

C O U N T R Y S I D E R E C R E A T I O N N e t w o r k N e w s



Number 2 June 1993

1992 UK DAY VISITS SURVEY

- over 1,300 million leisure day visits taken during April and September;
- around one in three of these were to the countryside;
- average distance travelled to the countryside was 31 miles;
- the majority (78%) of visits to the countryside were made by car;
- around one in four of all visits to the countryside were made on a Sunday;
- walking, participating in an outdoor sport and visiting a leisure attraction accounted for some one in three of the activities in the countryside.

These are just some of the results from the 1992 UK Day Visits Survey sponsored by the member agencies of the Countryside Recreation Network. The pilot study is a unique source of information about the characteristics of that ever-popular activity—the "day out".

Editorial

The first edition of CRN News was greeted with enthusiasm as a welcome means of presenting recent and ongoing research into policy and practice in countryside recreation and its management. Thank you to all those who took the time to express their support and interest. CRN News embarks upon its second edition with a variety of articles that I'm sure will be relevance and interest to all those concerned with countryside recreation, in whatever capacity. Chief among these is the publication of the results of the 1992 UK Day Visits Survey, a major pilot study directed by Sue Walker of the Centre for Leisure Research. The preliminary results make fascinating reading, detailing a host of vital statistics for all those with an interest in countryside recreation. The full report can be found on pages 7-13.

Scottish Natural Heritage has recently developed a Visitor Monitoring Training Manual designed for use by all those who have to deal with the users of the countryside. This will surely become a vital reference for all those who wish to improve their knowledge and understanding of visitor

monitoring and help to develop a degree of continuity and consistency amongst of this notoriously inconsistent area of practice. Mike Dales of SNH describes the Manual and how to get your copy on page 14.

The development of more sophisticated and consistent methods of monitoring the users of the countryside embraces not only their direct monitoring but also ensuring that, where they come into contact with countryside managers, they are treated as customers with appropriate standards of care. The 1993 Countryside Recreation Conference—Customer Care in the Countryside—seeks to address this need by bringing together a wide variety of practitioners and academics to discuss and develop the latest thinking and practice on the subject. The Conference will thus be of central interest to all those who are in any way involved with caring for users of the countryside.

Increasing the opportunities for the recreational use of the countryside comes in many forms; one of the latest and burgeoning is the use of abandoned railway

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Transport and the Countryside
- UK Day Visits Survey Preliminary results
- SNH Visitor Monitoring
- CRN and Europe
- Access to Woodlands
- WTB Customer Care

Exchanging and Spreading Information to develop best Policy and Practice in Countryside Recreation

Secretariat provided by:
Department of City & Regional Planning,
University of Wales
College of Cardiff,
PO Box 906,
Cardiff, CF1 3YN
Tel. (0222) 874970
Fax. (0222) 874970

lines to form cycling and walking routes. Sustrans is pioneering this work; their work is described on pages 5 and 6. This compliments efforts to manage increasing visitor numbers in the countryside through utilising public transport links to areas that suffer from heavy traffic pressure or are otherwise inaccessible to the majority of people who do not own or have access to a car. The Countrygoer project faces an uphill task but the work is crucial to developing new attitudes towards access to the countryside; the report begins on page 4.

Changing approaches to research into and the day to day management of the countryside resource form the basis of a guest article by past CRRAG Chairman Thomas Huxley. We hope that the article may serve to spark reaction in our readers; you are thus encouraged to respond with your own thoughts, on this or any other matter related to CRN News or its content, for publication in October. The deadline for the receipt of material for inclusion is 1 September.

Robert Wood
Dept. of City & Regional Planning
UWCC
PO Box 906
Cardiff
CF1 3YN
Tel/Fax 0222 874970



Robert Wood, CRN Manager

When the Grit gets Grittier

Having congratulated the editor of CRN News, he asked for some thoughts on the changing nature of countryside recreation and attendant policy developments. Here is my response.

I see little change in the nature of countryside recreation, other than more of it everywhere, with more people engaging on mechanised, noisy and penetrative activities and the providers—a mixed bag to boot—still struggling to disentangle conflicting interests. About a quarter of a century ago, the Scottish Landowners Federation published "Access without Tears", a real advance in collaboration at that time, yet has that movement towards goodwill been maintained? Not much. Indeed, in recent months I have sometimes thought that the grit simply got grittier.

Why? A major part of the answer lies in the political arena. Too many mechanisms for moving things forward in a steady way are in a state of flux: struggling to regroup in a sensible way (nature conservation and enjoyment in Wales and Scotland) or partly regrouped in one part of the country and waiting to see what happens in another (water), or engaged in future speculation and consultation everywhere (local government), or selling land without being certain whether enlightened policies operating heretofore will continue under new management. All these changes may lead to a splendid millennium but in the meantime I see too much effort expended in a national game of musical chairs waiting for the new pc to be connected, while the log-pile of tasks out there in countryside management gets larger by the day.

Meanwhile—and this is also political—the hunt is on for Value for Money. Would that VFM stood for Very Forwardthinking Mentality but too often it has quite the reverse effect: replacing creativity and problem-solving with the search for better performance indicators. Your editor said that I was not to reminisce but allow me one recollection of a Minister of Defence some years ago explaining how contracts that ran grossly over estimate would never occur again, yet one reads in the paper of some current defence work running 400% over budget (in the hundreds of £m not the hundreds of £k of countryside recreation costs). Now here is something for CRN to think about. Are there really meaningful measures whereby to

A Wind of Change?

The wind of privatisation is threatening to shake the branches of the Forestry Commission. An interdepartmental government committee has been established to:

- review the effectiveness of current incentives for forestry investment;
- review options for the ownership and management of Forestry Commission woodlands; and
- make proposals which would improve the effectiveness of the delivery of the Government's forestry policy objectives.

Officials from the Treasury, MAFF, the Welsh Office, DoE, the Forestry Commission and the Prime Minister's Policy Unit, under the Chairmanship of the Scottish Office, have formed the Forestry Review Group which held its first meeting on 31 March this year.

As might be expected, opinions as to the potential benefits and disbenefits are sharply divided. Potentially, the Forestry Commission's 900,000 hectares of woodland could be broken up into substantial geographically-defined areas, perhaps making attractive investment opportunities for corporate

monitor the effectiveness of countryside recreation expenditure? If there are, even, say, for the simplest roadside picnic site, how will the cost of carrying out such monitoring on a continuing basis relate to the original capital cost and the revenue cost of maintaining the site? Accurate monitoring is expensive and the number of variables large if one is not going to end up with more potential questions than answers.

Surely we can do sample counts, weight them to correct for bad weather and then do multiplication to show impressive statistics of overall use in 1993 but that is not what the VFM people are looking for in seeking to determine more accurate outputs and targets for individual expenditure programmes. They want a lot harder information and the issue is whether that information is truly amenable to measurement, even if the cost of obtaining it is not a limiting factor, which it can be. This question is important because, if the collective wisdom of CRN organisations concludes that the search will generally be as successful as that for the Holy Grail, then the sooner this is made clear the better and effort concentrated on solving real problems, combined with good and prudent financial control, audited both in terms of purpose as well as what is produced under capital and revenue heads. It is right and sensible to have practical guidelines for appropriate standards and this is the sort of work that should continuously be updated as new techniques and experience are gained. CRN's aim to exchange information on best policy and practice is spot on.

The reason that VFM is on the top of every agenda is because there is a national shortage of cash: for education, the health and social services, housing—there is something about this in the papers every day and Leisure and Recreation cannot be exempted from discussion about priorities. The question for CRN is

how it may best contribute to this debate. My guess is that there is still a long way to go in demonstrating that Leisure and Recreation are not luxuries which the community can dispense with when the going gets tough. For example, we see everywhere that the kind of enforced leisure which results from unemployment creates an increased need for playing fields and open spaces and more education, not less, about how to spend time away from work constructively. In this context, it is very unfunny to read of outdoor centres being closed down. The old distinction between centres aimed primarily at teaching ecological field studies and physical education was becoming less important by the late 1980s; what matters is that most now include something about how to enjoy the countryside sensibly and so the less young that gain that early experience, the more this educational buck passes on to rangers whose numbers are being restricted by a lack of resources. As yet, VFM has difficulty in making these kind of soft connections.

Indeed, as I write this, what looks like another example of accountants failure to appreciate soft connections is reported in the newspapers, in that the Forestry Commission is being asked by Parliament's Public Accounts Committee why its income from timber felling is less than it might be. Amongst the several reasons which will surely have been given in evidence, the multiple use of forests for recreation and conservation must be important. In recent decades the Commission's enlightened policies for the management of its woodlands has been widely welcomed and it would be a retrograde policy, as well as a poor example to the private sector, if the concepts of multiple use and sustainability were now to be sacrificed on the altar of VFM and maximising timber yields.

Thomas Huxley

investors, landowners and timber users.

Though woods of high amenity value could be separated out to be managed by local authorities and conservation bodies, this has not allayed the fears of those such as the Ramblers Association who are anxious that the gains in access to Forestry Commission woodlands in recent years, under the freedom-to-roam policy, should not be lost.

Ministers and officials have been at pains to point out that the options are very much open.

The Forestry Review Group is not taking evidence, but bodies or members of the public are invited to make representations to the secretary of the Group.

G S Pearson
Secretary, Forestry Review Group
Room 6/61
New St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3TO



COUNTRYSIDE
RECREATION
NETWORK

Getting Them Out of Their Cars

Whilst the dramatic growth in car ownership and usage in Britain over the last few decades has increased access to the countryside in a spectacular way, mass motorisation has its serious downside. Twenty two million private cars in a small island make impossible demands for road and parking space, whilst twenty two million car exhausts represent Britain's fastest growing source of atmospheric pollution, including carbon dioxide, the principal "greenhouse" gas and nitrogen oxide, a prime ingredient of acid rain and smog.

Only recently has the exponential growth in leisure motoring been recognised as being more than an occasional problem in the countryside. Publication of the Countryside Commission's *Trends in Transport and the Countryside* (CCP382) in 1992 drew attention to a number of disturbing issues. Forecasts of overall UK traffic growth hide what is likely to prove an even faster rate of increase of growth, especially in leisure traffic, in rural areas as a result of people moving away from crowded cities and enjoying increasingly car-based lifestyles. This is especially true of fine areas of countryside such as National Parks, AONBs and Heritage Coasts. Potentially tripling or even quadrupling of traffic in such areas threatens near gridlock conditions and massive environmental degradation. This in turn will lead to increasing demand for ever more roads and parking lots, already posing perhaps the biggest single threat to Britain's countryside according to environmental groups such as the CPRE.

Paradoxically, even with such massive predicted increases in car ownership and usage, there will always remain a minority of the population who cannot share the idyll of motorised freedom. Almost exactly a third of households in the UK have no car, and this figure masks people living

in households with a car who do not have access to that car. In fact, the most rapid increases are likely to occur among the more affluent, creating more two and three car households. A rump of the population, perhaps as much as 30%, including less affluent families, older people, younger people, those with disabilities, will never share in the motorised dream. But consequent cutbacks in public transport, especially in rural areas, are already helping to reinforce the "two thirds/one third society" in which the affluent majority enjoy easy access to the countryside—tailbacks and pollution permitting—whilst the minority are effectively barred from enjoying a heritage which is equally theirs.

Clearly such a situation is not a healthy one either for the countryside or for society as a whole. There is a widespread recognition that traffic management in a variety of forms—traffic calming, park and ride, road pricing, parking controls—will become an increasingly important part of visitor management in the countryside. At the same time improved public transport provision is essential not only to give those without access to their own transport an equal share in the countryside, but to create "greener" networks, linked to walking and cycling as a alternative to the car, and to help make the

inevitable restraints on our motorised freedom—or illusion of freedom—more politically acceptable.

Over the last seven years, Transport for Leisure (TFL), a small specialist practice which grew out of the Countryside Commission's Wayfarer Recreational Transport in Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire, has been working with such agencies as the Countryside Commission, local authorities and British Rail, to develop better public transport networks for countryside recreation, and to ensure the networks that do exist are better publicised and marketed. Despite bus deregulation, and what many see as the threat of rail privatisation, there is still an extensive network of rail and bus services in most parts of rural Britain, which is underused for recreation. Indeed, greater use of rural networks by visitors help to sustain the network local communities need, thus providing a tangible benefit to rural communities from tourism and countryside recreation. Around 80% of travellers for example on the Settle-Carlisle railway through the Yorkshire Dales and Cumbria travel for leisure purposes, enabling the service to survive for the 20% of users from the local hill farming communities who travel for essential reasons, including young people needing access to further education in Carlisle.

TFL, with Simon Holt Marketing, also operate the Countrygoer Campaign on behalf of the Ramblers' Association (RA) and a consortium of agencies including the YHA, Countryside Commission, Countryside Council for Wales, ETB, Regional Railways, local authorities and individual subscribers. *Countrygoer* focuses around a regular magazine highlighting some of the excellent links that do exist to National Parks, Country Parks, Heritage Coasts and urban fringe countryside, often with low cost fares, to help people without cars and to



Walkers leaving the 'Hark to Rover' Bus at Slaidburn, Forest of Bowland

From Tracks to Tyres and Boots



tempt people out of their cars.

Copies reach every RA affiliated walking group in the UK, plus youth hostels, tourist offices, local authority offices, and the national and regional press. The aim, supported by a press campaign, is to create a positive awareness of the many social, personal and environmental advantages of leaving the car at home or at a fringe park-and-ride car park and enjoying a different kind of flexibility and freedom to explore the countryside by using the bus or rural train.

Countrygoer accepts that nothing short of a cultural revolution will persuade dedicated car users to leave their car behind and take a bus or train. Perhaps central Government action on carbon taxes and road pricing must come first. But cultural revolutions must start somewhere, and even if just a small number of individuals begin to change their behaviour—and evidence suggests that they are—this will help the dismal patterns of patronage decline to reverse, and create new markets. In 1993 **Countrygoer** is nominating **Grasshopper Awards** for train and bus services throughout Britain which provide high quality countryside access, hoping to develop the public transport equivalent a real ale guide—the kind of consumer-led revolution in attitudes needed if the car is ever going to be tamed in the countryside.

Colin Speakman

Transport for Leisure Ltd,
67 Grove Road,
Ilkley, West Yorkshire,
LS29 9PQ

Much of the hundreds of kilometres of abandoned railway line in the UK hold the potential for conversion to routes for cycling and walking. However, it is only since 1979 that the inherent advantages of the resource have been exploited; this is the rationale behind Sustrans, a charitable organisation which seeks to promote the use of abandoned railway lines as routes for commuting trips and leisure use. An old line from Bristol to Bath was the focus for the first Sustrans project. The line ran from central Bristol, out East through a 300 metre tunnel, through the suburbs then turned towards the South to run through the Avon valley into Bath. It was wet, overgrown, and at night or in winter, oppressively bleak. Nevertheless, it made an excellent route between the two cities for walkers and the tougher types of cyclists, who were probably trespassing but preferred that to the danger and hostility of the A4. It also provided access to the still surprisingly attractive countryside between Bristol and Bath, without damaging that countryside.

Gradually people in Bristol began to consider that it wouldn't be an impossible task to turn this occasional, informal route into a proper, purpose-built foot/cycleway, accessible to those who are most at risk on roads and city streets—the very young, the elderly, wheelchair users, inexperienced cyclists and parents with children. Perhaps fortunately nobody quite foresaw the tremendous complexity of land ownership, leases and licences, negotiations with the councils through whose jurisdiction the line passed, fund-raising, volunteer organisations, planning permission, signing, maintenance.....the list seems endless. Unlike many other cities where the people recognised the possibility of such a route but did nothing, the people of Bristol and Bath actually got together and in a succession of volunteer weekends, built the first path section. The existing well-prepared railway solum and graded ballast made path construction an easier matter than it might otherwise have been; the end result was immediately popular. The Bristol to Bath Railway Path is planted with trees and has a burgeoning sculpture trail, seats and drinking fountains along its length. Privacy bunds screen the lineside housing, access controls permit only walkers, cyclists and wheelchairs, and the urban sections of the path are a veritable linear park, full of blackberries, birdsong, foxes and wildflowers. People from all over the UK became aware of the project and its outcome, and suddenly the way seemed



open for railway paths to be built anywhere. Thus Sustrans was born.

Overcoming reticence and scepticism to what was a revolutionary idea proved to be an important barrier. Thankfully the long-term potential of the project and its widespread applicability served as a convincing argument to those with a long-term perspective, interested in the environmental and social benefits which accrue. Perhaps most prominent among them the Countryside Commission, who recognised very early the value of Sustrans' projects and supported almost all of them. The Community Programme provided a labour force ideally suited to our projects. They

The 1992 UK Day Visits Survey (UKDVS)

Introduction

UKDVS has been developed by the Countryside Recreation Research Advisory Group (now CRN) to improve the quality and comparability of information on leisure day visits in the UK. This new survey is designed to measure participation in leisure day visits by the adult population and the scale and value of visits within the UK and the four member countries.

The 1992 survey was a UK-wide *pilot* sponsored by British Waterways, the Countryside Commission, the Countryside Council for Wales, the Department of Employment, the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland's Environment Service, the Forestry Commission, Scottish Natural Heritage, and the Scottish, Northern Ireland and Wales Tourist Boards. The pilot was designed to test the survey methods and whether the results would provide the information required by each of the sponsors.

The 1992 survey was undertaken by Survey Research Associates and, in Northern Ireland, by Ulster Marketing Surveys, with additional advice on survey design from the Centre for Leisure Research. This article describes the 1992 survey, summarises the main results and outlines future plans for UKDVS.

The Scope of UKDVS

The main aim of UKDVS is to collect information about *leisure day visits made from home*, as opposed to visits made while people are staying away from home (these are monitored by the United Kingdom Tourism Survey - UKTS).

The emphasis is on visits for *leisure and pleasure* and a list of 16 activities is used to define leisure day visits (Figure 1). In 1992 the survey focused on visits of 3 hours or more, although a proportion of people were asked about all leisure day visits, regardless of the length.

Two other types of visit are covered by the survey:

- one-off business visits made from home, for example to attend a conference for a day or go on a works outing; and
- day visits made to/from holiday bases—these are included because, although UKTS asks about leisure activities on holiday visits, it does not record where these activities took place (e.g. urban areas, countryside, forest/woodland) and this information is required by the majority of UKDVS's sponsors.

The survey distinguishes between visits to:

- towns and cities,
- the countryside, and
- the seaside and coast

Figure 1: Definition of Leisure Day Visits

The 1992 UKDVS recorded information about round trips or outings:

- made from home and not while people were staying away from home overnight
 - in people's leisure time;
 - in the UK, i.e. England, Wales, Scotland, or Northern Ireland
 - lasting three hours or more from start to finish
 - for the following activities:
1. To go for a walk, hill walk or ramble (including walking the dog, if it was for 3 hours or more, but not walking to work or to the shops)
 2. To go cycling or mountain biking
 3. To go swimming—at a swimming pool or leisure centre
 4. To play sport indoors at a sports centre, leisure centre or club
 5. To take part in sport or active pursuits in the countryside (ie not at a particular facility eg fishing, sailing, horse riding)
 6. To play other sports outdoors at a sports centre, sports ground, stadium or club
 7. To watch sport (not on TV)
 8. To pursue a hobby or special interest (eg bird watching, photography, field or nature studies)
 9. To play informal sport/children's games or sunbathe/relax outdoors (eg kicking a ball about, frisbee, sit around or in the car)
 10. To go to a leisure attraction or place of interest (eg theme park, visitor or heritage centre, museum or art gallery, a nature reserve/trail, zoo or wildlife park, historic or stately home, castle or ancient monument, cathedral or ancient church, a fairground, fete, carnival or show)
 11. For entertainment (eg cinema, theatre, concert, ballet, opera, dance or disco, bingo, casino)
 12. To go shopping (eg gift/souvenir shopping, antique fair "flea market" but not regular weekly shopping or for everyday household items)
 13. To eat or drink out at a cafe, restaurant, wine bar or pub
 14. To go for a drive, sightseeing and/or picnic, or to go pleasure boating
 15. To go to the beach/sunbathing/paddling/swimming in the sea
 16. To visit friends or relatives in their home (ie not going out with friends/relatives)

1992 UK Day Visits Survey

The survey distinguishes between visits to:

- towns and cities,
- the countryside, and
- the seaside and coast.

In 1992 the survey also collected information about visits:

- to forests/woodlands,
- to canals and navigable rivers, and
- for countryside sport.

Survey Design

The survey consisted of household interviews with individuals of 15 years and over who were selected at random. In 1992 interviews took place continuously from April to September and were evenly distributed across days of the week.

Initially, individuals were asked to provide information about all day visits from home in the *last 2 weeks*. A follow-up section then asked about *the most recent* visit within an extended recall period (up to 1 year) in order to obtain more information about visits, increase the sample size for certain types of visit (the seaside/coast, forests/woodlands, and canals), and focus on particular activities (countryside sport). The final two sections of the questionnaire asked about business and holiday visits within a 2-week recall period.

The response rate was just over 60% and over 5,000 interviews were completed: 2,528 in England, 917 in Wales, 1006 in Scotland, and 645 in Northern Ireland. In England one half of the interviews were used to test different versions of the questionnaire and so the *standard* sample for the UK contained 3842 interviews which yielded information about 7,000 visits.

The data have been weighted (taking into account age, sex, social class, country and region of residence) to be representative of the total UK population aged 15 and over (i.e. 46.5 million people).

The results from the survey have been analyzed in three main ways:

- based on the total number of respondents (i.e. a base figure of 3,842 people);
- based on the total number of visits reported for the 2-week recall period (the base figure for visits from home is 5,488 visits); and
- based on the most recent visit within a 4-week recall period (the base figure for visits from home with a 4-week recall period is 3,715 visits - the results from this data set have been weighted to represent the demographic profile of the UK population but not grossed-up to the total population estimates).

The base for the figures reported here is shown on each table and figure (base figures reported are for the

unweighted data). All of the visits referred to here are of 3 hours or more and relate to the *adult* population aged 15 and over. Only results from the standard sample are reported and the focus is on leisure day visits from *home*.

As with all *sample* surveys, the figures reported here are subject to sampling error and the range of error associated with key statistics from the survey is shown at the end of this article.

The Results

The results from the 1992 survey show that during April to September:

- Over 1,300 million leisure day visits were made in the UK. Of these, around:
 - 1,000 million leisure day visits were made from home;
 - 300 million leisure day visits were made from holiday bases; and
 - 15 million one-off business trips were made from home (this figure is for England only).
- Based on a 2-week recall period, the proportion of people making visits was:
 - 60% had made at least one leisure day visit from home (the average number of visits per person was 1.7);
 - 12% had made at least one visit from a holiday base (the average number of visits per person was 0.5); and
 - 2% had made at least one business visit (in England) (the average number of visits per person was under 0.5).
- The majority of leisure day visits from *home* were in England and were to towns or cities (Table 1 and Figure 2, overleaf)
- Based on a 2-week recall period, the proportion of people visiting the different locations was:
 - 43% had visited a town or city;
 - 26% had visited the countryside;
 - 10% had visited the seaside or coast;
 - 3% had visited a forest or wood; and
 - 2% had visited a canal or navigable river.
- Extending the recall period to one year increases the participation figures, although the accuracy of people's recall over this period is questionable. Looking back over a year:
 - 82% had visited a town or city;
 - 67% had visited the countryside;
 - 54% had visited the seaside or coast;
 - 27% had visited a wood or forest; and
 - 16% had visited a canal or navigable river.

continued on page 10

Table 1: Location of day visits from home by country

	England		Scotland		Wales		N.Ireland		UK	
	Visits	%	Visits	%	Visits	%	Visits	%	Visits	%
Town/city	525	63	45	66	22	52	11	58	603	63
Countryside	247	30	18	26	15	35	5	26	285	30
Seaside/coast	63	8	6	9	5	13	3	17	78	8
All visits	835	100	69	100	42	100	20	100	966	100
Base figure: N =	2090		1284		1257		857		5488	

Note: Figures for visits are rounded to the nearest million.

The figures relate to the country in which visits originated and all except a small percentage of visits took place in the country of origin.

Base: All leisure day visits from home (3+ hours), April to September 1992: weighted and grossed.

Table 2: Leisure day visits from home by age, sex, working status, social class, household type, and car ownership

	People making visits	People making no visits	All respondents
	Percentage of people (15+)		
Age (years)			
15-24	22	12	18
25-64	63	62	62
65+	15	26	20
Sex			
Male	48	48	48
Female	52	52	52
Working Status			
In employment	55	47	52
Unemployed	6	9	7
Retired	16	25	20
Housewife - non-working	13	14	14
Student/at school	9	5	7
Social Class			
AB	19	14	17
C1	28	21	25
C2	25	28	26
DE	29	37	32
Household type			
Children in household	34	31	33
No children in household	66	69	67
Car ownership			
Car in household	80	66	74
No car	20	32	25
Base figure: N =	2134	1708	3842

Note: Figures for people making a visit are based on a 2-week recall period.

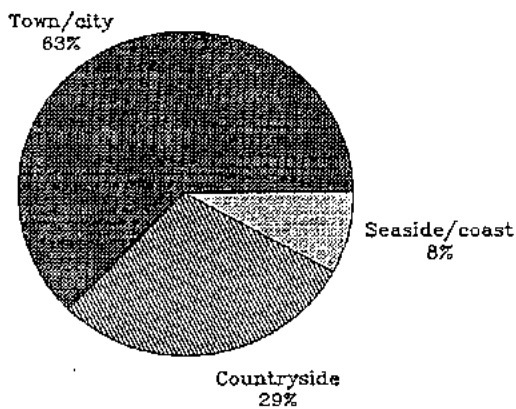
Where percentages do not sum up to 100, this is due to a proportion of people not answering the question

Base: All UK respondents - weighted and grossed

1992 UK Day Visits Survey

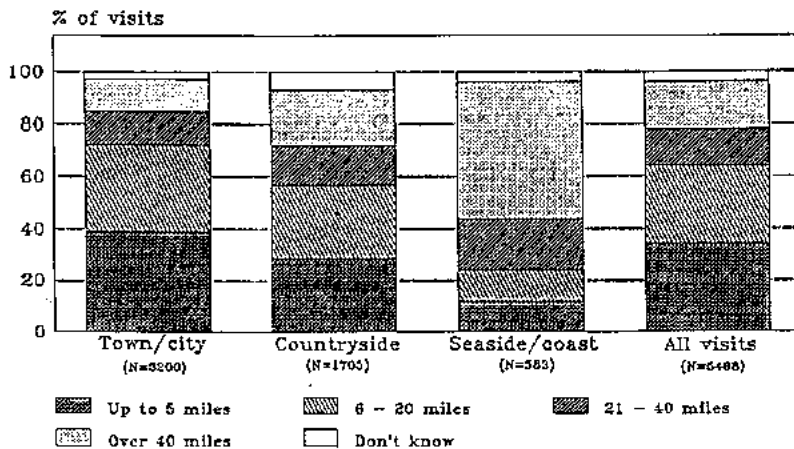
- Comparing the personal and social characteristics of those people who make visits and those who don't (Table 2), the results confirm the findings of earlier surveys that people are more likely to make leisure day visits if they are:
 - in the younger age groups,
 - in full-time employment,
 - in the ABC1 social classes, and
 - have access to a car.

Figure 2
Location of day visits in the U.K.



Base figure: N=5488 (UK)
Base: All day visits from home (3+ hours)
April - Sept 1992; weighted and grossed

Figure 3
Distance travelled



Base: All UK day visits from home
(3+ hours) April - Sept;
weighted and grossed

miles, but this varied with the type of location visited (Figure 3):

- on town/city visits the average distance travelled was 21 miles;
- on countryside visits the average distance travelled was 31 miles; and
- on seaside/coast visits the average distance travelled was 69 miles.

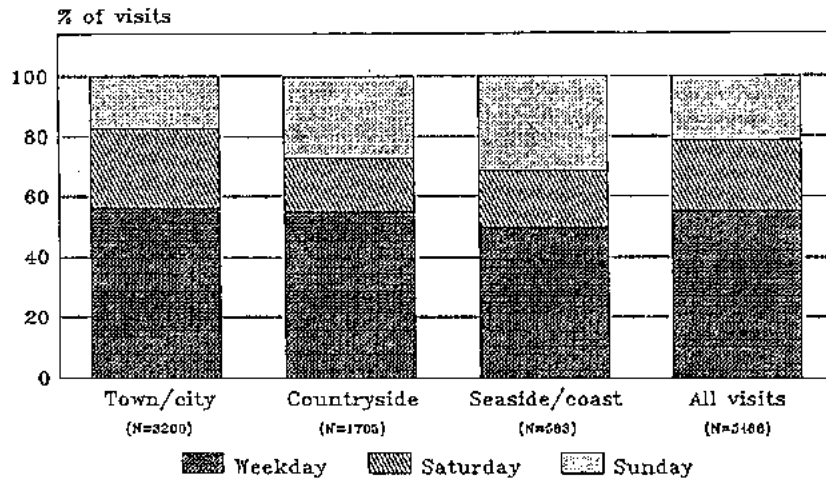
- Most leisure day visits were made by car or van (7 out of 10 of the most recent visits were made by car/van). With the exception of walking (11% of visits were on foot), other modes of transport were used on less than 1 in 20 visits. Visits to the countryside were most likely to be made by car (78% of the most recent visits), while town/city visits were least likely to be car-based (64% of most recent trips).

- On average, visits lasted for 5 hours from start to finish, but visits to the seaside/coast tended to be longer. The average length of visits to the seaside/coast was 7 hours, while the average for town/city visits was just under five hours and for countryside visits just over five hours.

- More visits were made on weekdays (54% of all visits) than weekend days, but a disproportionate number of visits were made on the two weekend days (Figure 4). Saturday was the most popular day for all visits (23% of all visits were made on Saturday, compared with 21% on Sunday), but this varied with the location and Sunday was more popular for visits to the seaside/coast and countryside (29% of visits to the seaside/coast were on Sunday, as were 26% of visits to the countryside).

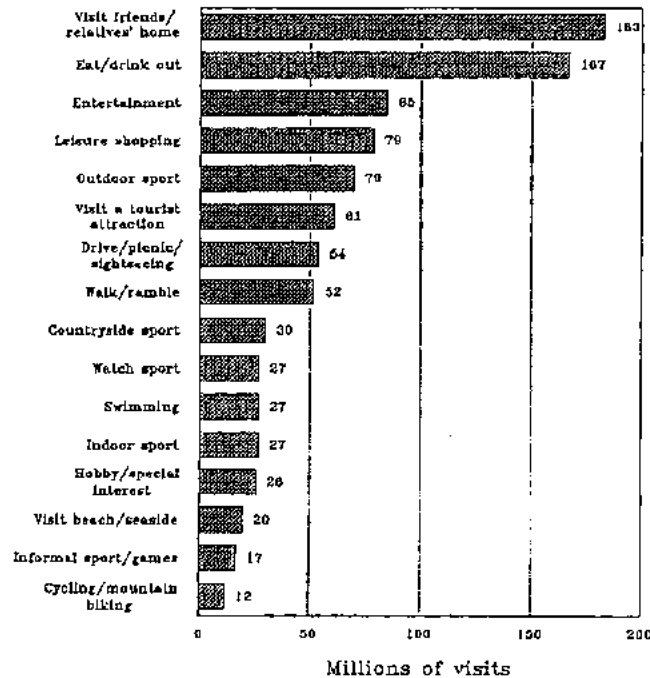
continued on page 12

Figure 4
Day of week visits made



Base: All UK day visits from home (3+ hours) April - Sept weighted and grossed

Figure 5
Main activity undertaken



Base figure: N=5468 (UK)
Base: All day visits from home (3+ hours)
April - Sept 1992; weighted and grossed

Table 4: Party Composition

	Town/city	Countryside	Seaside/ coast	All leisure visits
	Percentage of visits			
Adult party	57	60	45	55
Adults with children	22	25	40	25
Unaccompanied visit	15	9	6	12
Organised party	3	2	5	3
AVERAGE PARTY SIZE	2.6	2.8	3.0	2.7
Base figure: N =	1691	1029	574	3715

Base: All most recent day visits (3+ hours) in the UK in a 4 week period - weighted

Table 3: Five most popular activities by location

Town/city	Countryside	Coast/Seaside
1. Visits to friends/relatives' homes (20%)	1. Visits to friends/relatives' homes (19%)	1. Visit to beach/sea (23%)
2. Eat/drink out (20%)	2. Eat/drink out (16%)	2. Drive/sightseeing (16%)
3. For entertainment (13%)	3. Walk/ramble (11%)	3. Visits to friends/relatives' homes (10%)
4. Leisure shopping (12%)	4. Outdoor sport (11%)	4. Visit a leisure attraction (10%)
5. Outdoor sport (6%)	5. Visit a leisure attraction (10%)	5. Walk/ramble (7%)

Figures in parenthesis show the percentage of total visits.

- The main activities undertaken on leisure day visits from home were visits to friends and relatives' homes (183 million visits - 19% of all visits) and going out for a meal and/or drink (167 million visits - 17% of the total) - Figure 5. Again, the popularity of activities varies with the location (Table 3).
- Most leisure day visits are made by adults but, as might be expected, the seaside is more popular with families (Table 4).
- An estimated £13,000 million was spent on leisure day visits from home during April to September (in 1992 this estimate was based on spending on the *most recent* visit and it should be noted that the survey has shown that the most recent visit dataset is not necessarily representative of all visits). Spending took place on 7 out of 10 visits and, on average, £18 was spent per visit (figures are rounded to the nearest pound - the average is £13 if visits with no expenditure are included). On average, £22 was spent on visits to towns/cities, £18 on visits to the coast/seaside and £14 on visits to the countryside.

The 1993 Survey and Beyond

Overall, the 1992 survey showed that the survey methods worked well and both the quality and comparability of the data have been improved. Although a wealth of data was collected, the interviews took, on average, only 17 minutes and most of the people (around 8 out of 10) taking part in the survey said that it was enjoyable and easy to understand.

The 1992 pilot also indicated ways in which the survey could be improved. In consequence, in 1993 the six month survey is being repeated to test:

- the feasibility of collecting information about all leisure day visits, i.e. with no 3 hour cut-off;
- a restructured questionnaire;
- whether a response rate nearer 70% can be achieved with revised fieldwork procedures; and

- whether, with more information on the frequency of visits, the data for most recent trips can be weighted to be representative of all visits.

The 1993 survey is under way and is sponsored by the same agencies, with the exception of the Northern Ireland agencies which have other priorities for funds in 1993 (the Department of National Heritage also has replaced the Department of Employment). Depending on the outcome of the 1993 survey, the intention is to commission a 12-month survey, beginning in 1994.

Conclusion

UKDVS provides comparable information on the volume and value of leisure day visits for the whole of the UK for the first time. It also reveals the relative importance of day visits in the four individual countries and to urban and rural areas and the coast, as well as providing information about the characteristics of visits and visitors to these destinations.

The new survey did not take shape overnight and the people appointed to the CRN Working Group have invested considerable amounts of time and effort in getting UKDVS this far. UKDVS shows what can be achieved through successful collaboration between the main tourism and recreation agencies in the UK and, along with UKTS, provides a basis for monitoring a major sector of the domestic leisure market.

Sue Walker

Centre for Leisure Research

Margins of error associated with the data

The data from UKDVS are derived from a sample survey and so are subject to margins of error associated with sampling. The table below provides an indication of the complex standard errors associated with key statistics for the UK at the 95% level of confidence. Smaller sub-sets of the data, for example for individual countries or destinations, are subject to wider limits of confidence.

	survey estimate	margin of error +/-
Participation in leisure day visits from home by the adult population 15+ (2-week recall)	60%	3.5%
Average number of visits per person	1.7	0.16
Number of visits - April to September	1000 million	100 million

Visitor Monitoring Training Manual

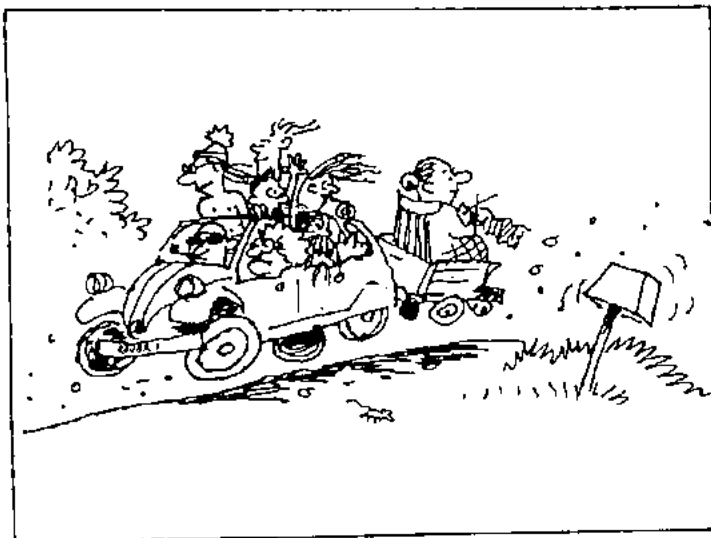
Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) has recently published a Visitor Monitoring Training Manual that may be of interest to a wide range of CRN News readers.

The publication is a product of the Visitor Monitoring Project, which was started by SNH's predecessor, the Countryside Commission for Scotland. The project has been continued and developed by staff in the Recreation and Access Branch of SNH's Research and Advisory Directorate.

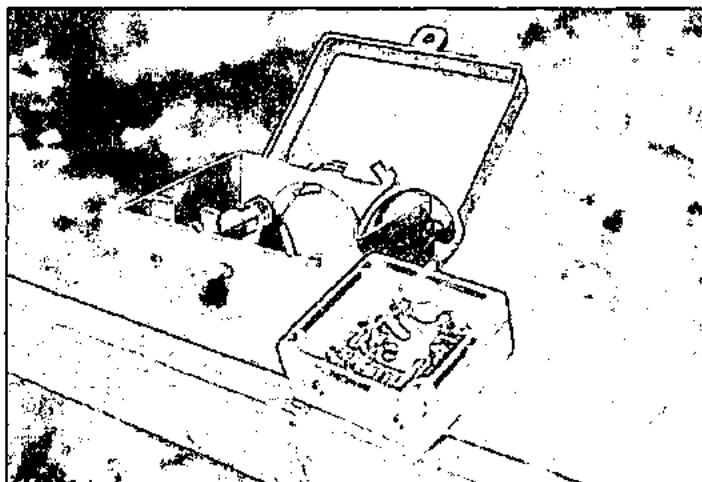
The overall aim of the visitor monitoring project is to promote and encourage the collection of information on visitors to informal recreation sites, as an aid to more informed decision and policy making. Indeed, the main benefit to be derived from visitor monitoring is an increased capacity to make accurate and well-judged management decisions. The vital areas of management that can profit from the increase in available information include planning, resource allocation, policy, staffing, marketing, advocacy and performance monitoring.

The project was initially set up to offer assistance to staff at country parks in Scotland, but enquiries and requests for advice from other sources has led to it being broadened to take account of the wider range of interest. Beneficiaries of the project so far include those responsible for long distance routes, nature reserves, visitor centres, universities, museums and National Trust for Scotland properties. Enquiries have not only been from Scotland but have come from further afield including Surrey, Hampshire and Jersey. An order has already been received from South Africa! The Training Manual is therefore intended for use in a wide range of situations and can be used by manager, ranger, lecturer and student alike.

The content of the Manual describes the techniques of visitor monitoring in two separate parts.



Counters are not sufficient in themselves to allow you to estimate accurately the number of people using your facility



The Schmidt Acoustic People Counter

Part 1 explains how to collect visitor numbers through the use of traffic and people counting machines, and how to use calibration techniques for converting counter readings into estimates of actual visitor numbers.

Part 2 is devoted to questionnaire surveys, and how they can be used to gather more detailed information, such as visitor profiles, catchment areas, distribution of visitors within the facility and their use of different activities, and also their views, attitudes and motives on certain key issues.

As well as this Manual, SNH can offer advice on visitor monitoring in several other forms, such as a one day Training Course which is run on a regular basis at locations throughout Scotland, and site visits in Scotland to offer advice on monitoring at a particular facility.

A series of Information Sheets describing the various types of counting machines will be produced later in 1993 and these will complement the techniques described in the Manual. Details of the Information Sheets will be included in CRN News when they are published. The cost of the Training Manual is £10.00 and the cost of the full set of Information Sheets is also likely to be around £10.00. In the meantime, brief details of equipment are included in the Visitor Monitoring Equipment Inventory, which is available free to all enquirers and will be enclosed with each copy of the Training Manual.

*Mike Dales,
Scottish Natural Heritage*

For further information about these and for any other matters relating to visitor monitoring, please contact Mike Dales at Scottish Natural Heritage, 2 Anderson Place, Edinburgh EH6 5NP Tel. 031 446 2469

Good Europeans?— the CRN Agencies Investigated

Whatever the ambivalence of many of Britain's politicians towards Europe, the level of interest in European policy issues appear to be high among the professional agencies of government, represented in the CRN. And CRN has given this prominence by requesting information from all the agencies on their relationships with Europe, and making it a major discussion item on their July meeting agenda. A questionnaire survey to the agencies has elicited a very high response rate, and the information given emphasises the importance of the European level of policy-making.

Influencing and adding items to the European agenda, advising and informing on current European policies and proposals, and identifying funding sources from Europe are seen to be important functions for the agencies. Three agencies—the Scottish Sports Council, the Sports Council for Wales and British Waterways—are mainly seeking out additional sources of funds. Other agencies, though, place an equal or greater emphasis on agenda setting or policy making.

In study of interest groups in Europe, two political scientists use the expression "shooting where the ducks are" to characterise the way in which groups "retarget their influence once they realise that the power to make decisions which affect them has moved to a new institution" (Sonia Mazey and Jeremy Richardson). Likewise for some CRN agencies—such as the National Rivers Authority, whose work is so structured by European Community Directives—who see agenda setting in Brussels as a prime activity.

But even the Sports Council emphasises an agenda-setting role in Europe, although the European Commission has no remit for sport. This has not stopped the Council from cultivating a range of links with Brussels Directorates, but more particularly from being actively involved with the Council of Europe. Indeed, its example shows that the agencies are not only responding to Brussels Directives, but are caught up in a more profound process of European integration whereby many of the activities and functions for which they are responsible are being organised on a pan-European scale.

How to relate Europe raises many dilemmas for the agencies. Do you want to deal, on your own, directly with Brussels? Are you formally allowed to do so? Do you have the resources and the power to be effective without other organisations? If you decide to act in collaboration with others, how do you choose? One way forward would be to join forces with those actively pursuing a similar function—agenda-setting for example. But how much agreement would there be? Another grouping would be by type of organisation—the National Parks with Europe, for

example, or by interests, or by nationality. All those targetting the same organisation in Brussels—an EC Directorate, or the Council of Europe—could join forces. Collaboration could be at many levels—from one organisation having statutory powers to represent another, to an informal phone call between colleagues.

In practice, most of the agencies focus their attention on the European Commission, but on nine different Directorates, although DGVI (agriculture) and DGXI (environment) are clearly the most popular. A whole range of intermediate organisations are used for liaison, representation and information purposes—some, such as the Consultative Council of Local and Regional Authorities, where the common powers and remits of the members are important; and others where common nationality is the key—for example the Wales European Centre.

On the whole, the agency staff dealing with European issues are housed in the organisations' headquarters in the UK. A few natural groupings, such as the Tourist Boards, jointly employ or contract someone in Brussels. Most of the agencies use a range of means to maintain day to day links with Brussels, including intermediate organisations, European information agencies, and collectively sponsored contractors.

Does this complicated mosaic of information flows suggest that the agencies are not acting effectively in European matters? About half of the organisations claim that they are at the forefront in European debates in their area of interest, and that the present system of dealing with Europe is effective. Those more critical of their agency's performance suggest that resources are a constraint and report problems of information flows—either the timescales for the receipt of information, or of sifting communications for relevant information. Some are concerned by their agency's inability to represent their area of interest, either because of their limited remit, or, as in the case of sport, by the limited remit of the European Commission. But when volunteering information on the organisations most effective in European matters, the agencies do not mention themselves, or each other, suggesting predominantly voluntary groups, with the RSPB receiving the most votes.

Hilary Talbot
Research Manager
Centre for Rural Economy
Newcastle University

The Centre for Rural Economy is currently undertaking a major investigation of the Europeanisation of the British environmental sector.

Good Practice Guide for Coastal Zone Management

The National Coasts and Estuaries Advisory Group (NCEAG) has recently published a Good Practice Guide for Coastal Zone Management. The Guide draws on current projects and experience in the local authority sector and has been prepared by NCEAG on behalf of its joint sponsors—the ACC, ADC and AMA. It seeks to focus attention on the many and varied issues which affect our coastlines and estuaries, the manner in which such issues are currently being addressed by legislators, and in particular the way in which such issues are being tackled by local authorities throughout the UK.

The aim is to disseminate knowledge about the coastal zone and to publicise good practice. The first edition concentrates on the achievements of local authorities in England and Wales, whilst recognising the contributions being made by authorities in Scotland and Northern Ireland and in the wider European context. The latter will be considered in future editions.

Case studies in the guide cover regional strategic planning guidance, countywide coastal strategies and a range of coastal and estuarine planning and management proposals. At a time when concern for the conservation of our coastal heritage is at last receiving recognition and encouraging the positive action which is required, the case studies provide an opportunity to share experience and to assist in the wider debate on the further improvement of practice and legislation for UK coastal zone planning and management.

The Guide can be obtained from:
NCEAG, Coastal Good Practice Guide,
c/o Countryside and Heritage Division,
County Engineering and Planning Department,
Devon County Council, Luscombe House,
Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QW
Price £11.50 (inc. P & P)

Water Skiing and the Environment

A sixth of water-skiing sites in the UK may be under threat of closure, even though the sport is growing in popularity according to the recently published "Water-skiing and the Environment", the first world-wide review of water-skiing's effects on the environment. The Study, carried out by the UK Centre for Economic and Environmental Development (UK CEED), draws on original research from as far apart as Europe and Australia, but all the research reviewed has relevance to the UK situation.

The Report states that "it is forecast that water-skiing will continue to grow in popularity throughout the next decade. Such growth is likely to increase the potential for conflict with conservation interests at both existing and new sites." The British Water Ski Federation estimates that about 200,000 people regularly water ski and that 36 of the 174 sites currently used for water-skiing are under threat, mainly because of environmental concerns.

Four main areas of contention were investigated by the Report—noise, pollution, wildlife disturbance and the effect on the water bodies themselves. The Report fills an information vacuum, helping to bring conflicting interests toward a common understanding—"many water-skiers believe that a large proportion of the claims about the negative impact of skiing activity on the environment have been based on emotive and subjective appraisals. Conversely, conservation interests consider that water-skiers have made claims about the impact of water skiing activity which have not been supported by technical, accurate evidence" the Report says.

Complete copies of the Report, priced £20.00, can be obtained from the Sports Council's Information Unit, 16 Upper Woburn Place, London, WC1H 0QP.

Planning Obligations for Sport and Recreation

This report will be essential reading for local authorities, developers and other organisations involved in developing community level sports and recreational facilities. The report which draws on new legislation and guidance from Government, explains the ground rules which apply to the use of planning obligations (formerly known as planning gain or planning agreements). In addition, the report describes some 19 case study examples of actual planning obligations made to provide sport and recreational facilities. The report then goes on to set out guidelines on the level of sport and recreational facilities appropriate to different size new housing developments and, finally, describes a

step-by-step approach on how to develop this work and what needs to be done. In effect, this final chapter is a guide to negotiation and action.

This report, priced at £25.00, is available from:

The Publications and Despatch Dept.
The Sports Council
16 Upper Woburn Place
London
WC1H 0QP

The Framework for Access

People remain intensely interested in access—see the last CRN News, articles about access studies in Northern Ireland and the Scottish access review as well as the recent Byways and Bridleways Trust seminar held on 7 April in London.

Britain is fortunate in its natural and cultural heritage, in its countryside, its scenery, coastline, mountains and moorland, farmland and woodland. The opportunities for those mobile enough to take them up are astounding. However, many people living in our towns and cities do not have these opportunities.

What limits these opportunities? Is it the lack of transport, the lack of time, the lack of money or the lack of information? Recent argument suggests that the legislative framework is the major constraint on the opportunities.

Current debate often focuses on the countryside away from towns, in remote and beautiful places and in the uplands. Here problems of access become more sharply focused—the impacts are more visible and the effects sometimes more pronounced. Good forestry and techniques developed by foresters, as set out in Forestry Authority guidelines, can often help to resolve problems in such

locations. Although timescales associated with forestry are longer than many are used to, some problems can be solved quickly.

Many of the real challenges occur in and around our towns and cities, where most people live. It is here that:

- industrial development and intense agriculture have removed many of the pockets of countryside previously available;
- opportunities for access to real countryside are scarce;
- the quality of available countryside is often poor; and
- the impacts of recreation on the countryside around towns is high.

Planting more urban woodland and community woodlands close to town and providing the links between them offers enormous scope. The Woodland Grant Scheme, Community Woodland Supplement and Better Land Supplement provide the incentives to encourage planting in these areas. Woodland has many characteristics which render it attractive for recreation:

- *Variety*
Forests and woodlands are more than just collections of trees—they include the streams, rivers and lakes,

the plants and rocks, the leaves, the wildlife and much more besides.

- *Dynamism and Flexibility*

Forests are dynamic and flexible, providing a living, adjustable framework of spaces.

- *Robustness*

Forests are usually the more robust form of land cover, able to absorb the sight and sound of people like no other habitat. It is usually possible to design in a network of routes from the start which will provide the basis for access and recreation.

- *Quickly Established*

People often think that establishing a forest takes a very long time. In fact trees grow rather more quickly than people. For many species and in many areas they have a longer lifespan than people. The forest community continues to develop and becomes richer as the years go by. If a rapid effect is required, foresters can plant all sorts of shrubs, brambles and herbs as well so that within five years or so a framework is established.

There are six opportunities for CRN News readers to provide more access, countryside recreation and enjoyment by encouraging forest recreation:

- Work with Forest Enterprise to increase the accessibility of the national forest and woodland—providing the right information for the right the right people, improving car parking, encouraging public transport and options for those without cars, improving the quality of walks, trails and facilities on offer, involving others in providing services to encourage more activity.
- Work with the Forestry Authority to provide the right blend of incentives, training and advice to encourage more owners to open up their woods and manage them with recreation in mind. Many private woodland owners



Woodland has many characteristics which render it attractive for recreation

already welcome visitors. One purpose of the Forestry Authority Special Management Grants under the Woodland Grant Scheme is to support the management of the woodland for recreation. Other agencies are urged to support this initiative by grant-aiding other related facilities or services which will add to the recreation potential.

- Work with the governing bodies of sports and other responsible organisations to encourage courtesy and care amongst those enjoying the outdoors.
- Support local authorities and Forestry Authority in working to create more woodlands close to where people live and in preparing community woodland plans.
- Encourage co-operation amongst providers to enable more people to visit, by encouraging simple information systems. This helps people to be aware of the opportunities available to them. This information takes many forms: orientation maps or boards at sites, networking with adjacent sites, regional gazetteers or forests open to visitors, database or other annual publication of opportunities to learn about the forest environment.
- Increase the level of understanding between the interested parties in their respective fields. Encourage joint ventures. Increase understanding amongst all ages by encouraging the return of a woodland ethic.

Taking up these opportunities requires effort, money and time. The focus is often on money. We believe there are some simple ways in which money can be raised from visitors for services they require. We have outlined these in our Forest Recreation Guidelines. Not always is enough money available; if there is less money available then we must allocate more effort, more imagination or more time. Increasingly though, there are indications that many share a common interest in enabling more enjoyment for more people from more countryside. This enjoyment rests on access. Access is easier to provide in woodlands than in almost any other habitat. It is interesting to consider the situation in other countries of Europe. For the most part, where there is more access there is more woodland. It seems that other cultures too find it easier to provide access in woodlands.

More woodlands mean more access. More access means more enjoyment and understanding. More woodlands means more enjoyment and understanding. We can all play our part to promote more woodland through direct action, by working with one of the relevant organisations and by lending our support to one of the voluntary organisations. All can spread information about accessible woodland. Are you prepared to share your greatest secrets with a friend? Tell them where your favourite woodland is, but only if they agree to tell you one in exchange.

*Richard Broadhurst
Senior Recreation Officer
Forestry Authority, Edinburgh*

Access to Woodlands

The freedom to roam exists in much of the national Forestry Commission woodland, where a welcome is extended to visitors on foot. The national woodlands account for 40% of our woodlands throughout Britain, rather more in Scotland and Wales and less in England. The remainder belongs to a range of organisations—the National Trust and other voluntary organisations, the water companies, local authorities, National Parks, companies and private individuals. Of the woodlands closer to where people live much is in private ownership. This represents an enormous resource.

There are two ways to encourage people to visit and enjoy woodlands. The first is to provide a welcome. The second is to let people know that you are providing a welcome. In April, the Forestry Trust for Conservation and Education published the pilot version of "Woodlands to Visit in England and Wales". This is the sort of project which is so sensible you wonder why it has not been done before. The Trust believes that by encouraging visitors, more people will come to understand the range of benefits which good woodland management can bring. Hopes are high that this book will do for woodlands what that bestseller "Gardens of England and Wales" produced by the National Gardens Scheme, does for gardens.

Working to tight timescales, the Trust has produced a



Freedom to roam....

very useful little book which lists some 130 woods where a welcome is assured. The book includes maps to make it easy for people to plan their visits. Some are open throughout the year, others are only open on specific times.

To accompany the book the Trust has arranged a series of Open Days through the year to encourage visitors to enjoy these woodlands in each of the seasons. The remaining dates this year are: 4 July, 3 October and 5 December

For this pilot version attention has focused principally on four counties: Devon, Berkshire, Gwent and West Yorkshire. The coverage is therefore biased toward these areas. There are though some notable exceptions: Royal Woods in Norfolk and Cornwall amongst them. All sorts of woodlands have been included—from those such as the 4 hectare Ireland Wood outside Leeds, belonging to the Woodland Trust to extensive woodlands and forests of thousands of hectares. The book hints at some of the interesting features and stories associated with the woods—anything from micaceous haematite mine workings to Mendelssohn! The kinds of tree, the wildlife you might expect, the archaeology and history of the woods are amongst the things about which the owners have written. Some woods are free to visit, for others there is a charge which is donated to charity. It is good to see some winners of the Forestry Authority Centre for Excellence Awards included which previously have been closed to the public.

Work is already underway preparing for the 1994 edition, for which the Trust intends including at least 500 entries. Woods from throughout England and Wales will be included, in the private and voluntary sectors. The forthcoming 1994 edition is available at a much reduced price for advance orders.

To order your copy of "Woodlands to Visit in England and Wales" which costs just £2.00 & 50p P&P, contact:

The Forestry Trust for Conservation and Education
The Old Estate Office
Englefield Road
Theale
Reading
RG7 5DX
or telephone: 0734 323523

The Countryside Commission, the Countryside Council for Wales and the Forestry Authority are supporting the project with the full expectation that it will become self-financing by November 1995.

Richard Broadhurst
Senior Recreation Officer
Forestry Authority

Tourism 2000: The Role of Customer Care

This year the CRN Conference is set to examine the issues surrounding "Customer Care in the Countryside". Customer care is of fundamental concern to the Wales Tourist Board and as such is an integral element of our draft strategy—Tourism 2000: A Strategy for Wales—which is due to be published in May 1993. A series of consultative papers was prepared in advance and deal in depth with some of the key themes and issues which the tourism industry in Wales needs to address in the run up to the millennium. Customer care forms the substance of consultative paper No. 8 but is influential in others, particularly No. 9 which deals with training in the tourism industry.

The paper begins by discussing the concept of customer care. It presents a case for considering customer care activity as a tourism product in its own right rather than as a by-product or adjunct of any particular business. Quality of product and service delivery are identified as critical factors in persuading people to buy and continue buying particular tourism products. Competing on quality means not only producing the right physical product but also delivering consistently good service, promptly, courteously and enthusiastically. Attention is drawn to the fact that quality of service can frequently compensate for possible shortfalls in actual physical facilities. The importance of the Welcome or 'Croeso' extended to customers should never be underestimated. Research indicates that over two thirds of customers may be lost to a service provider because they have received poor or indifferent service.

The report recognises that consumer expectations are not static but will change over time. Today's luxuries could well be tomorrow's standards. The tourism industry must appreciate this fact and be prepared to modify its customer care product if it is to successfully keep pace with changing demands and attitudes. An analysis of consumer reaction to holiday trips to Wales over the past five years suggests that there is an increasing tendency for consumers to expect higher levels of customer care and service.

Recent attempts by the Wales Tourist Board to address the problem of delivering good customer care are discussed in some depth. The Board has developed a number of accreditation schemes for accommodation, attraction and activity based tourism products which are designed to benefit both the customer and operator. Customer care is not restricted to the tourism operator, however. Visitor impressions are coloured by the reception they receive from everyone in the community, not just those directly involved in tourism. To tackle the welcome given by Wales in a comprehensive way, the Board has become the first in Europe to launch a 'Welcome Host' initiative based

continued on page 20

Customer Care

on the very successful Canadian 'Superhost' model. Take up of the initiative has been excellent with more than 6,000 people trained throughout Wales in just over a year.

The paper concludes by raising a number of issues which merit further consideration and debate. Some of the issues raised include how best to develop and ensure: quality standards in the industry, effective complaints mechanisms, satisfactory accommodation standards and the future role of the Wales Tourist Board when delivering the care the customer wants.

For further information on this or any papers in the series, please contact:

Annette Pritchard
Senior Research Officer
Wales Tourist Board
Brunel House
Cardiff
CF2 1UY

Customer Care in the Countryside

29th September to 1st October 1993

University of Nottingham

In recent years customer service and quality management have become important issues for both the manufacturing and service sectors. As customers have become more knowledgeable, their expectations regarding products and services have increased. Managers recognise that improved quality and customer service lead to gains in competitive advantage, by providing a means for differentiating a company from its competitors. The public sector has been relatively slow in taking up some of these approaches. However, considerable impetus to do so has resulted from the introduction of the Citizen's Charter and performance measurement.

Customer care is often seen as being a simple public relations exercise, whereby staff are encouraged to "be nice" to customers. Increasingly though, it is being realised that the product provided and the management processes and procedures used to deliver the product are key components of providing a service to customers. Therefore quality management has implications for all people and organisations providing

products or services for the public.

This conference is intended to look at the issues involved and how they relate to customer expectations in a countryside recreation context. The objectives of the Conference are to:

- review the characteristics of visitors to the countryside and their expectations;
- review the need for customer care and quality management programmes in a countryside context;
- consider how such programmes can be undertaken; and
- investigate how performance can be measured and monitored.

The Conference thus presents a unique opportunity to update your knowledge using the experience of leading practitioners in Customer Care from a variety of different areas.

A programme and booking form are enclosed with this Newsletter; contact Robert Wood on 0222 874970 for additional copies.

CRN Workshop

Recreation and the Natural Environment — 18 June 1991 Viking Hotel, North Street, York

A CRN workshop considering the relationship between recreation and the natural environment is to be held on the 18 June in York. Those involved in managing recreation in the countryside, including coastal areas, often have to act with little information on the effects of recreation on the natural environment or the best ways of managing these effects. With increasing debate about the impacts of recreation on the natural environment, there is a need to take stock and to use this knowledge in providing better management and in encouraging more awareness and understanding.

The main purpose of this workshop, therefore, is to consider the range and scale of the impacts and to consider how this knowledge can be used more effectively in recreation policy, planning and management. The workshop will combine overviews of the subject and more participative sessions.

Speakers will include: Carol Davenport (Director, GMCU), Ann Goodall (ECO Surveys), Roger Sidaway (Consultant) and Jeremy Worth (Countryside Commission). For a booking form please contact Robert Wood on 0222 874970.

Arboricultural Association Annual Conference

Trees—a Dinosaur in our Midst

7-9 September 1993

University College of Swansea
Residential Fee: £180 + VAT

Contact:

Jean Berry
Ampfield House
Ampfield
Nr Romsey
Hants. SO51 9PA
Tel: 0794 68717