838.75</b>	<b>20924.5</b>

Although nearly 18,000 kgs. of faeces and 21,000 litres of urine are produced by the dogs resident in the New Forest, it should then be borne in mind that dogs also use their gardens. In order to estimate the figures of faeces and urine actually deposited in the Forest, it is then appropriate to further break down the figures based on the number of times a day they are walked in the Forest.

Thus it is assumed that those dogs which are walked in the Forest twice a day are perhaps most likely to deposit their waste only in the Forest and those only walked once a day are likely to also defecate/urinate in their gardens. Based on researchers observations, it has been assumed that dogs typically defecate twice a day.

The following formula is applied:-

<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Walked twice per day	All waste
Walked once per day	1/2 waste
Walked 3 – 4 times per week	1/4 waste
Walked once per week	1/14 waste
Occasionally	1/20 waste

Thus, based on the average figures of walk frequency from the household survey and the NFDog Survey, the following picture emerges:-

Frequency of Waste	Level of Faeces	Amount of Faeces per day (Kg)	Levels of Urine	Amount of Urine per day (Ltrs)
2 x per day 29.5%	All	5262.43	All	6172.72
1 x per day 37.0%	1/2	3300.16	x 1/2	3871.04
3 – 4 per week 18.0%	1/4	807.71	x 1/4	941.60
Once per week 4.25%	1/14	54.15	x 1/14	63.53
Occasionally 6.25%	1/20	55.74	x 1/20	65.39
		<b>9,475.19</b>		<b>10,812.27</b>

Thus the amount of faeces estimated to be deposited in the New Forest on a daily basis is 9,475 kilogrammes. This would equate to **3,458** tonnes per annum based on 365 days a year.

Similarly, the estimate of the amount of urine deposited in the New Forest each day by dogs is 10,812 litres which would equate to **3.9** million litres per annum.

In addition, there are an estimated 600,000 dogs which visit the New Forest with their owners during the tourist season. Using the formula employed for the resident dogs, based on output by dog and the national split of dog size, it suggests that there would be an additional 284 tonnes of faeces and over 330,000 litres of urine deposited in the Forest.

Clearly the urine would simply be absorbed into the ground, along with urine from grazing animals and wildlife in the area. Urine contains nitrogen which can affect vegetation. The effect would be determined by urine concentration and weather conditions.

Dog faeces can present a serious nuisance in public areas such as car parks and paths. In addition, dog faeces can carry harmful infections such as Toxocariasis. The above figures suggest that there is a strong case for dog owners to collect the waste and dispose of it safely.

## **OBJECTIVE 4**

*To identify how better provision could be made within the Park for dog walkers, e.g. dog bins or specific dog walking areas.*

An analysis of the two surveys has shown that better provision for dog walkers could be made in the following ways. Strength of feeling is determined by the number of unprompted comments occurring in both surveys. The base of respondents for the NFDog survey was 627 and for the household survey 1,276.

### **Dog Bins**

In both the NFDog Survey and the Household Survey, one of the key improvements for dog walkers would be the provision of dog bins. In unprompted comments by NFDog respondents, the provision of dog bins was mentioned 62 times and in the Household Survey 169 times.

### **Education of other users**

Also important is the education of other users, whether cyclists, horse riders or picnicking visitors. Riders of bikes or horses should have more consideration for dog walkers and a number of people suggested designated paths and tracks would be sensible for these users. The education of visitors to take away their litter and treat the Forest with respect is important and, there were 162 unprompted comments made about this from the household survey and 92 comments from the NFDog respondents.

### **Forestry Commission activities and maintenance**

The Dog Walkers also feel the Forestry Commission should be more careful about reinstating tracks after they have used them for logging and other commercial activities. This would improve the area for dog walkers. There were 30 comments from the NFDog survey respondents and 44 comments from the householders along these lines.

As far as maintenance is concerned, the Forestry Commission should make better car park provision, both in terms of repairing car parks and also not closing them for months on end. A number of householders object to car parking charges, although these were not mentioned by NFDog members. There were also comments about improving facilities.

In the household survey, there were suggestions that more toilets should be provided at busy car parks. Seating should be provided, using fallen down trees as benches, although these points were not mentioned by NFDog respondents.

### **Restriction of speeding**

Respondents, in particular in the household survey, felt that if speeding restrictions were more effectively imposed on motorists in the New Forest boundary the area would improve for dog walkers and other users. There were 6 specific references to this.

### **Incident Reporting by Dog Owners**

In the NFDog survey, 98% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that dog walkers usefully observe and report problems during their walks. This figure fell to 64% in the general household survey. There were additionally 19



unprompted comments made on this point in the NFDog survey “any other comments” section.

There are recognised health benefits of walking dogs. When asked the extent to which they agree with the statement “dog walking is beneficial to the health and pleasure of both the dog and its owner,” not surprisingly, of the NFDog respondents, 99% either agreed or strongly agreed and 91% of the household respondents either agreed or strongly agreed. There were 55 unprompted comments about the favourable side of dog walking.

## **Dog Code**

The respondents felt that the Dog Code should be made widely available. At the Focus Group, NFDog members felt that if this was laminated and put up in car parks, it would be there for all to see. It would also be useful to include this with a leaflet tailored to visitors. In both the household survey and NFDog survey there was support for the statement “a leaflet should be available to visitors giving details of dog friendly pubs, b & b’s, hotels, local vets and warnings of dangers”. 82% of NFDog respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement as did 74% of the householders.

The Tourism South East Visitor Survey undertaken in summer 2004 points to the fact that 8% of visitors come to the Forest to walk their dogs. (Figures provided by Tourism South East). There are between 7.5m and 20m visitors to the New Forest every year (figures vary because different sources quote different figures according to the definition of visitors i.e. those who come into the area for a day visit/holiday and those who visit regularly because they are local). This indicates there could be between 600,000 and 1.6m dogs visiting the Forest each year, in addition to local users. Many visitors start coming to the Forest from Easter onwards, which coincides with the ground nesting bird season. 88% of householders and 72% of NFDog respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “dogs should be kept on a lead or close to their owners in areas where birds are nesting on the ground”.

## **OBJECTIVE 5**

*To assess the problems of dog walking in order of priority as perceived by both dog owners and other forest users.*

In depth analysis of the open ended questions about what people enjoy about their visits to the New Forest and what would improve their visits has led to the following conclusions being made about the problems of dog walking in order of priority. Many of the problems have already been addressed in Objective 4. This section attempts a quantification of the extent of the problems.

From the Dog Walkers' point of view (from a total of 627 responses), the key problems experienced when they are walking their dogs in the New Forest are as follows:-

- 1) Lack of dog bins. They would like more so they can clear up after their dogs. 52% of NFDog respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the fact that dog fouling is a problem at some car parks and popular areas and there were 60 unprompted comments from NFDog members about the provision of dog bins.
- 2) Other users, in particular horse riders, often act as though they own the Forest and frighten dog walkers. There should be more education of these and, also, cyclists. There were over 90 unprompted comments on this issue.
- 3) Car parks are often closed, especially in the winter and remain closed for long periods of time. Also, the car parks are often in a bad state of repair with pot holes. The Forestry Commission leave muddy tracks in enclosures which make walking difficult – this was referred to by focus group attendees as well as generating some 50 unprompted comments from respondents in the NFDog survey.
- 4) The Forestry Commission have an anti-dog attitude which creates a problem for dog walkers. This again, emerged from the focus group as well as generating more than 50 comments in the NFDog survey.

From the Household Survey (a total of 1,276 responses) it was ascertained that the key problems associated with dog walking are as follows:-

- 1) Dog fouling was mentioned 95 times in the open ended questions by dog walkers, but in addition in the household survey, two thirds of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that dog fouling is a problem at some car parks and popular areas. The issue of dog fouling received 170 unprompted comments in total.
- 2) Car parks prompted 164 comments, mainly about improvements which could be made in terms of repair, security and more facilities at some locations.
- 3) Speed of motorists was cited as a problem for all users of the Forest by 50 respondents. At some crossing points this is a danger for dog walkers and some of the household respondents would like more control of vehicle speeds and a few people felt illuminated collars/headcollars on livestock would be helpful.

- 4) Control of dogs. The household survey showed a marked increase in observations of dogs out of control compared to the dog owners in the NFDog survey. The table below shows the findings of the survey and illustrates that the problem of out of control dogs is perceived by the locals to be more marked in the tourist season.

<b>Dogs out of Control</b>	<b>NFDog Survey</b>	<b>Household Survey</b>
Never	17.0%	11.0%
Rarely	47.0%	36.0%
Not very often	12.0%	30.0%
Fairly often	0.01%	11.0%
Often	0.003%	8.0%
Mainly during the tourist season	21.8%	19.0%

NB: Figures for the NFDog survey do not add up to 100% as some respondents did not answer this question. Figures for the household survey add up to more than 100% as several respondents selected more than one option.

## OBJECTIVE 6

*To make recommendations for the management of dog walking in the New Forest.*

As a result of this study, the researchers would propose the following actions for the Forestry Commission:-

1. Dealing with dog faeces appears to be an important issue. Dog walkers and residents alike appear to be in favour of having dog bins installed at the most common car parks where dogs are walked. They suggest these should be regularly emptied and it has been suggested that they should not be bright coloured plastic but perhaps made of wood to blend in with the environment. Given the fact that so many dog walkers say they would use them and there were so many unprompted responses requesting them, it is recommended that the Forestry Commission undertake a trial at some of the most popular car parks. The Forestry Commission have proposed this route previously but the Verderers have objected to this suggestion. Dog bins can be helpful to dog owners in many places for the convenient disposal of the waste. However, there is also the view that dog bins simply transfer the responsibility for removing waste from a site from the owner onto the agency which has the responsibility for emptying the bins. It may be better to educate dog walkers about the ecological and health effects of dog faeces. The complex diets of dogs is such that 3,458 million tons of dog faeces should be recognised as a potential hazard, especially in comparison to the horses and cattle in the Forest which are herbivores and form part of the ecological cycle.
2. The Forestry Commission should be more active in promoting the areas it has designated for cyclists, in particular, so that there is not a clash of interests by users.
3. The respondents feel the Forestry Commission should not close so many car parks for so long and should repair pot holes more readily. Some car parks should have better facilities, such as toilets. Also they should ensure their vehicles do not leave ruts and muddy tyre tracks in the Forest. If maintenance programmes can incorporate these suggestions, dog walkers would feel that their issues have been considered.
4. The Forestry Commission should circulate the Dog Walking Code, both to visitors and to locals to encourage responsible behaviour by all dog owners.

## **OBJECTIVE 7**

*To identify any further research in the context of dog walking that may help in the management of the New Forest.*

As research has now been done amongst horse riders and dog owners, there is one other major user group; cyclists. Given the objections made by horse and dog owners to their behaviour, in order to inform the Progress Project further, it may be appropriate to undertake research amongst this and other groups to ascertain the extent to which they use the Forest, whether their activities are damaging and to what extent they are really regarded as nuisance by the resident population.

From the household survey, 27% of respondents undertake cycling or mountain bike riding. This was the fourth most popular activity after dog walking and picnicking or just relaxing. Appendix 3 shows the relative popularities of various activities based on the number of times mentioned.

**APPENDIX 1**

**New Forest Dog Walkers Survey**

As a dog walker we would appreciate your help in establishing the extent of dog walking in the New Forest and your views on the facilities available for dog walkers

**Q1 Do you think of the New Forest as an important wildlife site?** Yes .....  No.....

**Q2 Are you aware that dog walkers have been walking freely in the New Forest for very many years?** Yes .....  No.....

**Q3 How often do you walk your dog(s) in the New Forest countryside?**  
Twice a day .....  3 or 4 times a week .....  Occasionally .....   
Once a day .....  Once a week.....  Never.....

**Q4 How many dogs do you normally walk at one time?**  
One .....  Three .....  More than four .....   
Two.....  Four.....

**Q5 On average how long does each of your walks last?**

**Q6 Are there any other leisure activities you enjoy in the New Forest countryside?** (Tick all those options that apply)  
Horse riding .....  Birdwatching .....   
Jogging /running .....  Cycling / mountain bike riding.....   
Walking (Alone or with friends/family) .....  Other (Please specify below) .....   
Picnicking or just relaxing.....

**Q7 Do you have direct access to the areas that you normally walk in from your house?** Yes .....  No.....

**Q8 Which areas of the New Forest do you normally walk in with your dog and/or car park(s) you use to start your walk from?**

**Q9** What do you enjoy most about your visits to the New Forest Countryside?

**Q10** How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding dog walking in the New Forest?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Dog walking is beneficial to the health and pleasure of both the dog and its owner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dogs walkers should have the same general freedom to enjoy the Forest as other Forest users provided the dogs are under control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dogs should be kept on a lead or close to their owners in areas where birds are nesting on the ground (1st March to 31st July)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dog fouling is a significant problem at some car parks and popular areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A leaflet should be available to visitors giving details of dog friendly pubs, B&B's, hotels etc, local vets and warnings of local dangers such as adders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dog walkers usefully observe and report problems during their walks e.g. injured animals, fires etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The New Forest is a better place to exercise dogs than residential areas and playing fields	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q11** How often do you observe dogs in the New Forest that are out of control (You may tick more than one option)

Never.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fairly often.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rarely.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Often.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not very often.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mainly during the tourist season.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q12** If your dog fouls whilst in the New Forest car parks or popular areas which of the following statements best describes what you prefer to do?

Clean up and take it away for disposal elsewhere.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Move it off a path or popular area into the undergrowth.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use dog bins if made available.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never clean up or move it.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q13** Are there any ways to make dog walking in the New Forest more enjoyable?(Tick all those options that apply)

- No, I am happy with the current situation .....
- Keep all car parks open throughout the year.....
- Repair paths damaged by potholes/fallen trees/flooding etc .....
- Improve paths for the elderly .....
- Other (Please specify below).....

**Q14** Do you have any other comments you would like to make about dog walking in the New Forest?

For analysis purposes please could you provide us with the first four digits of your postcode

**Thank you for taking the time to answer this questionnaire, your opinions are important to us**



## New Forest Household Survey



Dear householder

We are undertaking some research amongst households in the New Forest area on behalf of the Forestry Commission. The Forestry Commission are continually looking for ways in which they can make your leisure visits to the New Forest Countryside more enjoyable whilst at the same time maintaining the conservation value of the site. We would appreciate 10 minutes of your time to answer a few simple questions which will help the Forestry Commission understand more about their visitors

The questionnaire is divided into 4 sections. In the first section we would like to know how you use the New Forest Countryside

### SECTION 1 - TO BE COMPLETED BY EVERYONE

**Q1** What leisure activities do you enjoy in the New Forest countryside? (Tick all those options that apply)

- |  |                          |                                     |                          |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Walking (Alone or with family/friends) ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | Picnicking or just relaxing.....    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Dog walking .....                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cycling / mountain bike riding..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Horse riding .....                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (Please specify below).....   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Jogging / running .....                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |                                     |                          |

**Q2** Do you have direct access, by foot, from your house to the areas of the New Forest that you normally use?

- Yes .....  No.....

**Q3** Which areas of the New Forest do you normally use and/or car parks do you use?

**Q4** What do you enjoy most about your visits to the New Forest?

**Q5** Do you think of the New Forest as an important Wildlife site?

- Yes .....  No.....

**Q6 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding dog walking in the New Forest?**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Dog walking is beneficial to the health and pleasure of both the dog and its owner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dog walkers should have the same general freedom to enjoy the Forest as other Forest users provided the dogs are under control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dogs should be kept on a lead or close to their owners in areas where birds are nesting on the ground (1st March to 31st July)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dog fouling is a significant problem at some car parks and popular areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A leaflet should be available to visitors giving details of dog friendly pubs, B&B's, hotels etc, local vets and warnings of local dangers such as adders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dog walkers usefully observe and report problems during their walks e.g. injured animals, fires etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The New Forest is a better place to exercise dogs than residential areas and playing fields	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q7 How often do you observe dogs in the New Forest that are out of control? (You may tick more than one option)**

*Never*.....      *Not very often*.....      *Often*.....   
*Rarely*.....      *Fairly often*.....      *Mainly during the tourist season*.....

**Q8 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about horse riding in the New Forest?**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Horse riders should continue to enjoy open access in the forest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Horse riders disturb the ground nesting birds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q9 Is there anything that can be done to improve your visits to the New Forest?**

**SECTION 2 - TO BE COMPLETED BY DOG OWNERS**

As a dog owner we would appreciate your help in establishing the extent of dog walking in the New Forest and your views on the facilities available for dog walkers

**Q10 Are you aware that dog walkers have been walking freely in the New Forest for very many years?**

Yes .....      No .....

- Q11 How many dogs do you own?**  
 One .....  Two.....  Three .....  Four.....  More than four
- Q12 How many dogs do you normally walk at one time?**  
 One .....  Two.....  Three .....  Four.....  More than four
- Q13 How often do you walk your dog(s) in the New Forest countryside?**  
 Twice a day .....  3 or 4 times a week .....  Occasionally .....   
 Once a day .....  Once a week.....  Never (Go to next section)....
- Q14 On average how long does each of your walks last?**
- Q15 If your dog fouls whilst in the New Forest car parks or popular areas, which of the following statements best describes what you would prefer to do?**  
 Clean up and take it away for disposal elsewhere .....  Move it off a path or popular area into the undergrowth.....   
 Use dog bins if made available.....  Never clean up or move it.....
- Q16 Is there anything that would improve dog walking in the New Forest for you?**

**SECTION 3 - TO BE COMPLETED BY HORSE OWNERS**

As a horse owner we would appreciate your help in establishing the extent of horse riding in the New Forest and your views on the facilities available for horse riders

- Q17 How many horses/ponies do the members of your household own and use for recreational purposes?**  
 1 .....  2 .....  3 .....  4 .....  5 .....  6 .....
- Q18 Please indicate where the horses/ponies are kept for the majority of the year**  
 At home .....  At livery.....  Other (please specify where below) .....
- Q19 On average how often is each of the horses/ponies ridden in the New Forest?**
- |                         | Horse / pony 1           | Horse / pony 2           | Horse / pony 3           | Horse / pony 4           | Horse / pony 5           | Horse / pony 6           |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Never                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Occasionally            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1-2 days per week       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 or more days per week | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Q20 How often do you vary the general area in which you ride?**  
Every time.....  Once or twice a month.....  Never.....   
Every week.....  Less than once a month.....

**Q21 How often do you vary the general route on which you ride?**  
Every time.....  Once or twice a month.....  Never.....   
Every week.....  Less than once a month.....

**Q22 Do you have to ride in the open forest in order to get to any surfaced tracks?** Yes.....  No.....

**Q23 Would you say that you mostly ride** (Tick as many options as apply)  
On the surfaced tracks .....  On the enclosed areas of the New Forest .....   
On the open areas of the New Forest (off the surfaced tracks).....  Other (specify where below).....

**Q24 In your opinion has the number of horses being ridden in the New Forest increased, decreased or stayed the same over the last 10 years** (or during the time you have lived in the area if that is less than 10 years, in which case please state how long you have lived in the area)?  
Increased.....  Stayed the same.....  Decreased.....   
Number of years lived in the area

**Q25 Is there anything that would improve horse riding in the New Forest for you?**

**SECTION 4 - TO BE COMPLETED BY EVERYONE**

It would be helpful if you could provide the first four digits of your postcode in order that we can collate the results by area

**Postcode**

Thank you for your time in completing this questionnaire, your views are important to us.  
A FREEPOST envelope has been enclosed for your reply, which we would appreciate by Thursday 24th March

**APPENDIX 2**

**Are there any other leisure activities you enjoy in the New Forest countryside?  
- NFDog Survey**

Leisure Activity	Number of Responses
Walking (Alone or with family/friends)	389
Picnicking or just relaxing	286
Bird watching	242
Cycling / mountain bike riding	66
Jogging / running	33
Photography	18
Carriage driving	8
Flora and fauna	8
Painting	8
Caravanning	7
Other animal watching	7
Camping	4
Deer watching	4
Driving	4
Enjoying the effects of seasonal changes	4
Dog training	3
Ecology	3
Drawing	3
Fishing	3
Botany	2
Cricket	2
Badger watching	2
Natural history inc walks	2
Pony watching	2
Caring for depastured ponies	1
Charity Walks	1
Classic Car Run	1
Dog show	1
Fox watching	1
Golf	1
Local history	1
Model flying	1
Model Yacht Racing	1
Mushrooming	1
Rambling	1
Shopping and eating	1
Sitting and reading	1
Supporting working trials	1

**What leisure activities do you enjoy in the New Forest countryside?  
– Household Survey**

<b>Leisure Activity</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Walking (alone or with family/friends)	1000
Picnicking or just relaxing	743
Dog walking	523
Cycling / mountain bike riding	339
Jogging / running	125
Horse riding	124
Bird / animal / wildlife watching	61
Driving	45
Walking	16
Photography	15
Playing Golf	15
Painting / Sketching	14
Playing / watching games	11
Admiring the beauty	8
Visiting pubs / eating out	7
Hunting	6
Studying flora and fauna	6
Flying / watching remote control vehicles	5
Camping	4
Caravanning	4
Visiting the beach	3
Fruit picking	3
Organised family activities	3
Fishing	3
BBQs	2
Natural history	2
Sailing	2
Orienteering	2
Peace	1
Having sex	1
Taking rubbings from stone memorial	1
Farmers market	1
Conservation	1
Swimming	1
Carriage driving	1
Sunbathing	1
Enjoying rivers and streams	1