

# **FOREST VISITOR SURVEYS 1996**

## **Summary Report**

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## Introduction

This report summarises the results of a wide variety of surveys that provide information about forest recreation in Great Britain. It covers all surveys that started in 1996 and are known to Forestry Commission HQ Statistics.

The report is divided into four sections:

- 1) Forestry Commission visitor surveys - grouped by FE region
- 2) Forestry Commission surveys at campsites and cabin sites
- 3) Household surveys
- 4) Other surveys providing information about forest visits

All survey summaries have the following structure: Title, file reference, type, date, topics, results, publication, comments. The file number (e.g. EPV 4/1) relates to files held by HQ Statistics, which may include tables for unpublished surveys. If you would like any of the publications mentioned in this report, please contact HQ Statistics who either hold copies or know where to obtain copies.

1996 was the second year in which Forest Enterprise (FE) headquarters co-ordinated a programme of surveys in Forest Districts throughout Great Britain, assisted by Forestry Commission HQ Statistics. Most surveys adopted a common style of questionnaire, with a standard first page of questions on the type of visitor, distance travelled to the site, previous visits made and frequency, length of stay and how they found out about the site; in the survey summaries the topics are just indicated as "standard first page". Selected results from these surveys are given in the summary on page 4.

In addition to the surveys listed, there may have been other surveys organised locally, and there may have been other surveys of forest visitors carried out by academic researchers. If any readers would like to provide information about any missing surveys, please contact HQ Statistics at the address given below.

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\* = Survey for which no report was published

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# 1. FC VISITOR SURVEYS

## Summary Results

Forest District	Location	% from home	Ave group size	Ave hours at site	Groups % with U-16s	Groups % with dogs	Sample size
<b>Scotland</b>							
Buchan	various	87	2.1-2.9	1.3-2.0	27	40	527
Kincardine	Countesswells	98	2.0	0.8	23	75	230
Kincardine	Kirkhill	94	1.9	1.3	15	38	156
Kincardine	Tyrebagger	95	2.5	1.2	31	50	113
Fort Augustus	Glen Affric	12	2.9-3.0	n/a	20	n/a	299
Fort Augustus	Kylerhea Otter Haven	3			21	0	171
Newton Stewart	Glen Trool	35	3.0	3.0-3.1	32	16	327
<b>England</b>							
Rothbury	Chopwell	98	2.5	1.7	21	29	145
Rothbury	Hamsterley	79	3.0	3.5	38	9	336
Sherwood & Lincs	Chambers Farm Wood	92	2.4	2.2	22	30	93
Sherwood & Lincs	Willingham Woods	92	3.6	1.5-1.9	46	24	450
Sherwood & Lincs	Sherwood Pines	47	3.1	2.3	51	6	182
	Cycling						
Northants	various	93			33	46	252
Forest of Dean	various	65	3.0-4.5	2.1-3.3	29	19	380
Forest of Dean	Symonds Yat	52		2	27	14	409
Weald	King's Wood, Challock	92	2.3-2.7	1.3	30	49	173
New Forest	New Forest Cycling	25	3.5	n/a	58	5	142
Downs & Chilterns	Wendover Woods	94	5.4	2.6	64	23	139
<b>Wales</b>							
Ceredigion	Nant yr Arian	58	3.0	2.5-3.1	25	19	114
Morgannwg	Garwnant	71	n/a	2.1	n/a	19	165
Morgannwg	Parkwood	63	4.3	1.5	32	32	131

Note:

n/a = information not available (either question not asked or problems in recording of data)

# NORTH SCOTLAND

## BUCHAN

EPV 4/18/10

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** May and August 1996

**HOURS:** 280 hours

<b>NUMBER OF FORMS:</b>	527 forms	Bin	98
		Back o' Bennachie	96
		Donview	152
		Essons	181

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + management of site, waymarked walks, guided walks, rating of facilities, visits to other FE woods.

**RESULTS:** Walking was the most common main activity at all locations. A higher proportion of groups at Bin (40%) than at other locations were mainly dog walking (the three other car parks were all part of the same forest). On average groups had 2.1 people in them at Bin, 2.7 people in them at Back o' Bennachie, 2.9 at Donview and 2.6 at Essons. Typically groups were 1 or 2 adults aged 25-59 at all locations. 30% of groups had children at Essons, 27% at Back o' Bennachie 24% at Donview and 19% at Bin.

Overall 87% had come from home that day, mostly from within 15 miles of the sites. The majority at all locations had been before. Groups at Back o' Bennachie, Essons and Bin tended to visit more frequently than groups at Donview. The majority had found out about the woodlands through informal sources rather than formal sources e.g. had always known about them or through road signs or friends/relations. On average groups were staying 1.3 hours at Bin, 1.7 hours at Back o' Bennachie, 1.8 hours at Donview and 2.0 hours at Essons. Few were staying longer than 4 hours at any location.

71% had used the waymarked walks; a higher proportion of groups at Bin and Essons had used them than at other locations. Around a third at all locations were interested in guided walks. Most facilities at the sites were rated highly by those who used them except the road signs at Back o' Bennachie, Donview and Essons and the picnic area at Bin. When asked what improvements they would like to see, the most common suggestions were for better waymarking on the walks and better road signs.

**PUBLICATION:** Bellringer, AJ, 'Buchan Visitor Surveys 1996', June 1997.

**COMMENTS:** None.

## **DORNOCH**

EPV 4/18/7

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** July and September 1996

**HOURS:** 58 hours

<b>NUMBER OF FORMS:</b>	64 forms	Aldie	31
		Carbisdale	7
		Shin Falls	26

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + rating of facilities, waymarked walks, route marking, quality of paths, improvements, visits to other FE woods, Esso campaigns.

**RESULTS:** Too few responses to analyse

**PUBLICATION:** None

**COMMENTS:** None

## COUNTESSWELLS (Kincardine)

EPV 4/10

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** July - August 1996

**HOURS:** 90 hours

<b>NUMBER OF FORMS:</b>	230 forms	Countesswells	98
		Foggieton	43
		Rotton o' Gairn	23

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + waymarked walks, guided walks, management of site, visits to other FE woods, Esso campaigns.

**RESULTS:** The majority of groups (77%) were mainly dog walking at Countesswells. On average there were 2.0 people in a group and few groups were larger than 4 people. Typically groups were 1 or 2 adults aged 25-59. 23% of groups had children, 16% had senior citizens and 12% had young adults aged 16-24. 75% of groups had dogs.

Virtually all had come from home that day from within 5 miles of the site. Virtually all had been before; the majority of these (68%) visited 1-3 times a week or more. Groups tended to have found out about the woodland through informal rather than formal means e.g. always known about it, had heard through friends or relations or had found out from road signs. On average groups were spending 50 minutes at the site. Few were spending longer than an hour.

49% had used the waymarked walks that day. Of these a third thought the route marking was just OK and 16% thought it was poor. The majority thought the quality of the paths was good (the highest rating). The forest itself and the peace and quiet were the most common enjoyable aspects of the walk. 22% said they would be interested in guided walks. When asked what improvements they would like to see, 73% gave suggestions. Around a third of suggestions were for more toilets.

**PUBLICATION:** Bellringer, AJ, 'Kincardine Visitor Surveys 1996', June 1997.

**COMMENTS:** None.



## **KIRKHILL (Kincardine)**

EPV 4/10

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** July - August 1996

**HOURS:** 80 hours

<b>NUMBER OF FORMS:</b>	156 forms	Weekday	73
		Weekend	83

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + waymarked walks, guided walks, frequency of cycling, information, rating of cycle trails, visits to other FE woods, Esso campaigns.

**RESULTS:** A third of groups were mainly there to dog walk and a third were mainly there to cycle. On average there were 1.9 people in a group. Few groups had more than 2 people in them. Typically groups were 1 or 2 adults aged 25-59. 21% had young adults aged 16-24. Few had senior citizens or children. 38% of groups had dogs with them and 36% had bikes.

Virtually all had come from home that day from within 15 miles of the site. Most had either always known about the woodland (35%) or had found out from friends or relations (31%). On average groups were staying 1.3 hours at the site. Few were staying longer than around 2 hours. Those recorded as being with bikes were asked questions on cycling and the rest were asked questions on waymarked walks. The majority of those not on bikes had been before; just over half of these visited 1-3 times a week or more.

56% had used the waymarked walks. Most rated the standard of route marking, information boards and the quality of the paths as good. 21% were interested in guided walks.

The majority (83%) of those with bikes cycled for leisure at least once a week in the summer. Generally most of them do most of their cycling in places other than Kirkhill. 59% had used the waymarked cycle trails that day; most of these rated the route marking and quality of the paths as good. Just under a quarter (22%) of cyclists had done no off road cycling. All were using mountain bikes.

Virtually all groups said they would recommend Kirkhill to friends and would be likely to return.

**PUBLICATION:** Bellringer, AJ, 'Kincardine Visitor Surveys 1996', June 1997.

**COMMENTS:** None.

## **TYREBAGGER (Kincardine)**

EPV 4/10

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** August 1996

**HOURS:** 50 hours

<b>NUMBER OF FORMS:</b>	113 forms	Weekday	41
		Weekend	72

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + sculptures, waymarked walks, guided walks, management of site, visits to other FE woods, Esso campaigns.

**RESULTS:** The majority of groups were either dog walking (45%) or just walking (35%). On average there were 2.5 people in a group. Typically groups were 2 adults aged 25-59. 31% of groups had children, 19% had young adults aged 16-24 and 12% had senior citizens. Half the groups had dogs with them.

Virtually all had come from home that day from within 15 miles of the site. Virtually all had been to the site before, 40% of these visited 1-3 times a week or more and 28% visited 1-3 times a month. Most had either always known about the woodland, had found out from a friend or relation or through road signs. On average groups were staying 1.2 hours at the site. Few were staying longer than around 2 hours.

89% had seen the sculptures. Most thought they were interesting. 65% had used the waymarked walks that day. Most who had used the walks rated the various aspects of the walk as good but a quarter rated the standard of route marking as poor. 22% of all groups said they would be interested in guided walks at the site. Common suggestions for improvements include more bins, improved route marking and improved sign posting.

**PUBLICATION:** Bellringer, AJ, 'Kincardine Visitor Surveys 1996', June 1997.

**COMMENTS:** None.

## **GLEN AFFRIC (Fort Augustus)**

EPV 4/18/2

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** July - August 1996

**HOURS:** 88 hours

**NUMBER OF FORMS:**           299 forms     Dog Falls     155  
  River Affric   144

**TOPICS:** Where come from, is this a holiday, how often visit Highlands/Glen Affric, how found out about Glen Affric, who runs the forest, activities, facilities, information, parking fee, environmental group, improvements.

**RESULTS:** The main activities being done at the site were admiring the scenery, taking photos and just relaxing or picnicking. On average groups had 2.9 people at Dog Falls and 3.0 at River Affric. Typically groups were 2 adults aged 25-59. 24% of groups at Dogs Falls and 15% at River Affric had children.

The majority (88%) were on holiday. Just over half of these were touring. 26% of holidaymakers were staying at a B&B, 23% in self catering accommodation and 20% were camping/caravanning. The majority of holidaymakers were staying no longer than a week in their current accommodation; 37% were staying just 1 or 2 nights. Just over a third (37%) of all groups were from overseas, 29% were from Scotland and 34% from elsewhere in the UK.

32% of groups were spending half a day at Glen Affric that day and 34% were spending the whole day. Few were spending less than an hour. 38% of holidaymakers were on their first visit to the Highlands. 32% of holidaymakers had been before but did not visit regularly. The majority of all groups at River Affric (64%) and Dog Falls (72%) were on their first visit to Glen Affric.

Around a third (36%) had found out about Glen Affric from a personal recommendation and just over a quarter (28%) through guide books or leaflets. The majority who had used the facilities at Glen Affric rated them as good (the highest rating). 77% were aware it was a Caledonian Reserve though half these did not know this before they came.

The majority wanted more information; common topics include "Wildlife", "Identifying trees" and "History of Glen Affric". 88% would pay a parking fee. Most of these would pay £1-£2. Just over a third (36%) belonged to an environmental group, mostly National Trust or RSPB. Virtually all would recommend Glen Affric to friends and the majority would come back.

**PUBLICATION:** Bellringer, AJ, 'Glen Affric Visitor Survey 1996', June 1997.

**COMMENTS:** Report also makes comparisons with surveys held in 1994 and 1995.

## **KYLERHEA OTTER HAVEN (Fort Augustus)**

EPV 4/18/3

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** June - August 1996

**HOURS:** 40 hours

**NUMBER OF FORMS:**

171 forms	Weekday	140
	Weekend	31

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + activities, information, leaflets, who runs forest, environmental group, magazines read, wildlife seen, improvements.

**RESULTS:** The most popular activity was watching wildlife and birds. Groups typically had 2 people in them. The majority had not come from home and most of these stayed in self catering accommodation or were camping or in a B&B. Virtually all had come by car from a wide range of distances; 4 in 10 came from over 26 miles away, just under a third had come from between 16 and 25 miles away and just over a quarter had come from within 15 miles.

All expected to spend less than half a day at Kylerhea. Virtually all were on their first visit to Kylerhea. Almost half belonged to an environmental group - mostly RSPB, National Trust or NTS. Just under a third read wildlife magazines. The majority had seen wildlife; the most seen animal being the seal.

**PUBLICATION:** None.

**COMMENTS:** Tables of results sent by HQ Statistics to Forest District in May 1997. No report written. Results to be included in a report along with results of a 1997 survey.





## **HAMSTERLEY (Rothbury)**

EPV 4/16/3

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** July - August 1996

**HOURS:** 60 hours

<b>NUMBER OF FORMS:</b>	336 forms	Weekday	195
		Weekend	141

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + rating of facilities in and around VC, additional facilities, visits to other FE woods, Esso campaigns.

**RESULTS:** The most common main activity was relaxing/picnicking; 48% of groups were doing this. On average there were 3.0 people in a group. Typically groups were 2 adults aged 25-59 during the week and 2 adults aged 25-59 with children at the weekend. Few groups had dogs or bikes.

The majority (79%) had come from home that day. Most holidaymakers were camping or caravanning or staying at a B&B. Groups had come from a variety of distances to the site that day. 38% had travelled from within 15 miles away, 28% from between 16 and 25 miles and 30% from between 26 and 50 miles away. Few came further than this. The majority of groups lived in the area to the east of Hamsterley especially Bishop Auckland, Darlington, Durham, Sunderland and Middlesborough. 74% had been before but most did not visit frequently; 22% of repeat visitors visited 1-3 times a month and only 7% visited more frequently than this. Most had found out about Hamsterley through informal rather than formal sources e.g. always known about the wood or through friends or relations. On average groups were staying 3.5 hours at the site. Few were staying longer than around 6 hours.

56% during the week and 56% at the weekend were visiting the Visitor Centre that day. The majority of visitors who used the Visitor Centre facilities and other facilities at Hamsterley rated them as very good or good. However, 19% of those who had used the toilets rated them as only OK or poor. Similarly 24% who had seen the information boards rated them as only OK or poor, 15% who had used the car park and 28% who had seen the road signs. 25% at the weekend and 15% during the week wanted a children's play area and 24% at the weekend and 12% during the week wanted new or improved refreshment facilities. Common suggestions for improvements to the site include: a café, a play area, better signs, more bins and better facilities for cyclists.

**PUBLICATION:** Bellringer, AJ, 'Hamsterley Visitor Survey 1996', June 1997.

**COMMENTS:** None.

## **CHAMBERS FARM WOOD (Sherwood & Lincs)**

EPV 4/16/2

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** August - September 1996

**HOURS:** 36 hours

**NUMBER OF FORMS:**

93 forms	Weekday	51
	Weekend	93

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + rating of facilities, waymarked walks, additional facilities, information, management of site, visits to other FE woods, Esso campaigns.

**RESULTS:** The most common main activity at Chambers Farm Wood was wildlife watching; 31% of groups were mainly doing this. On average there were 2.4 people in a group. Few groups were larger than 3 people. Typically groups were 2 adults aged 25-59. Just under a quarter (22%) had children and around a third (32%) had senior citizens. There were few young adults aged 16-24. 30% of groups had dogs with them.

Virtually all had come from home that day and most had come from within 15 miles of the site, especially during the week. Most visitors lived in the Lincoln area to the south west of the woods. Most at the weekend (71%) and especially during the week (86%) had been to Chambers Farm Wood before; just over half of these (56%) visited 1-3 times a year or less and 25% visited 1-3 times a month. Most had either always known about the woodland or had found out from friends or relations. On average groups were staying 2.2 hours at the site.

73% had used the waymarked walks. Over half (59%) these had used the White one and 29% had used the Red one. Most rated the standard of route marking as satisfactory. The forest itself and the peace and quiet were the most common enjoyable aspects of the walk. Most of those who had used the facilities rated the car park and Visitor Centre as very good or good.

Of those who had used the picnic area most rated it as very good or good though a quarter thought it only OK. 20% wanted additional wildlife watching facilities at the site. 75% wanted more information. The most common topics suggested were "Identifying trees", "History of the forest" and "Wildlife". Virtually all said they would be likely to come back to Chambers Farm Wood in the future.

**PUBLICATION:** Bellringer, AJ, 'Sherwood Visitor Surveys 1996', June 1997.

**COMMENTS:** None.



## **WILLINGHAM WOODS (Sherwood & Lincs)**

EPV 4/16/2

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** August - October 1996

**HOURS:** 150 hours

<b>NUMBER OF FORMS:</b>	450 forms	Weekday	213
		Weekend	237

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + rating picnic area/car park, waymarked walks, additional facilities, information, management of site, visits to other FE woods, Esso campaigns.

**RESULTS:** The most common main activities at Willingham Woods were relaxing/picnicking (24% were mainly doing this) and just walking (22%). On average there were 3.6 people in a group. Groups tended to be slightly larger at the weekend than during the week but few groups were larger than 7 people. Typically groups were 2 adults aged 25-59 or a party of adults with children. 46% of groups had children with them and 28% had senior citizens. There were few young adults aged 16-24. 31% of groups at the weekend and 18% during the week had dogs with them.

Virtually all had come from home that day from a variety of distances up to 50 miles away. Visitors lived particularly in the Lincoln area and Grimsby and Doncaster areas. 91% had been to the site before; 57% of these visited 1-3 times a year or less and 28% visited 1-3 times a month. The majority had found out about the woodland through informal rather than formal sources e.g. through friends or relations or had always known about it. On average groups were staying 1.9 hours during the week and 1.5 hours at the weekend. Few were staying longer than around 3 hours.

39% had used the waymarked walks. Of these 77% had used the Red walk. Just over half of those who had used the walks rated the standard of route marking as satisfactory but 39% rated them as unsatisfactory. The majority of those who had used or seen the car park and picnic area rated them as very good or good though 22% thought the car park was only OK and 29% thought the picnic area was only OK. 42% wanted a children's play area. Other common suggestions for new or improved facilities include refreshments facilities, toilets, cycle trails and baby changing facilities. Virtually all wanted more information. The most common topics suggested were "Identifying trees", "History of the forest" and "Wildlife". Virtually all said they would be likely to return.

**PUBLICATION:** Bellringer, AJ, 'Sherwood Visitor Surveys 1996', June 1997.

**COMMENTS:** None.





# SOUTH AND WEST ENGLAND

## FOREST OF DEAN

EPV 4/15/1

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** 1996: June (Round 1), August (Round 2), October (Round 3)

**HOURS:** 126 hours

<b>NUMBER OF FORMS:</b>	380 forms	Beechenhurst	97
		Mallards Pike	61
		Speech House	64
		Symonds Yat	107
		Wenchford	51

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + visits elsewhere, cycling, type of bike, problems with cyclists, controls, cycling code, improvements.

**RESULTS:** Groups were doing a variety of main activities at the 5 locations surveyed. Walking on the forest trail was a common main activity at Beechenhurst, Speech House, Symonds Yat and Wenchford. Picnicking was more common at Wenchford and Mallards Pike than elsewhere. Dog walking was more common at Wenchford than at other locations. Watching wildlife was a more common main activity at Symonds Yat than elsewhere. Cycling or visiting the shop or café were not common main activities at any location.

Typically groups were 2 adults aged 25-59 at all locations. Beechenhurst (36%) and Wenchford (43%) had the higher proportions of groups with children than elsewhere. On average there were 4.5 people in a group at Wenchford, 4.1 at Beechenhurst, 3.9 at Mallards Pike, 3.1 at Symonds Yat and 3.0 at Speech House. Around a quarter of groups had dogs at Mallards Pike and at Speech House and 20% had them at Wenchford. Few had dogs at Beechenhurst or Symonds Yat.

The majority at all locations had come from home that day. Symonds Yat had the highest proportion of holidaymakers (48%) of the 5 locations. Just over half (54%) had come from within 15 miles of the locations and around a third (34%) had come from over 25 miles away. Visitors lived all over the region around the Dean but particularly in the Gloucester area.

69% of groups had been before. Most of these did not visit frequently. The majority had found out about the forest through informal rather than formal sources e.g. had always known about it or through friends or relatives. On average groups were staying 3.3 hours at Symonds Yat, 3.0 hours at Beechenhurst, 2.5 hours at Wenchford, 2.1 hours at Mallards Pike and 2.1 hours at Speech House.

The majority at all locations were not visiting any other places in and around the Dean that day. Virtually all did not have bikes. Of those without bikes just under a quarter said they had cycled in the Dean and a quarter said they had walked on designated cycle trails. The few who had bikes were asked why they cycled in the Dean. The most common reason was because of the landscape. Just over half had done most or all of their cycling off the forest roads and virtually all were using mountain bikes.

The majority of all groups had not had problems with other cyclists or walkers though 21% said they had at Symonds Yat - mainly with cyclists cycling too fast or too close. Around half thought there should be controls on cyclists, especially at Mallards Pike. The most common sort of control suggested was to allow them on designated routes only. 69% were not aware of the cycling rules and code of conduct. Most thought the provision for cyclists was either just right or had no opinion. The most common attractions for the visit that day were the beauty of the site and the peace and quiet.

**PUBLICATION:** Bellringer, AJ, 'Forest of Dean Visitor Survey 1996', June 1997.

**COMMENTS:** None.

## **SYMONDS YAT (Forest of Dean)**

EPV 4/15/1

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** 1996: July (Round 1), August (Round 2), September (Round 3)

**HOURS:** 126 hours

<b>NUMBER OF FORMS:</b>	409 forms	Christchurch Campsite	48
		Goodrich Castle	51
		Jubilee Park	49
		Kerne Bridge	24
		Leisure Park	50
		Old Ferrie Inn	46
		Saracens Head	42
		Symonds Yat Rock	64
		Wye Valley Farm Park	35

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + visits elsewhere, expenditure, traffic problems, likely to come back.

**RESULTS:** Walking, relaxing/picnicking and fresh air and exercise were the most popular activities in the area. Typically groups were 2 adults aged 25-59 though this does vary from location to location. Overall around a third had children with them though virtually all groups had children at Wye Valley Farm Park and few had them at Jubilee Park or Symonds Yat Rock. Few groups had dogs with them though around a third had them at Old Ferrie Inn and around a quarter had them at Symonds Yat Rock.

Around half the groups were on holiday except at Jubilee Park (where only a third were holidaymakers) and the Leisure Park (where only a quarter were holidaymakers). The most popular type of overnight accommodation for holidaymakers was camping/caravanning (just under half were doing this) or staying at a hotel or B&B (around a third were doing this). Virtually all were staying a week or less in the area. 20% of visitors lived in the south west of England and similar proportions lived in the south east of England or the Midlands.

The majority (71%) had been to the Symonds Yat area before but most of these did not visit frequently (1-3 times a year or less). The majority had found out about the area through informal rather than formal sources though first time visitors were more likely than repeat visitors to have found out about the area from leaflets or guide books.

Typically groups were staying 2 or 3 hours at the sites though were staying longer at Christchurch Campsite and Saracens Head than elsewhere, probably because some were also spending the night there.

Around a third planned to visit other places in the area that day. The most common place that was also visited was Symonds Yat Rock but other popular places include Ross, Symonds Yat East and Monmouth.

Around two thirds had spent money that day. Just under half of all groups had spent money on food and drink. 15% had spent money on admissions. Few had spent money on other things. Very few had encountered problems with traffic that day. The majority (83%) said they would be likely to come back and a further 13% said they might come back.

**PUBLICATION:** Bellringer, AJ, 'Symonds Yat Visitor Survey 1996', Forest of Dean, June 1997.

**COMMENTS:** Survey ran in collaboration with Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Report written by HQ Statistics and published by Forest District office.

## **KING'S WOOD, CHALLOCK (Weald)**

EPV 4/15/5

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** August - September 1996

**HOURS:** 84 hours

<b>NUMBER OF FORMS:</b>	173 forms	Weekday	72
		Weekend	101

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + waymarked walks, other users, information, sculptures, improvements, parking fee, likely to come back, visits elsewhere.

**RESULTS:** Virtually all groups were mainly at King's Wood to walk - around half were dog walking and half were just walking. On average there were 2.3 people in a group and few groups had more than 4 people. Typically groups were 2 adults aged 25-59 with no children. Overall, 30% of groups had children with them.

Virtually all had come from home that day and most had come from within a 25 mile radius of the site. Typically visitors lived in the Ashford, Faversham, Canterbury or London areas. 83% had been to King's Wood before; of these a quarter visited 1-3 times a week or more and a third visited 1-3 times a month. Most had found out about King's Wood through informal sources e.g. had always known about it or had found out through friends or relatives. On average groups were staying 1.3 hours at the site. Few were staying longer than around 2 hours.

86% had used the waymarked walks. 72% of those who had used the walks had used the Green one, 54% had used the Brown and 35% the Orange. Virtually all rated the standard of route marking as good (the highest rating). Few groups objected to sharing the paths with cyclists or horse riders. 66% wanted more information. Most of these wanted more information on nature or forest management.

Virtually all said they liked the sculptured picnic seating. Virtually all those who had seen the other sculptures liked them. Most had found out about the sculptures by accident. Just over half wanted more sculptures at the site. 62% wanted new or improved facilities at King's Wood. The most common suggestion was for new or improved toilets.

81% said they would pay for parking. Few would pay more than £1 and most would pay between 50p and a £1. The most common main attractions for visiting King's Wood that day were the proximity of the wood to visitors' homes, the size of the forest, the peace and quiet and the variety of walks on offer. Virtually all said they would recommend King's Wood to friends and virtually all would be likely to come back in the future.

**PUBLICATION:** Bellringer, AJ, 'King's Wood, Challock Visitor Survey 1996', June 1997.

**COMMENTS:** None.







**WEST WALK (Downs & Chilterns)**

EPV 4/15/8

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** September 1996

**HOURS:**

**NUMBER OF FORMS:** 53 forms

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + waymarked walks, route marking, quality of paths, improvements, visits to other FE woods, Esso campaigns.

**RESULTS:** Too few responses to analyse.

**PUBLICATION:** None.

**COMMENTS:** This was to have been part of a visitor monitoring pilot exercise at West Walk in 1996. Surveys were planned for the three car parks and for a central point in the forest, along with a separate cycling survey at the end of a cycling route, calibration of traffic counters at car parks, the recording of random car park counts, and self-completion questionnaires being handed out at the same time as calibration. The start was postponed because of staff changes and lack of resources in the District, and then abandoned in February 1997.







## **FFOREST FAWR (SE Wales)**

EPV 4/20/4

**TYPE:** Interviewer

**DATE:** September 1996

**NUMBER OF FORMS:** 70 forms

**TOPICS:** Standard first page + waymarked walks, route marking, quality of paths, improvements, awareness of vandalism, visits to other FE woods, Esso campaigns.

**RESULTS:** Just over a third were mainly dog walking and just under a third were there for the fresh air and exercise. The size of groups is not known accurately, because boxes on the form were ticked instead of numbers being entered. Most groups were just adults aged 25-59; about a fifth had young adults aged 16-24, slightly less had children, and about a fifth had senior citizens. Over a third of groups had dogs with them; few had bikes.

Only one tenth of groups were on holiday; most visitors had come from home, travelling less than 5 miles. Most (about three quarters) had been to Fforest Fawr before; of these a third visited 1-3 times a week and a quarter visited 1-3 times a month. The majority had found out about Fforest Fawr through informal rather than formal sources e.g. had always known about it or had found out from friends or relatives. Most groups were staying 1 or 2 hours at the site.

Only just over a quarter had used waymarked walks; most of them thought that the route marking and quality of path were good. The improvement suggested by most (over a quarter) was new toilets. Around a third were aware of vandalism in the forest, and about half of these groups felt threatened by it. About a half knew of other FE woodlands near their homes and most of them visited these woodlands.

**PUBLICATION:** None

**COMMENTS:** This was to have been part of a visitor monitoring pilot exercise at Fforest Fawr in 1996. Surveys were planned for two points in the forest, and there was to have been a separate cycling survey on a cycling route; these have been combined in the 70 responses. A calibration of traffic counters had been planned, but was abandoned because of vandalism problems with the counters, so the plan for self-completion questionnaires being handed out at the same time as calibration was also abandoned. The start was postponed because of staff changes and lack of resources in the District, and then abandoned in February 1997.

## 2. FC SURVEYS AT CAMPSITES AND CABIN SITES

### FOREST HOLIDAYS CABINS

EPV 2/2/3

**TYPE:** Self completion

**DATE:** Nov 1995 - Jan 1997 (Ongoing since June 1995)

**HOURS:** N/A

<b>NUMBER OF FORMS:</b>	1987 forms	Deer Park	659
		Keldy	751
		Loch Awe	244
		Strathyre	263
		Unknown	70

**TOPICS:** Length of stay, location, before departure, holiday choice, cabin site (facilities etc.), activities and overall impression, life-style (papers read etc.). Identical to 1995 questionnaire.

**RESULTS:** More than half the groups consisted of 4 or more people, with just under half having 2 adults aged 25-44, and just under half having children aged 4-13. Only 20% of groups included any senior citizens. Just under half were there on their main holiday of the year. Just over half were staying for 7 nights, with 10% staying longer and the rest staying for shorter periods. One third had heard about Forest Holidays through a friend, and a further third through an advertisement. Around half had been on a Forest Holiday before, 10% having been 6 or more times, but less than 20% had been on a similar holiday with another operator.

All the services and facilities were generally rated as excellent or good, with most getting this rating from over 80% of visitors. The most important factors in choosing a Forest Holiday were peace and quiet, choice of locations, value for money, and that it was in an interesting region and a good walking area. Almost all said that they had walked, mainly on forest trails, while around a third reported bird watching and a third reported cycling.

**PUBLICATION:** None.

**COMMENTS:** Results tabled by HQ Statistics. Results used for performance indicators for cabin site managers. New questionnaire designed for use after January 1997, and survey ongoing through 1997.



### **3. HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS**

#### **1996 UK DAY VISITS SURVEY**

**TYPE:** Interviewer administered household survey throughout GB, by SCPR for consortium of countryside agencies and departments, brought together through CRN.

**DATE:** January - December 1996

**NUMBER OF FORMS:** 7,649 total - 3,467 in England, 2,177 in Wales, 2,005 in Scotland. Gave data for 25,679 leisure visits from home in the last 2 weeks of which 1,342 were wood/forest trips (697 England, 275 Wales, 370 Scotland).

**TOPICS:** Leisure day trips, from home and holiday bases, in previous 2 weeks (or most recent if none in 2 weeks in that category). For visits to towns-country-seaside, each of which could also be identified as to wood/forest or to canal/river.

**RESULTS:** Around 5,700 million leisure day trips from home, of which around 1500 million to countryside; 350 million to woods/forests, mostly in countryside. Around 12% had visited a wood in 2-week recall period (14% in summer, 10% in winter); around 41% had visited in the past year.

**PUBLICATION:** Summary results published September 1997 in leaflet 'UK Day Visits Survey : Summary of the 1996 survey findings'. More detailed results to be published March 1998, in priced report. Leaflet and report both written by SCPR, available from Countryside Commission.

**COMMENTS:** Summary leaflet is also available on the internet, through Countryside Commission's web site. Data should be available through ESRC data archive.

## 4. OTHER SURVEYS

### BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY - SCOTLAND

**TYPE:** Self completion.

**DATE:** August - December 1996

**NUMBER OF FORMS:** 478 forms returned (Around 6,000 printed, see comments)

**TOPICS:** FC woodlands used, rating of facilities, FC woodlands would like to use, permits, insurance.

**RESULTS:** Most (60%) said they rode in FC woodlands. Of these around a third rode in them 1-3 times a week or more and around a quarter rode in them 1-3 times a month.

Just under half those who rode in FC woodlands and who gave a rating (45%) rated the quality of the trails as 1 or 2 (the highest ratings on a scale where 1 was very good and 5 was very poor); just under a quarter (23%) rated them as 4 or 5. The quality of the signs were generally not rated highly; 52% of those who rode in FC woodlands and gave a rating rated the quality as only 4 or 5 and 24% gave them a rating of 3. The quality of information was rated similarly. 41% of those who rode in FC woodlands and who gave a rating rated the service from FC staff as 1 or 2 and a similar proportion (37%) rated it as 4 or 5.

32% of respondents said that there were FC woodlands that they would like to ride in but could not do so. The main reasons why they could not were that they were not permitted or there was a lack of information.

21% were not aware that a permit was needed to ride on FC land. Around a third of these said they had ridden in FC woodlands.

82% were interested in an annual permit which would enable them to ride in all FC woodlands in Scotland. Of those interested, 45% would pay around £25, 36% would pay less than this and 16% would pay around £50. Few would pay more than this.

Virtually all said that they had third party insurance for riding.

**PUBLICATION:** None.

**COMMENTS:** Joint survey between Forest Enterprise and British Horse Society. 6,000 questionnaires printed, for mailing direct to BHS members in Scotland and for distribution at various meetings, but it is known that not all were sent out - number distributed not known. Analysed by HQ Statistics and results sent to FE HQ and to BHS.