Public Opinion of Forestry 2023: Wales

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The research agency of the

Forestry Commission

Forest Research is the research agency of the Forestry Commission and is the leading UK organisation engaged in forestry and tree related research.

The agency aims to support and enhance forestry and its role in sustainable development by providing innovative, high quality scientific research, technical support and consultancy services.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Surveys of public attitudes to forestry and forestry-related issues have been conducted by Forest Research (and previously the Forestry Commission) since 1995, generally on a biennial basis. These surveys are used to inform and monitor policy development.

This publication presents results from the Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2023: Wales, commissioned by Forest Research on behalf of the Welsh Government, on:

- benefits and disadvantages of woodlands;
- benefits and disadvantages of street trees;
- urban trees;
- woodland recreation;
- community engagement;
- awareness of logos;
- tree health;
- wood as a fuel; and
- accessibility.

Fieldwork for the survey was undertaken in March 2023 and a copy of the questionnaire used in this survey, giving complete wording of questions and the response options available, is provided in the Annex at the end of this report.

Surveys have also been run across the UK (to provide results for the UK and for England), and in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Separate reports, providing results from these surveys, are available on Forest Research's Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys homepage.

Results from the 2023 survey are published for the first time in this release and are shown alongside results from earlier surveys, where appropriate. Results for earlier years have not been revised from those previously released. Since 2021, surveys have been conducted online; prior to this, surveys were conducted face-to-face. For further details, see the Revisions section of the Annex.

As the data are obtained from a sample survey, there is a range of uncertainty (confidence interval) associated with any results produced. Any differences referred to in the text are statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level unless otherwise stated. For further details, see the Data Sources and Methodology and the Quality sections of the Annex. Unless otherwise specified, this report refers to woodlands and trees in both urban and rural settings. The Glossary in the Annex provides further information on terms used.

Key findings

In 2023:

- Most respondents (90%) believed the woodlands near them provide at least one benefit to the local community. One half (50%) believed that there was at least one woodland-related issue that disadvantaged the local community.
- Around four in five respondents (81%) believed that street trees provide at least one benefit for the local urban area. Around three in five respondents (58%) believed that there was at least one disadvantage.
- Almost three-quarters of respondents (72%) had visited forests or woodlands in the last 12 months. Around one half of respondents (49%) reported no change in the amount of time spent visiting forests or woodlands in the last 12 months.
- Almost all respondents (95%) who had visited forests or woodlands in the last 12 months agreed they would visit again and 92% would recommend the woodland/forest to a friend or relative.
- Almost one half of respondents (45%) who had visited woodland had gathered products from forests or woodlands in the last 12 months.
- Almost two-thirds of respondents (65%) said there was a woodland or forest they could get to easily without using a car or other transport.
- Thirteen percent of respondents had been consulted about plans for creating, managing or using woodlands in their area and over one half (54%) would like to be consulted in future.
- One in five respondents (20%) indicated that they were aware of plans for a new National Forest for Wales.

- Almost two-thirds of respondents (62%) recognised the FSC logo on wood products.
- On tree health, 75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that "action should be taken by authorities and woodland managers to protect trees from damaging pests and diseases".
- Twenty-nine percent (29%) of respondents use wood as a fuel, most commonly in the form of wood logs.
- Thirty-nine percent (39%) of respondents reported having a long-term physical or mental health condition or illness. Of these, almost one half (48%) said that it affected their use of woodlands, forests or other green spaces.

Benefits and disadvantages of woodlands

The survey asked respondents two questions about the benefits and disadvantages of nearby woodlands (urban and/or rural) for the local community.

Benefits of woodlands

Most respondents to the 2023 survey (90%) believed the woodlands near them provide at least one benefit for the local community (Table 1).

As in previous years, the most commonly selected benefit in 2023 was “they provide places for wildlife to live” (65%). “They improve the landscape” (58%), “they provide places for recreation” (57%) and “they provide places for relaxation and stress relief” (57%) were also selected as benefits by the majority of respondents.

However, support for most woodland benefits fell significantly when compared with 2021. For example, “they help to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere helping to reduce the impact of climate change” fell by 26 percentage points from 2021 to 2023; while “they provide places for wildlife to live”, “they improve the landscape”, and “they provide places for recreation” each fell by 20 percentage points over the same period (Table 1). Some of these changes are a result of particularly high levels of support for benefits in the 2021 survey, with support in 2023 closer to the levels in earlier years.

Table 1: Proportion of respondents who identified benefits that woodlands provide for the local community, Wales, 2013 to 2023

Benefit	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
They provide places for wildlife to live	62	70	77	83	85	65
They improve the landscape	55	56	63	71	78	58
They provide places for recreation	58	61	68	67	77	57
They provide places for relaxation and stress relief	46	49	57	63	78	57
They are accessible to all in the community	38	35	42	48	64	49
They help to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere	36	45	54	59	74	48
They help reduce air/noise pollution	29	28	43	52	66	43
They can be used by local schools and other educational groups	39	41	47	56	62	43
They are an important resource	[x]	28	44	47	58	42
They help soak up water in rainy weather	[x]	27	39	48	65	39
They help attract visitors to the area	40	37	49	52	48	35
They provide timber and other wood products	[x]	[x]	25	26	24	17
They support the local economy	19	20	25	29	24	17
They give people in the community the opportunity to work together	18	18	24	32	27	16
They provide firewood	21	14	20	22	18	14
Other	2	1	0	[low]	1	[low]
At least one benefit identified	94	94	96	97	92	90

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2013 (1,012), 2015 (1,022), 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (1,014), 2023 (1,047).
2. Respondents could select more than one benefit.
3. There have been some changes to the wording of the question and the response options over time.
4. [x]: data not available (option not included in that year's survey).
5. [low]: less than 0.5%.

Disadvantages of woodlands

In 2023, one half of respondents (50%) believed that there was at least one woodland-related issue that disadvantaged the local community (Table 2).

The most commonly identified disadvantages in 2023 were that “the woodlands near us are used for fly tipping” (selected by 16% of respondents in 2023) and “we can’t control what happens in our local woodlands” (15%).

Table 2: Proportion of respondents who identified disadvantages of woodlands for the local community, Wales, 2013 to 2023

Disadvantage	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
The woodlands near us are used for fly tipping	[x]	[x]	22	26	23	16
We can't control what happens in our local woodlands	8	12	9	10	19	15
Woodlands near us provide a place for criminal activity to occur	12	12	15	15	11	10
The woodlands near us can't be easily accessed	1	3	3	2	13	9
The woodlands don't provide enough local jobs	7	6	6	6	10	7
It's difficult to get firewood and timber from our local woodlands	5	3	2	3	5	6
The woodlands near us aren't good for wildlife	1	1	1	1	7	5
Timber lorries make me feel unsafe walking/driving on the roads	3	8	7	6	2	5
The woodlands near us aren't nice places to visit	2	2	2	2	3	4
Timber lorries/visitors to woodlands make the roads busy	3	7	7	5	2	4
Managing woodlands pollutes the air/water/soil	1	2	1	1	2	3
Woodland operations and visitors create noise pollution	1	2	2	2	3	3
The woodlands near us get in the way of developments around the community	1	1	1	2	2	3

Disadvantage	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Woodland operations create carbon dioxide contributing to making climate change worse	1	2	2	2	3	2
The woodlands make our landscape worse	[low]	1	1	1	1	2
Other	3	3	0	2	3	2
At least one disadvantage identified	39	38	43	47	52	50

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents (2013 to 2019, 2023)/all respondents who have woodland nearby (2021). Weighted totals: 2013 (1,012), 2015 (1,022), 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (969), 2023 (1,047).
2. Respondents could select more than one disadvantage.
3. [x]: data not available (option not included in that year's survey).
4. [low]: less than 0.5%.

Benefits and disadvantages of street trees

Questions relating to the benefits and disadvantages of trees located in/along streets for the local urban area (town or city) have been asked since 2013.

Benefits of street trees

Around four in five respondents (81%) to the 2023 survey believed that street trees provide at least one benefit for the local urban area (Table 3).

As in previous years, the most commonly selected benefits were “they make the area look more attractive” (selected by 64% of respondents in 2023) and “they provide places for birds and wildlife to live” (48%).

Table 3: Proportion of respondents who identified benefits of street trees for the local urban area, Wales, 2013 to 2023

Benefit	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
They make the area look more attractive	62	71	73	72	70	64
They provide places for birds and wildlife to live	43	50	61	62	64	48
They help people to feel more relaxed and calm	25	30	42	44	55	36
They remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere reducing the impact of climate change	28	31	44	53	60	36
They provide health benefits	19	18	34	34	40	33
They help reduce air and noise pollution	23	20	32	42	48	31
They offer a connection with the seasons and nature	[x]	[x]	37	40	55	30
Their shade helps to cool the area during summer	24	30	36	42	49	28
They help to soak up water in rainy weather	21	24	34	39	47	26
They enhance the appeal and performance of shopping areas in the town/city	22	29	29	35	54	24
It is just a benefit knowing that they are there	19	15	25	25	41	19
They create pleasant places to meet and mix with people	20	27	28	37	43	18
They act as natural classrooms	[x]	[x]	22	28	29	15

Benefit	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
They produce useful by-products	7	8	13	19	22	11
They increase property values and inward investment into the community	13	12	20	19	22	9
They help to improve road safety	6	6	8	12	11	4
Other	[low]	1	0	[low]	1	0
At least one benefit identified	88	91	92	93	82	81

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2013 (1,012), 2015 (1,022), 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (1,014), 2023 (1,047).
2. Respondents could select more than one benefit.
3. [x]: data not available (option not included in that year's survey).
4. [low]: less than 0.5%.

Disadvantages of street trees

In 2023, 58% of survey respondents selected at least one disadvantage of street trees from the response options provided (Table 4).

The most commonly selected disadvantages in 2023 were "Falling leaves and branches make a mess and are a health and safety hazard" (19%) and "The trees are not properly looked after" (15%).

Table 4: Proportion of respondents who identified disadvantages of street trees for the local urban area, Wales, 2013 to 2023

Disadvantage	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Falling leaves and branches make a mess and are a health and safety hazard	27	34	33	35	23	19
The trees are not properly looked after	[x]	11	15	15	24	15
We can't control what happens to the trees	7	5	8	10	17	14
Carrying out work to the trees causes disruption and mess	6	6	7	9	8	9
The trees in the urban areas near us aren't good for wildlife	1	2	2	1	7	8
Street trees reduce light to nearby houses and buildings	13	10	11	15	12	8
Trees hide views	10	12	9	14	10	7
The trees get in the way of developments in or around the urban area	1	3	2	2	3	7
Trees in urban areas near us provide opportunities for criminal activity and vandalism	4	4	5	4	5	7
Street trees damage buildings and cause subsidence	17	18	18	26	13	6
The trees make the urban landscape worse	1	1	1	1	2	4
The trees make the roads less safe	[x]	9	8	7	6	3

Disadvantage	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Trees cause interference to TV reception and effectiveness of solar panels	7	6	5	9	6	3
Trees harbour pests	4	5	3	5	2	3
At least one disadvantage identified	56	58	56	65	60	58

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents (2013 to 2019, 2023)/all respondents who have street trees nearby (2021). Weighted totals: 2013 (1,012), 2015 (1,022), 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (894), 2023 (1,047).
2. Respondents could select more than one disadvantage.
3. Results for respondents who answered “other” are not presented.
4. [x]: data not available (option not included in that year’s survey).

Urban trees

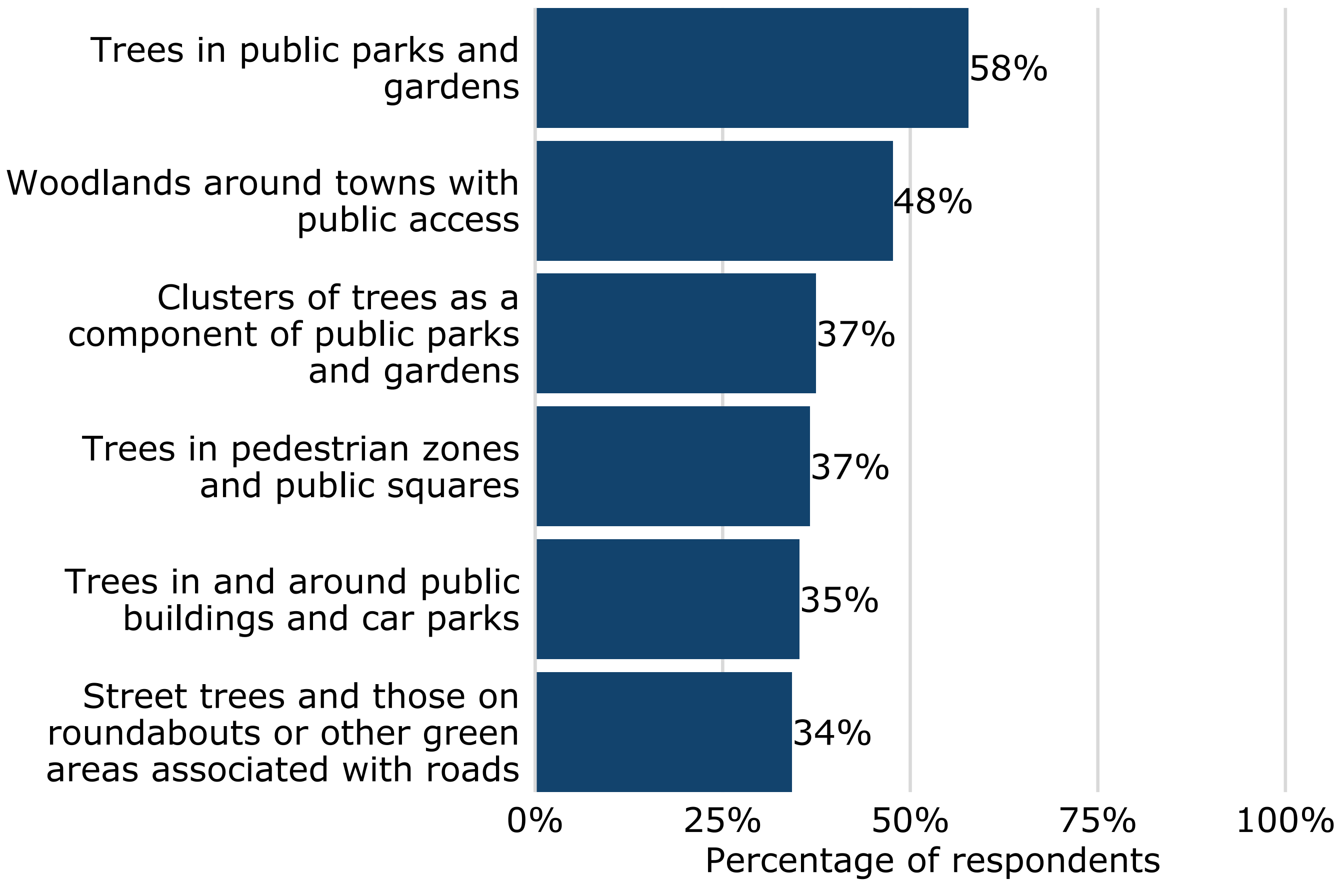
Questions relating to urban trees were introduced in 2017. The questions include street trees, but also have wider coverage that includes trees and woodlands in other urban areas.

Targeting the public resources

Respondents to the survey were first asked about priorities for targeting public resources for looking after urban trees and woods.

Around three fifths (58%) of respondents indicated that public funding should be allocated to "trees in public parks and gardens", and around one half of respondents indicated that "woodlands around town with public access" (48%) should be funded. All other statements received less than 50% support from respondents (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Proportion of respondents that support public funding for urban trees, Wales, 2023



Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted total: 1,047.

Support for urban trees

Respondents were asked if they would be prepared to support urban trees in various ways.

The proportion of respondents willing to take part in at least one activity to support urban trees was 75% in 2023 (Table 5). However, as with previous years, respondents were relatively more likely to be willing to undertake activities such as “participating in community planting programmes” (40%), “raising concerns with the Local Authority if you notice a problem with trees" (38%) and "planting and tending trees in your garden or communal outside area" (38%) than other activities. There was a statistically significant fall in the proportion of respondents saying they would accept higher council taxes to pay for community tree programs (12% in 2023, down from 21% in 2021).

Table 5: Proportion of respondents and their willingness to undertake activities to support urban trees, Wales, 2017 to 2023

Activity	2017	2019	2021	2023
Participating in community planting programmes	48	46	37	40
Raising concerns with the Local Authority if you notice a problem with trees	67	69	41	38
Planting and tending trees in your garden or communal outside area	60	62	41	38
Watering newly planted trees in public areas during periods of dry weather	49	50	31	32
Monitoring the health and condition of public trees	48	50	27	22
Accepting higher council taxes which will be used for community tree programmes	26	23	21	12

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents (2017 to 2019, 2023)/all respondents who have street trees nearby (2021). Weighted totals: 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (894), 2023 (1,047).
2. Respondents could select more than one statement.

Woodland recreation

The 2023 survey asked respondents several questions about their visits to woodland. This included whether the respondent had visited woodland, whether the amount of time spent visiting woodland had changed, type of woodland visited, the activities undertaken, if they foraged, reasons for choosing to visit, visitor satisfaction, management of the woodland visited, reasons for not visiting and access to woodland. These questions do not distinguish whether the woodlands visited were located in Wales or elsewhere.

Proportion visiting woodland

The proportion of respondents visiting forests or woodlands for walks, picnics or other recreation in the last 12 months was 72% in 2023. This represented a statistically significant increase from the level reported for the 2021 but a decrease from the level reported in 2019 (Table 6).

Table 6: Proportion of respondents who visited woodland in the last 12 months, Wales, 2015 to 2023

Year	Percentage of respondents who visited woodland
2015	64
2017	72
2019	77
2021	63
2023	72

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2015 (1,022), 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (1,014), 2023 (1,047).

Changes in the amount of time spent visiting woodland

For the first time in 2021, respondents were asked if the amount of time spent visiting woodland had changed in the last 12 months, compared to the previous year. The question was repeated in the 2023 survey.

Around one half of respondents (49%) to the 2023 survey reported no change in the amount of time spent visiting forests or woodlands in the last 12 months (Table 7). A further 31% of respondents reported an increase in time spent visiting woodland while 17% reported a decrease in time spent visiting woodland. Compared with 2021, significantly more respondents to the 2023 survey reported no change in the amount of time spent visiting woodlands while significantly fewer people reported the amount of time spend visiting woodlands had decreased.

Table 7: Proportion of respondents and change in the amount of time spent visiting woodland compared with the previous year, Wales, 2021 to 2023

Change	2021	2023
Increased a lot	13	10
Increased a little	15	21
No change	32	49
Decreased a little	10	10
Decreased a lot	24	7
Don’t know	5	2

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2021 (1,014), 2023 (1,047).

Type of woodland visited

Respondents who had visited woodland in the last 12 months were asked about the type of woodland on their most recent visit.

Of the respondents to the 2023 survey who had visited woodland or forests in the last 12 months, 54% had visited woodlands in the countryside on their most recent visit and 42% had visited woodlands in and around towns (Table 8).

Table 8: Proportion of respondents and the type of woodland most recently visited, Wales, 2015 to 2023

Type of woodland	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Woodlands in the countryside	64	66	51	55	54
Woodlands in and around towns	36	34	48	41	42
Other	[x]	[x]	[x]	3	1
Don’t know/can’t recall	[x]	[x]	[x]	2	2

Footnote:

1. Results are based on respondents who had visited woodlands. Weighted totals: 2015 (654), 2017 (746), 2019 (767), 2021 (635), 2023 (753).
2. [x]: data not available (option not included in that year’s survey).

Woodland activities

Over one half of respondents in the 2023 survey who had visited woodland or forests in the last 12 months did so to walk recreationally (72%). Dog walking was undertaken by 43% of visitors (Table 9).

Table 9: Proportion of respondents and activities undertaken in woodlands in the last 12 months, Wales, 2019 to 2023

Activity	2019	2021	2023
Walking (without a dog)	89	74	72
Dog-walking	43	42	43
Wildlife watching	28	29	23
Picnicking	32	17	23
Children's playground	25	9	19
Sightseeing/visitor attractions	27	16	18
Running	13	12	11
Woodland crafts	5	4	5
Off-road cycling/mountain biking	12	8	4
Fishing	4	2	2
Swimming outdoors	4	2	2
Horse riding	3	1	2
Off-road driving/motorcycling	1	[low]	2
Hunting	1	1	1
Climbing	5	4	1
Other	2	3	2
Don't know/can't recall	[low]	1	[low]

Footnote:

1. Results are based on respondents who had visited woodlands. Weighted totals: 2019 (767), 2021 (635), 2023 (753).
2. Respondents could select more than one activity.
3. [x]: data not available (option not included in that year's survey).

4. [low]: less than 0.5%.

Foraging in woodland

Respondents who had visited woodland or forests in the last 12 months were asked if they had gathered/foraged any products from the forest during their visits. Almost one half of respondents (45%) who had visited woodland in the last 12 months had gathered products from forests or woodlands. The most commonly gathered woodland products were decorative, floral and craft products (23%) and items for eating and drinking (18%).

Table 10: Proportion of respondents who gathered woodland products in the last 12 months, Wales, 2019 to 2023

Product	2019	2021	2023
Decorative, floral and craft products (such as foliage, branches, stems, moss, lichen and weld)	23	18	23
Items for eating or drinking (such as berries, fungi, nuts, flowers and sap)	22	16	18
Items for seasonal, cultural and religious use (such as holly, ivy and hazel wands)	15	13	14
Medicinal and dietary supplements (such as St. John's wort, meadowsweet and hawthorn)	2	2	8
Don't know	[low]	4	3
None of these	59	67	52

Footnote:

1. Results are based on respondents who had visited woodlands. Weighted totals: 2019 (767), 2021 (635), 2023 (753).
2. Respondents could select more than one product.
3. [low]: less than 0.5%.

Reasons for choosing to visit woodlands

Respondents to the 2023 survey who had visited woodlands were asked what they thought was important to them in choosing to visit the woodland they had been to most recently.

The factors most commonly identified were “Convenient distance” from respondent’s house (71%), “Peaceful and quiet” (60%), “Attractive scenery” (50%) and “Free to visit” (i.e., no entrance charge) (48%) (Table 11).

Table 11: Proportion of respondents and their reasons for choosing to visit woodlands, Wales, 2015 to 2023

Reason	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Convenient distance	55	59	64	62	71
Peaceful and quiet	52	60	62	68	60
Attractive scenery	51	64	59	60	50
Free to visit	36	38	41	68	48
Knowing that visitors are welcome there	28	37	35	47	44
A good place to unwind/de-stress	41	49	51	64	41
Safe environment	36	45	43	47	41
The wildlife	44	57	49	45	40
Good for exercise	46	53	53	60	36
Clear and accessible tracks and paths	34	42	39	52	35
Good facilities	[x]	[x]	27	17	29
Dogs are welcome	43	44	47	37	28
Clear signage	19	20	17	19	15
Enough space to maintain social distancing	[x]	[x]	[x]	47	12
Knowing I can access gates and stiles with my group	22	23	21	18	12
A variety of activities	11	18	14	19	11
Opportunities to collect woodland produce	4	8	7	13	10
Opportunities for learning	[x]	[x]	15	11	8
Don’t know	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	1
Other	1	0	1	3	[low]

Footnote:

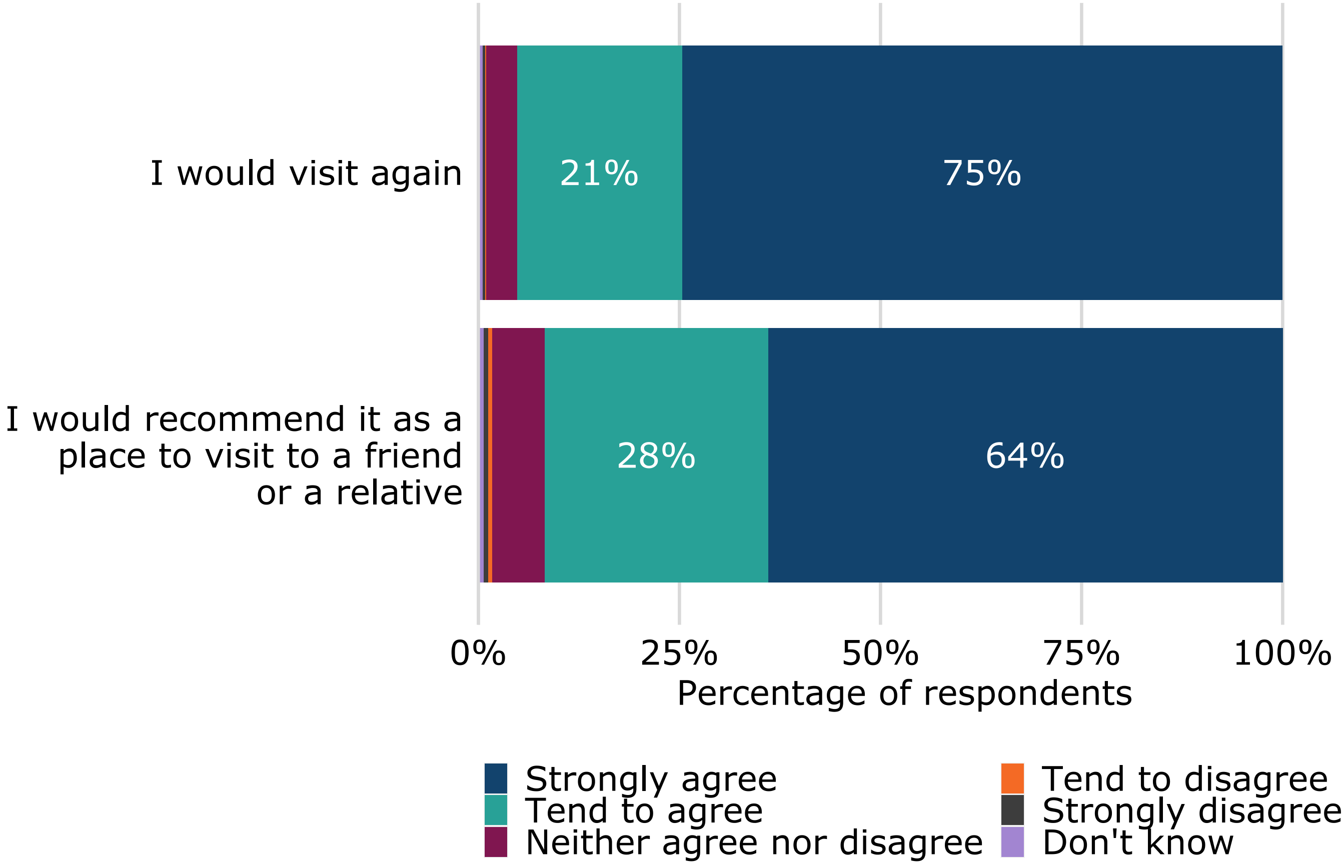
1. Results are based on respondents who had visited woodlands. Weighted totals: 2015 (654), 2017 (746), 2019 (767), 2021 (635), 2023 (753).
2. Respondents could select more than one reason.
3. [x]: data not available (option not included in that year's survey).
4. [low]: less than 0.5%.
5. Full wording of each response option is available in the questionnaire, provided in the Annex.

Satisfaction with woodland visited

Respondents who had visited woodland or forests in the last 12 months were asked for their views on the woodland or forest that they had visited most recently.

The vast majority of respondents (95%) agreed (giving a response of "agree" or "strongly agree") that they would visit woodland again and 92% agreed that they would recommend the woodland/forest to a friend or relative (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Proportion of respondents and level of satisfaction with most recently visited woodland, Wales, 2023



Footnote:

1. Results are based on respondents who had visited woodlands. Weighted totals: 753.

Management of woodlands visited

Respondents to the 2023 survey who had visited woodlands were asked to state who managed the woodland that they had visited most recently. As the survey did not ask about the location of woodlands visited, it is not clear whether these woodlands were in Wales.

Natural Resources Wales was reported as the manager of the woodland most recently visited by 34% of respondents. This proportion has increased significantly from the 2021 survey, where 19% of respondents reported that the woodland was managed by Natural Resources Wales. As in previous surveys, many respondents did not know who managed the woodland (Table 12).

Table 12: Proportion of respondents and management of their most recently visited woodland, Wales, 2015 to 2023

Manager	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Natural Resources Wales	4	5	4	19	34
National Trust	9	12	10	7	14
Woodland Trust	7	8	9	6	9
Community managed woodland	5	5	4	9	4
Forestry England	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	3
Forestry and Land Scotland	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	3
Forestry Commission	21	12	12	11	[x]
Other	18	17	15	9	4
None of the above	9	8	6	[x]	[x]
Don't know	26	31	40	40	29

Footnote:

1. Results are based on respondents who had visited woodlands. Weighted totals: 2015 (654), 2017 (746), 2019 (767), 2021 (635), 2023 (753).
2. [x]: data not available (option not included in that year's survey).

Reasons for not visiting woodlands

Respondents who had not visited woodland in the last 12 months were asked to state their main reasons for not doing so.

Almost one quarter of respondents (23%) indicated they did not visit due to a lack of interest in visiting (Table 13). A similar proportion cited personal mobility reasons (21%) and 18% stated that they can’t drive/do not have access to a car.

In 2021, one fifth of respondents (20%) said they did not visit due to concerns about catching coronavirus (COVID-19). In 2023, this fell significantly, with 3% reporting they did not visit due to concerns about catching Covid-19.

Table 13: Reasons for not visiting woodlands in the last 12 months, Wales, 2021 to 2023

Reason	2021	2023
Not interested in visiting	5	23
Personal mobility reasons	19	21
I can’t drive/I don’t have access to a car so visiting is difficult	12	18
The woods are too far away from my home	18	15
Lack of suitable public transport to the forest or woodland	6	13
I’m too busy/I don’t have enough time to go	5	11
I prefer other areas of the countryside	5	10
Lack of facilities	6	9
Lack of confidence	3	6
Lack of information about the woods/which woods to visit	4	6
I’m concerned that woods are not safe	4	5
Woodlands are badly maintained	1	5
Cost of visiting	2	5
I’m concerned about catching coronavirus	20	3
It’s too difficult to maintain social distancing at the woodland or forest	9	2
Other	27	4
Don’t know	13	14
None of the above	11	11

Footnote:

1. Results are based on respondents who had not visited woodlands. Weighted total: 2021 (341), 2023 (272).

2. Respondents could select more than one reason.
3. [x]: data not available (option not included in that year's survey).
4. Full wording of each response option is available in the questionnaire, provided in the Annex.

Access to woodlands

Almost two thirds of respondents (65%) to the 2023 survey said there was a woodland or forest they could get to easily without using a car or other transport (Table 14).

Table 14: Proportion of respondents who have access to woodland without the use of a car or other transport, Wales, 2005 to 2023

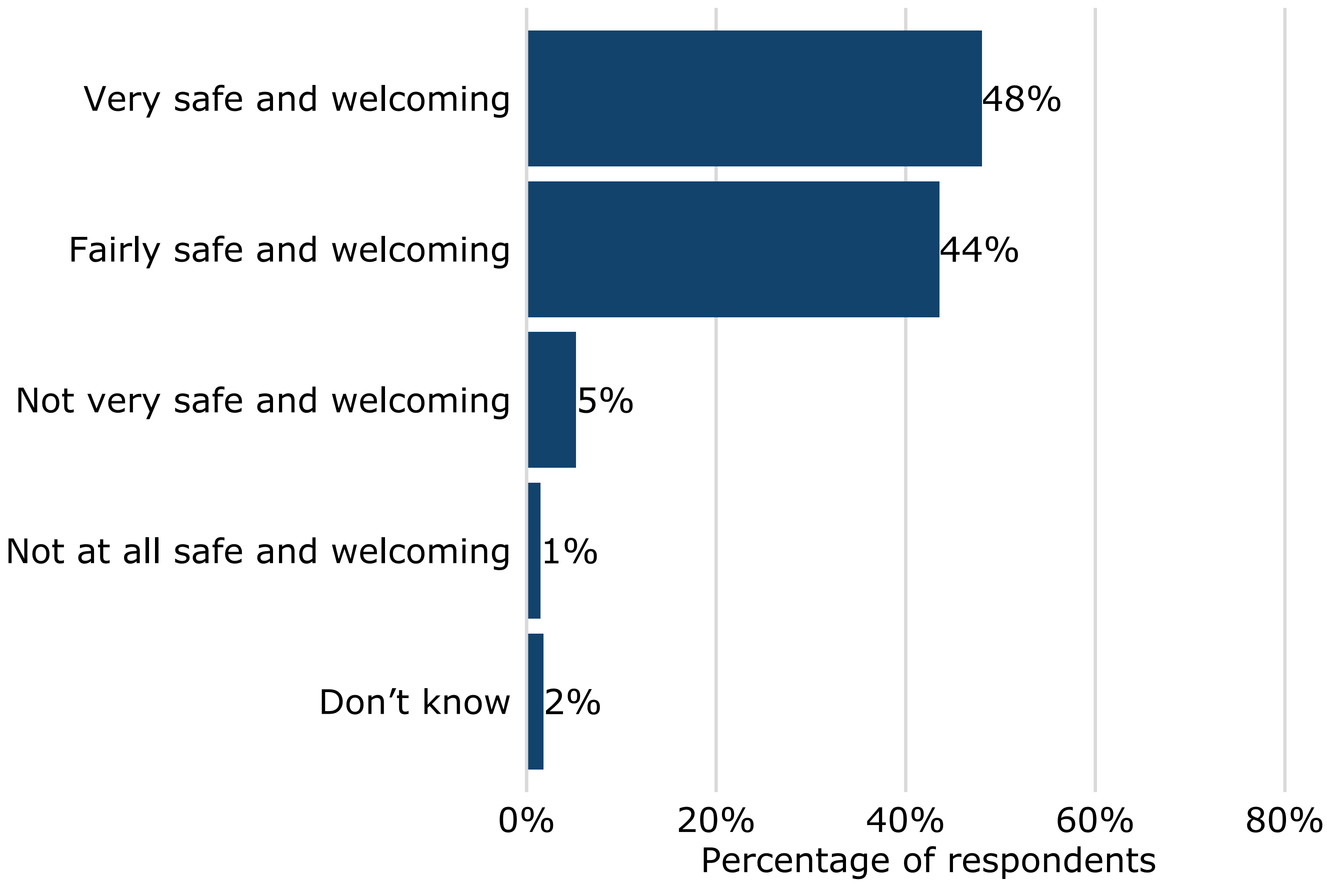
Year	Proportion of respondents with access to woodland without the use of a car or other transport
2005	59
2009	63
2011	60
2013	59
2015	64
2017	65
2019	73
2021	63
2023	65

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2005 (1,001), 2009 (1,002), 2011 (1,002), 2013 (1,012), 2015 (1,022), 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (1,014), 2023 (1,047).

Respondents who reported that they had access to woodlands without the use of a car or other transport were then asked to rate how safe and welcoming that woodland is. The vast majority (92%) of respondents gave a rating of “very safe and welcoming” or “fairly safe and welcoming” (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Proportion of respondents and feelings of safety in accessible woodland, Wales, 2023



Footnote:

1. Results are based on respondents who had access to a forest or woodland easily without using a car. Weighted totals: 682.

Community engagement

Respondents were asked a set of questions relating to how they engage with woodland and forest issues through public consultation, learning activities and volunteer groups.

Public consultation

In the 2023 survey, 13% of respondents reported having been consulted about plans for creating, managing or using woodlands in their area - a statistically significant increase on that reported in 2021 (4%) (Table 15). Just over one half of respondents (54%) indicated that they would like to be consulted in the future.

Table 15: Proportion of respondents who reported engaging in public consultation about plans for woodlands, Wales, 2013 to 2023

Statement	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Have you ever been consulted	6	5	5	4	4	13
Would you like to be consulted in future	28	37	39	44	51	54

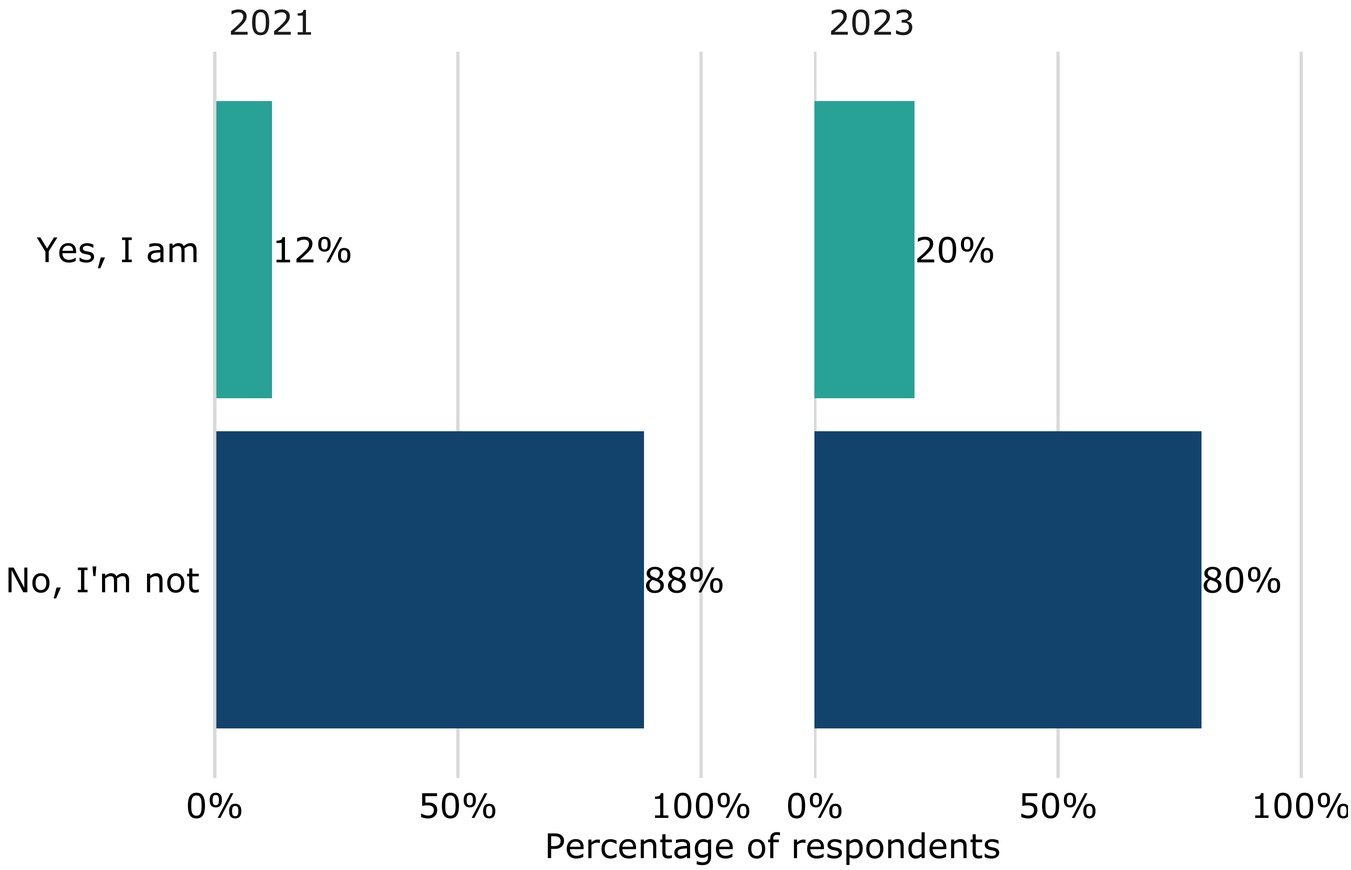
Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2013 (1,012), 2015 (1,022), 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (1,014), 2023 (1,047).

Awareness of plans for a National Forest in Wales

For the first time in the 2021 survey, respondents were asked if they were aware of plans to create a new National Forest in Wales. This question was repeated in the 2023 survey. In 2023, 20% of respondents indicated they were aware of the plans (Figure 4), a statistically significant increase from the 12% reported in 2021.

Figure 4: Proportion of respondents and awareness of plans for a National Forest, Wales, 2023



Footnote:

1. Results based on all respondents. Weighted total: 1,047.

Organised learning activities

Respondents were asked whether they or any member of their family had attended any organised learning activities or events associated with woodlands in the last 12 months (Table 16).

In 2023, around three in ten respondents (31%) said that they or a member of their family had attended at least one such event or activity. Fourteen percent of respondents or their family members attended school trips to learn about woodland

(Table 16). This represents a significant increase from the proportion reported in 2021 (5%), and is likely a result of the Covid-19 restrictions in place in 2021 resulting in a reduction to the number of organised learning activities available and the number of places on events during this time. A similar finding was also reporting for those who attended a guided walk or talk, or forest school (Table 16).

Table 16: Proportion of respondents who attended woodland learning activities in the last 12 months, Wales, 2013 to 2023

Activity	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
School trip	11	18	10	12	5	14
Guided walk or talk	5	7	4	5	3	11
Forest school	[x]	[x]	3	9	5	11
An organised tree planting event	4	4	1	1	4	7
Organised course or training event	3	4	1	3	3	6
Other	1	2	0	1	[low]	5
None of these	82	73	80	76	67	69
At least one	18	27	20	21	11	31

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2013 (1,012), 2015 (1,022), 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (1,014), 2023 (1,047).
2. Respondents could select more than one option.
3. [x]: data not available (option not included in that year's survey).
4. [low]: less than 0.5%.
5. Full wording of each response option is available in the questionnaire, provided in the Annex.

Conservation and volunteering

Respondents were asked if they had been involved in voluntary work in connection with woodlands in the last 12 months or if they were a member of a community group involved in conservation and/or management of local woodlands

Both the proportion of respondents involved in voluntary work and the proportion of respondents who are members of a community-based woodland group increase significantly in 2023. Overall, 16% of respondents to the 2023 survey said yes to one (or both) of these areas of involvement (Table 17). This is a statistically significant increase on the proportion reported in 2021 (6%).

Table 17: Proportion of respondents and involvement in voluntary work or community group, Wales, 2013 to 2023

Activity	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Involved in voluntary work	3	5	5	5	4	13
Member of a community-based woodland group	2	3	4	4	4	10
Either (or both) of the above	4	6	6	6	6	16

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2013 (1,012), 2015 (1,022), 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (1,014), 2023 (1,047).

Awareness of logos

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) and Grown in Britain (GiB) are schemes that certify woodlands as well as wood and wood products originating from sustainably managed woodland. Each scheme has a logo, which is displayed on certified products.

HETAS is the official body recognised by government to approve biomass and solid fuel heating appliances, fuels and services, including the registration of competent installers and servicing businesses. HETAS has a logo, which is displayed on approved products.

In the 2023 survey, respondents were asked if they had seen the FSC, PEFC and HETAS logos on wood products. For the first time, respondents were also asked if they had seen the GiB logo on wood products. Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents to the 2023 survey recognised the FSC logo, 23% has seen the Grown in Britain logo, 14% had seen the PEFC logo and 12% reported having seen the HETAS logo (Table 18).

Table 18: Proportion of respondents and awareness of logos on wood products, Wales, 2005 to 2023

Year	FSC	PEFC	HETAS	Grown in Britain
2005	25	12	[x]	[x]
2009	36	12	[x]	[x]
2011	47	15	[x]	[x]
2013	49	11	[x]	[x]
2015	52	10	6	[x]
2017	62	14	9	[x]
2019	55	15	11	[x]
2021	63	12	6	[x]
2023	62	14	12	23

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2005 (1,001), 2009 (1,002), 2011 (1,002), 2013 (1,012), 2015 (1,022), 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (1,014), 2023 (1,047).
2. Respondents could select more than one option.
3. [x]: data not available (option not included in that year's survey).

Tree health

Respondents were presented with a series of statements relating to tree health and asked to indicate their level of agreement (Table 19).

Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that:

- "Action should be taken by authorities and woodland managers to protect trees from damaging pests and diseases" (75% in 2023).

Conversely, few respondents agreed or strongly agreed that:

- "There is very little that anyone can do to prevent the spread of damaging pests and diseases" (28% in 2023).

Table 19: Proportion of respondents and support for tree health management actions, Wales, 2013 to 2023

Statement	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Action should be taken by authorities and woodland managers to protect trees from damaging pests and diseases	81	90	90	85	84	75
Everyone should take action when visiting woodlands to help prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases	66	69	69	69	65	64
I would be willing to look out for and report sightings of pests and diseases on trees, if appropriate information and advice was available to me on how to do this	63	68	63	71	63	63
I understand what is meant by the term biosecurity	26	28	26	37	40	36
There is very little that anyone can do to prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases	21	27	22	21	15	28

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2013 (1,012), 2015 (1,022), 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (1,014), 2023 (1,047).

Wood as a fuel

In the 2023 survey, all respondents were asked a series of questions relating to the use of wood as a fuel in their home, either on its own or with other fuels. Respondents were first asked about whether they used wood as a fuel in their home and, if so, the form of wood used (Table 20). Most respondents (71%) reported that they did not use wood for fuel (e.g., logs, waste wood, briquettes, pellets, chips). Of those that did, wood logs were the most commonly reported form used (20% of all respondents).

Table 20: Proportion of respondents who use of wood as a fuel in the home, Wales, 2015 to 2023

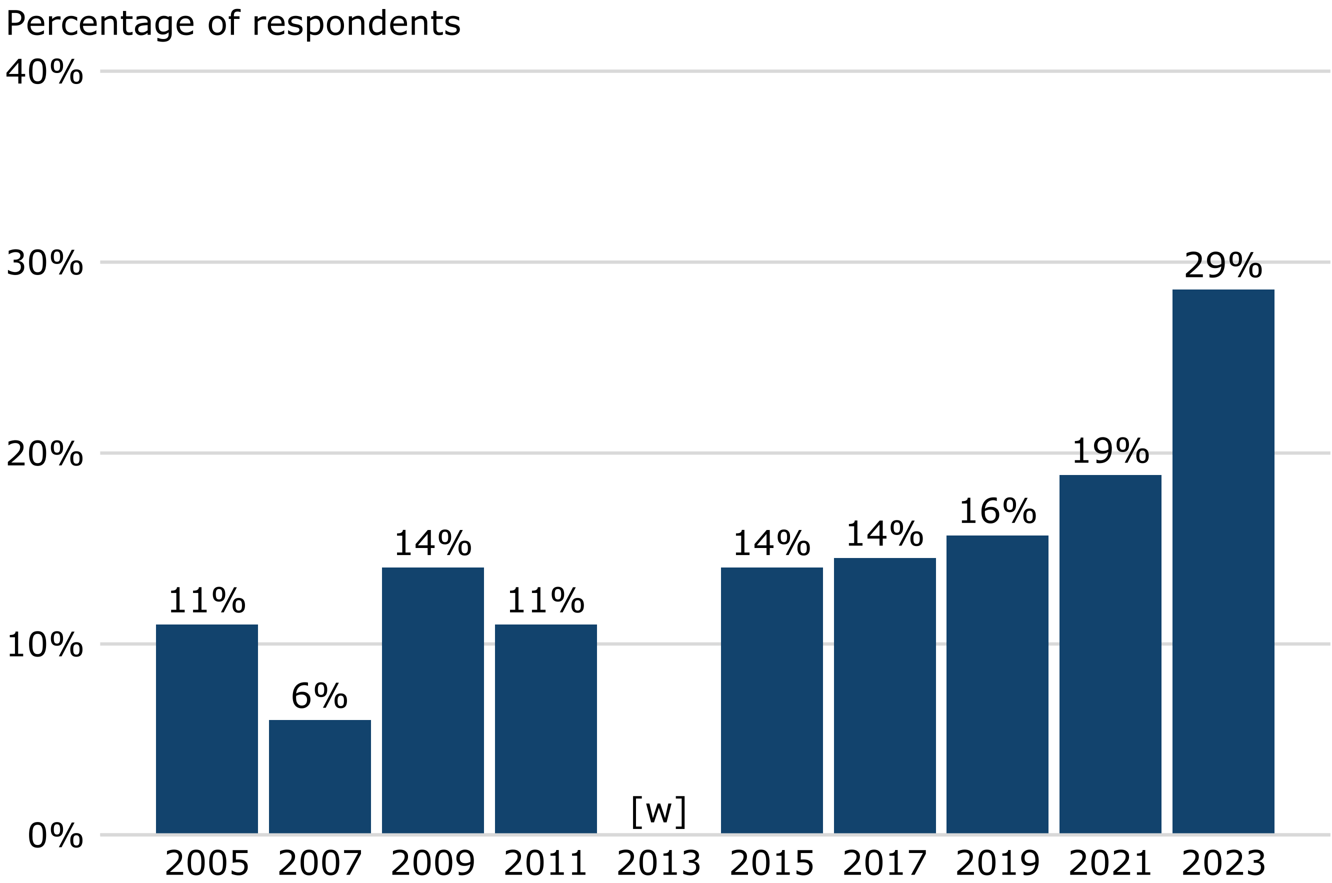
Type of woodfuel	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Wood logs	12	12	14	15	20
Waste wood	5	6	5	8	11
Foraged, gathered or found	4	5	4	6	6
Wood briquettes/heat logs	2	3	3	4	6
Wood pellets	1	1	1	2	6
Wood chips	1	[low]	1	2	5
Don’t know	0	1	2	2	1
None of these	86	85	82	81	71

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2015 (1,022), 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (1,014), 2023 (1,047).
2. [low]: less than 0.5%.
3. Respondents could select more than one form of wood used.

In the 2023 survey, 29% of respondents reported that they use wood as a fuel (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Proportion of respondents who use wood as a fuel in their home, Wales, 2005 to 2023

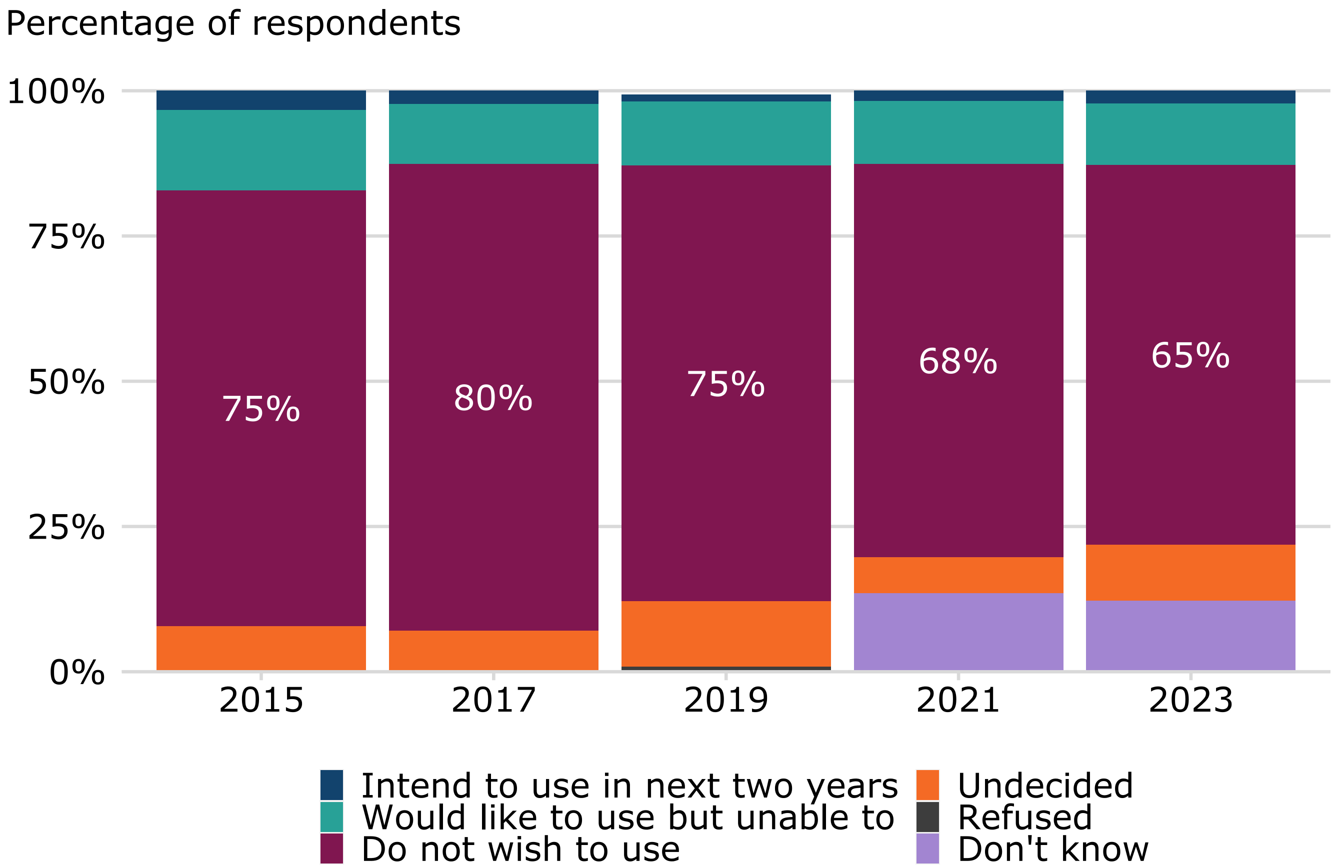


Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2015 (1,022), 2017 (1,035), 2019 (1,001), 2021 (1,014), 2023 (1,047).
2. [w]: questions on woodfuel were not included in the 2013 survey.

Respondents who said that they did not currently use wood as a fuel in their home were then asked whether they were likely to do so in the future. Around two thirds (65%) reported that they did not wish to use wood for fuel in the future and a further 11% said that they would like to use wood for fuel but were unable to do so (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Proportion of respondents and future use of woodfuel, Wales, 2015 to 2023



Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents who do not use woodfuel. Weighted totals: 2015 (881), 2017 (880), 2019 (824), 2021 (576), 2023 (499).

Respondents who currently use woodfuel, or who would like to do so in future, were asked about what attracted them to wood as a fuel (Table 21).

In 2023, 48% of respondents who use or would like to use woodfuel indicated they are attracted to wood as a fuel to better control their heating costs. 39% indicated they are attracted to woodfuel because it is cheaper than other fuels (Table 21).

Table 21: Proportion of respondents and attraction of using woodfuel, Wales, 2015 to 2023

Attraction	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Control of heating costs	14	14	15	39	48
Cheaper than other fuels	45	36	31	23	39
Fuel security/off grid heating	7	5	5	32	34
Reliable local supply	9	13	10	28	27
Have access to free source of wood	20	18	18	33	26
Firewood around house looks attractive	19	27	31	17	23
Environmental benefits	15	21	19	17	21
Cutting and gathering firewood keeps me fit	3	7	7	23	17
Other	29	31	34	6	4

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents who use woodfuel or would like to use woodfuel. Weighted totals: 2015 (292), 2017 (258), 2019 (262), 2021 (264), 2023 (363).
2. Respondents could select more than one response option.

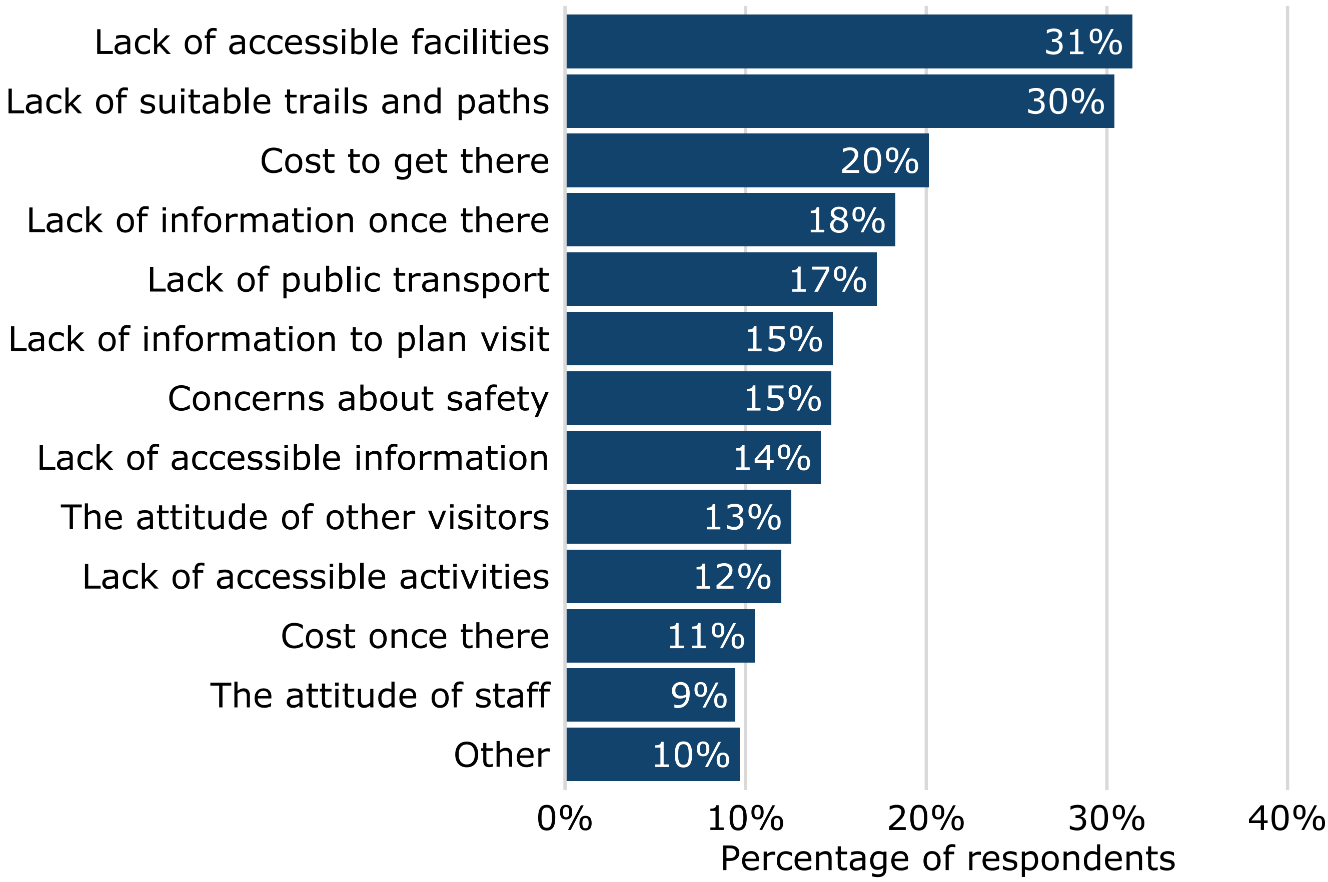
Accessibility

Since the 2017 survey, all respondents have been asked whether they had any long term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses (i.e., lasting or expecting to last 12 months or more) and, if so, whether this had affected their use of woodlands, forests or greenspaces.

In 2023, around two-fifths of respondents (39%) reported that they had a long-term physical or mental health condition or illness. Of those with a condition/illness, around one half (48%) said that their condition affected their use of woodlands/forests or other green spaces.

Respondents whose condition or illness affected their use of woodlands/forests or other green spaces were then asked to identify how their visit was affected (Figure 7). The most commonly identified factors were a lack of accessible facilities (31%) and a lack of suitable paths around the woodland/forest or other green space (30%), both similar to the levels reported in 2021. The cost of reaching the woodland, forest or green space was also identified as important by 20% of respondents.

Figure 7: Proportion of respondents and how their condition/illness affects their use of woodlands, forests or green spaces, Wales, 2023



Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents who have a condition or illness that affects their use of woodlands/forests or other green spaces. Weighted total: 195.
2. Respondents could select more than one factor.
3. Full wording of each response option is available in the questionnaire, provided in the Annex.

Annex

Introduction

This annex provides background information on the statistics presented in this release. It covers the data sources and methodology used to produce the statistics, information on quality measures and on any revisions to historic data and links to further information.

Glossary

Biosecurity

A set of precautions that aim to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful organisms. These may be pests, pathogens or invasive species.

Clustering

A sampling technique where the entire population is divided into groups, or clusters, and a random sample of these clusters are selected. All (or a selection of) observations in the selected clusters are included in the sample. Cluster sampling is often used when a random sample would produce a list of subjects so widely scattered that surveying them would prove to be far too expensive.

Confidence interval

An estimated range of values that is likely to include an unknown population parameter (i.e., a fixed value for the population as a whole). The confidence interval around an estimate is derived from the sample data and is used to indicate the reliability of the estimate.

Design factor

A factor applied in the calculation of confidence intervals to take account of the survey design (clustering, weighting, stratification) used in selecting the sample. A design factor of 1.5 is commonly assumed by market research companies for omnibus surveys of the population.

Forest

In the United Kingdom, there is no formal definition of "forest"; the term is often used for large woodland areas (especially conifers) or for old Royal hunting preserves such as the New Forest or the Forest of Dean.

Forest Research (FR)

The Forestry Commission agency responsible for forestry and tree related research (including statistics).

Forestry Commission (FC)

The government department responsible for forestry matters in England. The Forestry Commission's functions in Wales transferred to the Welsh Government and to Natural Resources Wales on 1 April 2013. The Forestry Commission's functions in Scotland transferred to Scottish Forestry and to Forestry and Land Scotland on 1 April 2019. The Forestry Commission is supported by two agencies; Forestry England and Forest Research.

FSC

Forest Stewardship Council.

Great Britain (GB)

England, Wales and Scotland.

Natural Resources Wales (NRW)

The organisation responsible for advising the Welsh Government on the environment, created on 1 April 2013.

Proportion

A weighted percentage.

Quota sampling

A method of sampling where interviewers are each given a fixed number of subjects of specified type to interview.

Statistical significance

A statistical assessment of whether observations reflect an actual pattern rather than just chance.

Stratification

A sampling technique where the entire population is divided into groups, or strata, and a random sample is selected within each group. Stratified sampling is often used to ensure that sufficient numbers from each group are included in the overall sample, particularly where results are required for each group.

Street trees

Trees in and along streets in urban areas (towns or cities).

United Kingdom (UK)

Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Urban trees

Trees and woodland located in towns or cities. Includes street trees, as well as trees in urban woods, parks, gardens and other urban areas.

Weighting

A set of factors assigned to survey responses to ensure that the resulting weighted results are representative of the population as a whole.

Welsh Government

The executive branch of the devolved government in Wales.

Woodland

Land under stands of trees with a minimum size of 0.5 hectares and a canopy cover of at least 20% (25% in Northern Ireland), or having the potential to achieve this, including integral open space, and including felled areas that are awaiting restocking. Generally (including the UK) woodland is defined as having a minimum area of 0.5 ha.

Data sources and methodology

Background

Forest Research (and previously the Forestry Commission) has conducted biennial surveys of public attitudes to forestry and forestry-related issues since 1995. The surveys have evolved since then as follows:

- In the initial surveys, a representative sample of 2,000 adults across Great Britain (GB) was surveyed;
- In 2001, with more interest in country-level results within GB, additional questions were asked of representative samples of 1,000 adults in each of Scotland and Wales;
- Separate Northern Ireland surveys (1,000 adults) have been carried out since 2005;
- In 2023, four separate surveys were carried for the UK, for Wales, for Scotland and for Northern Ireland. Some questions were asked in all four of

the surveys conducted in 2023, but a number of questions have become survey-specific.

All surveys run until 2019 were conducted using face-to-face interviewing. The restrictions in place across the UK in early 2021 as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic led to a change in methodology for all three surveys that were run then. The 2021 survey in Scotland changed to use telephone interviews, whilst the surveys across the UK and in Wales changed to use an online methodology. For the 2023 survey, Scotland and Northern Ireland changed to an online methodology, meaning all four surveys in 2023 were conducted online.

Table A1 shows a summary of the previous surveys and presents the approximate number of adults interviewed for each country. England results are a subset of the UK survey.

Table A1: Approximate sample size for the Public Opinion of Forestry surveys, UK, 2001 to 2023

Year	UK[1]	England[2]	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
2001	2,000	[x]	1,000	1,000	[x]
2003	4,000	3,400	1,000	1,000	[x]
2005	4,000	3,400	1,000	1,000	1,000
2007	4,000	3,300	1,000	1,000	1,000
2009	2,000	1,700	1,000	1,000	[x]
2010	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	1,000
2011	2,000	1,700	1,000	1,000	[x]
2013	2,000	1,600	1,000	1,000	[x]
2014	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	1,000
2015	2,000	1,500	1,000	1,000	[x]
2017	2,000	1,800	1,000	1,000	[x]
2019	2,200	1,800	1,000	[x]	1,000
2021	5,000	4,300	1,000	1,000	[x]
2023	11,100	9,300	1,000	1,000	1,000

Footnote:

1. 2001 and 2005 surveys covered Great Britain only (i.e., excluding Northern Ireland).
2. Results for England are derived from UK surveys.
3. [x]: data not available (no survey that year).

Survey design

The results presented in this report were gathered by Survation during fieldwork which took place between 7 and 17 March 2023. A total of 1,047 interviews were completed and analysed.

Previous surveys were obtained from the Beaufort Research Wales Omnibus Survey (2021 to 2019). These surveys used face-to-face interviewing. For the 2021 survey, the surveys were conducted online using the YouGov RealTime and YouGov Wales Omnibus.

Methodology

The 2023 survey was conducted via an online panel, with differential response rates from different demographic groups taken in account. Survation is an MRS (Market Research Society) company partner and member of the British Polling Council; data collection was digital and fieldwork was conducted according to MRS standards.

Survey sampling

Data were weighted to the profile of all residents aged 16+ in Wales. Data were weighted by age, gender and region to minimise bias and ensure the sample was representative. Targets for the weighted data were derived from the Office for National Statistics.

Questionnaire

A copy of the 2023 questionnaire is provided at the end of this release. This covers the questions requested by Forest Research and the Welsh Government. In addition, a small number of questions are included as standard in the omnibus surveys run by market research companies (e.g., gender, age, region) and some of these are also used in analysing the results from the survey.

Most questions are retained from one survey to the next, to enable comparisons over time. However, changes are sometimes made to reflect changing circumstances or priorities, or to improve the wording of questions.

Amendments have been made to the wording of some questions and response options, to provide additional clarification to respondents in an online survey.

Quality

Results from the Survation survey are weighted to population profiles to ensure an accurate representation of Wales's population. Weighting is applied on the basis of age, gender and region, using population estimates from the Office for National Statistics. Each respondent is assigned a weight which reflects the number of people that they represent in the population.

The results quoted in this report are presented as proportions, which are percentages calculated from the weighted totals of respondents.

Design effect

All results are subject to the effects of chance in sampling, so a range of uncertainty (confidence interval) should be associated with any result from the survey. The confidence intervals take into account the effect of clustering, weighting and stratification in the survey design (see methodology, above, for more details).

The Survation survey uses a quota sampling approach, which means that the likelihood of individuals within the population being interviewed cannot be measured. Any confidence intervals calculated are also indicative. Due to the survey design, a 'design effect' of 1.5 should be applied to confidence intervals calculated for data from this survey.

Confidence intervals are most commonly reported at the 95% level. This means that there is a 95% chance that the true population value lies within the confidence interval. The following provides a guide to interpreting the results in this report on the basis of a 95% confidence interval:

For questions asked to the whole Wales sample of 1,047, the margin of error should be no more than ±4.5%.

For questions not asked of the whole sample and sub-groups within the sample, margin of error will increase. For example:

- By gender (male n = 512; female n = 535), the confidence intervals should be no more than ±6.5%;
- For those who visited woodland in the last few years (n = 753), the confidence interval should be no more than ±5.4%.

For questions asked to whole samples, differences of more than ±6.5% between the 2021 and 2023 surveys are statistically significant.

Further information can be found on FR's quality of official statistics page.

Revisions

Results for 2023 are published for the first time in this release. All results are final.

Results for earlier years have not been revised.

Forest Research's revisions policy sets out how revisions and errors to these statistics are dealt with.

Further information

The accompanying data set to this release provides more detailed results including standard breakdowns.

Results have been independently rounded, so may not add to the totals shown.

Release schedule

The Wales Public Opinion of Forestry survey is a biennial survey, next due to run in early 2025 with results likely to be available in summer 2025.

Official Statistics

This is an Official Statistics publication. Visit the UK Statistics Authority for more information about Official Statistics.

Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2023: Wales Questionnaire

[All.]

Q1a From this list, please tell me which of the following benefits you think that woodlands near you provide for your local community?

(Please select all that apply. If there aren't any woodlands near you please select the "Not applicable" option)

- They support the local economy
- They help attract visitors to the area
- They provide firewood
- They provide timber and other wood products
- They are accessible to all in the community
- They provide places for wildlife to live
- They provide places for recreation (e.g., walking, cycling, horse riding, etc.)
- They provide places for relaxation and stress relief
- They improve the landscape
- They are an important resource for us all
- They can be used by local schools and other educational groups
- They help soak up water in rainy weather
- They help reduce air and noise pollution
- They remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, slowing climate change
- They give people in the community the opportunity to work together
- Other (please specify)
- Don’t know
- Not applicable – there aren’t any woodlands near me

[All.]

Q1b Which, if any, of the following woodland-related issues apply to your local community?

(Please select all that apply. If there are no woodland-related issues that apply to your local community, please select the "Not applicable" option)

- The woodlands don't provide enough local jobs
- It's difficult to get firewood and timber from our local woodlands
- The woodlands near us can't be easily accessed (e.g., limited footpaths, private land, etc.)
- The woodlands near us aren't good for wildlife (e.g., not enough wildlife, not enough variety of wildlife, etc.)
- The woodlands near us aren't nice places to visit
- The woodlands make our landscape worse
- The woodlands near us are used for fly-tipping
- The woodlands get in the way of developments around the community (e.g., the building of new homes, etc)
- We can't control what happens in our local woodlands
- Managing woodlands pollutes the air, water or soil
- Woodland operations and visitors create noise pollution
- Woodland operations create carbon dioxide making climate change worse
- Timber lorries/visitors to woodlands make the roads busy
- Timber lorries make me feel unsafe walking/driving on the roads
- Woodlands near us provide a place for criminal activity to occur
- Other (please specify)
- Don't know
- Not applicable – there are no woodland related issues in my local community

[All.]

For the following question, by "street trees", we mean trees in urban areas planted by or on behalf of the city.

Q2a Thinking about the nearest urban area (i.e., the nearest town or city), what benefits do you think street trees in this urban area provide?

(Please select all that apply. If there aren't any street trees in your nearest urban area, please select the “Not applicable” option)

- They make the area look more attractive
- They help people to feel more relaxed and calmer
- They provide health benefits
- They provide places for birds and wildlife to live
- They help reduce air and noise pollution
- They remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, reducing the impact of climate change
- They are just a benefit knowing they are there
- They help to improve road safety
- Their shade helps to cool the area during summer
- They increase property values and inward investment into the community
- They help to soak up water in rainy weather
- They offer a connection with the seasons and nature
- They act as natural classrooms (i.e., helping people learn about nature)
- They create pleasant places to meet and mix with people
- They produce useful by-products (e.g., leaf mulch for soil)
- They enhance the appeal and performance of shopping areas in the town/city
- Other (please specify)
- Don’t know
- Not applicable – There aren’t any street trees in my nearest urban area

[All.]

Still thinking about the nearest urban area (i.e., the nearest town or city) to you…

Q2b Which, if any, of the following tree-related issues apply to your local area?

(Please select all that apply)

- The trees in the urban areas near us aren't good for wildlife
- The trees make the urban landscape worse
- The trees get in the way of developments in or around the urban area
- We can't control what happens to the trees
- Carrying out work to the trees causes disruption and mess
- Trees in urban areas near us provide opportunities for criminal activity and vandalism
- Street trees reduce light to nearby houses and buildings
- Falling leaves and branches make a mess and are a health and safety hazard
- Street trees damage buildings and cause subsidence
- Trees cause interference to TV reception and effectiveness of solar panels
- Trees hide views
- Trees harbour pests
- The trees are not properly looked after
- The trees make the roads less safe
- Other (please specify)
- Don't know
- Not applicable – I don't have any street trees in my nearest urban area

[All.]

Still thinking about the nearest urban area (i.e., the nearest town or city) to you…

Q2c In which of the following areas would you like public funding to be allocated when it comes to woodlands and urban trees?

(Please select all that apply.)

- Street trees and those on roundabouts or other green areas associated with roads
- Trees in and around public buildings and car parks
- Trees in pedestrian zones and public squares
- Trees in public parks and gardens
- Clusters of trees as a component of public parks and gardens
- Woodlands around towns with public access
- Other (please specify)
- Don't know
- Not applicable – I wouldn't want public money spent on looking after urban trees or woods

[All.]

Still thinking about the nearest urban area (i.e., the nearest town or city) to you…

Q2d In which, if any, of the following ways would you be prepared to support trees?

(Please select all that apply. If you wouldn't be prepared to support trees, please select the "Not applicable" option.)

- Participating in community planting programmes
- Watering newly planted trees in public areas during periods of dry weather
- Accepting higher council taxes, the funds from which will be used for community tree programmes
- Planting and tending trees in my garden or my communal outside area
- Monitoring the health and condition of public trees
- Raising concerns with the Local Authority if you notice a problem with trees
- None of these
- Don't know
- Not applicable – I wouldn't be prepared to support trees

[ALL.]

Thinking about the last 12 months (i.e., since 1 March 2022)…

Q3a Have you visited forests or woodlands (i.e., for walks, picnics or other recreation)?

(Single answer)

- Yes, I have
- No, I haven't
- Don't know

[All.]

Q3b How has the amount of time you spent visiting woodlands or forests changed in the last 12 months, compared to the previous year?

(Single answer)

- Increased a lot
- Increased a little
- No change
- Decreased a little
- Decreased a lot
- Don't know

[If answered "Yes" for Q3a, go to Q3c; if "No" for Q3a, go to Q3e.]

[If answered "Yes" for Q3a.]

You previously mentioned that you have visited a forest or woodland in the last 12 months (i.e., since 1 March 2022)...

Q3c Which, if any, of the following recreational activities have you participated in when visiting forests or woodland in the last 12 months?

(Please select all that apply)

- Walking (without a dog)
- Dog-walking
- Running
- Wildlife watching
- Picnicking
- Children’s playground
- Woodland crafts
- Horse riding
- Climbing
- Hunting
- Fishing
- Off-road driving/motorcycling
- Off-road cycling/mountain biking
- Sightseeing/visitor attractions
- Swimming outdoors
- Other (please specify)
- Don’t know/can’t recall

[Ask if answered “Yes” to Q3a.]

Still thinking about ANY trips to forest or woodland the in the last 12 months (i.e., since 1 March 2022)...

Q3d Which, if any, of the following have you gathered from forests or woodlands during this time?

(Please select all that apply. If you didn't gather anything, please select the “Not applicable” option)

- Items for eating or drinking (e.g., herbs, berries, fungi, nuts, flowers and sap, etc.)
- Medicinal and dietary supplements (e.g., St. John's wort, meadowsweet and hawthorn, etc.)
- Decorative, floral and craft products (e.g., foliage, branches, stems, moss, lichen, mistletoe and weld, etc.)
- Items for seasonal, cultural or religious use (e.g., holly, ivy, hazel wands, etc.)
- Other (please specify)
- Don't know

[Now go to Q4a.]

[Ask if answered "No" to Q3a.]

You previously mentioned that you didn't visit any forests or woodlands in the last 12 months (i.e., since 1 March 2022)...

Q3e Which, if any, of the following are the main reasons for you not visiting woodland/forests more often or at all?

(Please select all that apply)

- I'm just not interested in visiting
- I can't drive/I don't have access to a car so visiting is difficult
- Lack of suitable public transport to the forest or woodland
- Personal mobility reasons (e.g., difficulty in walking, unwell, not pushchair friendly, etc.)
- The woods are too far away from my home
- Lack of facilities (e.g., play areas, picnic areas, toilets, etc.)
- Lack of information about the woods/which woods to visit
- I prefer other areas of the countryside (e.g., the beach, parks, lakes, etc)
- I'm concerned that woods are not safe (e.g., risk of crime, anti-social behaviour etc.)
- Woodlands are badly maintained

- The cost of visiting is too high (e.g., entrance fee, refreshments, car parking, travel costs etc.)
- Lack of confidence (e.g., in visiting new places, going on my own, getting lost etc.)
- I’m too busy/I don’t have enough time to go
- It’s too difficult to maintain social distancing at the woodland or forest (e.g., because too many other people are visiting, there is a lack of space on the path etc)
- I'm concerned about catching coronavirus (e.g., from touching gates, using the toilet etc.)
- Other (please specify)
- Don’t know
- Not applicable – there is no particular reason why I didn't visit a forest or woodland in the last 12 months

[Now go to Q5a.]

[Ask if answered “Yes” to Q3a.]

Thinking about your most recent visit to forest or woodlands...

Q4a Did you visit forests or woodlands in the countryside or in and around towns?

(Please select the option that best applies)

- Woodlands in the countryside
- Woodlands in and around towns
- Other
- Don’t know/can’t recall

[Ask if answered “Yes” at Q3a.]

Still thinking about your most recent visit to forest or woodlands...

Q4b To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

(1 Strongly agree, 2 Tend to agree, 3 Neither agree nor disagree, 4 Tend to disagree, 5 Strongly disagree, 6 Don't know)

- I would visit again.
- I would recommend it as a place to visit to a friend or a relative

[Ask if answered "Yes" to Q3a.]

Still thinking about your most recent visit to forest or woodlands...

Q4c Which one, if any, of the following organisations manage (i.e., look after) the forest or woodland you visited?

- Natural Resources Wales
- Forestry England
- Forestry and Land Scotland
- Woodland Trust
- National Trust
- Community Managed Woodland
- Other (please specify)
- Don't know

[Ask if answered "Yes" to Q3a.]

Still thinking about your most recent visit to forest or woodlands...

Q4d Which, if any, of the following factors were important to you when choosing which forest or woodland to visit?

(Please select all that apply)

- Convenient distance (i.e., it's close/easy to reach from my house)
- Knowing that visitors are welcome there (i.e., it's open to the public)

- Good facilities (e.g., toilets, café, playgrounds, etc)
- Attractive scenery
- The wildlife
- Peaceful and quiet
- A good place to unwind/de-stress
- Good for exercise
- Safe environment
- Free to visit (i.e., no entrance charge)
- Clear signage (e.g., welcoming, good directions on getting around etc.)
- Clear and accessible tracks and paths
- A variety of activities (e.g., bird watching, trails, adventure parks etc.)
- Dogs are welcome
- Knowing I can access gates and stiles with my group (e.g., pushchairs, dogs, wheelchairs or if you have a disability)
- Opportunities to collect woodland produce (e.g., nuts, berries, moss, firewood, etc.)
- Opportunities for learning
- Enough space to maintain social distancing
- Other (please specify)
- Don’t know

[All.]

Now thinking about forest and woodland in general...

Q5a Is there a forest or woodland that you can get to on foot from where you live (i.e., without using a car or any other form of transport)?

- Yes, there is
- No, there isn’t

- Don’t know

[Ask if answered “Yes” to Q5a.]

You previously mentioned that there is a forest or woodland that you can access without a car or transport...

Q5b How would you rate this forest or woodland in terms of how safe and welcoming it feels?

(Please select the option that best applies. If there is more than one forest/woodland that you can access on foot, please think about the one nearest to you)

- Very safe and welcoming
- Fairly safe and welcoming
- Not very safe and welcoming
- Not at all safe and welcoming
- Don’t know

[All.]

Q6a Have you ever been consulted about plans for creating, managing or using forests or woodlands in your local area?

- Yes, I have
- No, I haven’t
- Don’t know/can’t recall

[Ask if answered “Yes” to Q6a.]

Q6b Do you feel that you have ever influenced decisions about creating, managing or using forests or woodlands in your local area?

- Yes, I have

- No, I haven't
- Don't know/can't recall

[All.]

Q6c Would you like to be consulted in future about plans for creating, managing or using forests or woodlands in your local area?

- Yes, I would
- No, I wouldn't
- Don't know

[All.]

Q7 Are you aware of any plans for a new National Forest in Wales?

- Yes, I am
- No, I'm not

[All.]

Thinking about the last 12 months (i.e. since 1 March 2022)...

Q8 Have you and/or anyone in your family attended any of the following organised learning activities or events to do with woodlands?

(Please select all that apply)

- School trip
- Forest school
- Guided walk or talk
- Organised course or training event (e.g., dry stone walling, fencing, making bird boxes, woodland management, etc.)
- Organised tree planting event
- Other (please specify)

- Don’t know/can’t recall

[All.]

Still thinking about the last 12 months (i.e. since 1 March 2022)...

Q9a Have you been involved in voluntary work in connection with woodlands (e.g., physical work in a wood, administration, fund raising, running a group, etc.)?

- Yes, I have
- No, I haven’t
- Don’t know/can’t recall

[All.]

Q9b Are you a member of any community groups that are involved in the conservation and/or management of local woodlands?

- Yes, I am – [go to Q9c]
- No, I’m not – [go to Q10]
- Don’t know/can’t recall – [go to Q10]

[Ask if answered “Yes” to Q9b.]

You previously mentioned that you are part of a community group involved in the conservation or management of local woodlands...

Q9c What is the name of your group(s)?

(Please write your answer(s) in the box below. If you would rather not share your answers with us, please select the "Prefer not to say" option provided)

- ________________
- Prefer not to say

[All.]

Q10 Have you ever seen any of these logos on wood products?

(Please select one option on each row)

FSC:

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know/can’t recall

PEFC:

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know/can’t recall

HETAS:

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know/can’t recall

Grown in Britain:

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know/can’t recall

[All.]

Q11 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(1 Strongly agree, 2 Tend to agree, 3 Neither agree nor disagree, 4 Tend to disagree, 5 Strongly disagree, 6 Don’t know)

- Everyone should take action when visiting woodlands to help prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases (e.g., by washing shoes/boots, bikes etc before and after their visit and by brushing soil & plant material from clothes)

- I would be willing to look out for and report sightings of pests and diseases on trees, if appropriate information and advice was available to me on how to do this
- There is very little that anyone can do to prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases
- Action should be taken by authorities and woodland managers to protect trees from damaging pests and diseases
- I understand what is meant by the term "biosecurity"

[All.]

For the following question, we are interested to know whether you use any types of wood fuel indoors. If you use wood fuel outdoors, please do not include this in your answer. This can be wood fuels used either on their own or alongside other fuel such as gas.

Q12a Do you use any of the following types of wood fuel indoors (e.g., for heating your home, cooking, hot water etc.)?

(Please select all that apply. If you don't use any wood fuel indoors at home, please select the "Not applicable" option)

1. Wood logs
2. Wood pellets
3. Wood briquettes/heat logs
4. Waste wood (e.g., waste and off-cuts from industrial, manufacturing, DIY or renovation work, etc.)
5. Foraged, gathered or found branch wood from felled or fallen trees
6. Wood chips
7. None of these
8. Don’t know
9. Not applicable – I don’t use any wood fuel indoors at home

[Ask if answered "Not applicable" to Q12a.]

Q12b Which of these statements best applies to you?

1. I intend to use wood as a fuel for indoor purposes in the next two years
2. I would like to use wood fuel for indoor purposes but am unable to do so in the next two years
3. I do not wish to use wood fuel for indoor purposes in the next two years
4. I'm undecided whether I intend to use wood fuel for indoor purposes in the next two years
5. Don't know

[Ask if answered 1-6 to Q12a or 1-2 to Q12b.]

Q12c Which, if any, of the following reasons why you use/are you attracted to using firewood?

(Please select all that apply)

- It's cheaper than other fuels
- The environmental benefits
- I have access to a free source of wood
- I have a reliable local supply
- Control of heating costs
- It gives/will give me fuel security/off grid heating
- Firewood around the house looks attractive
- Cutting and gathering firewood keeps me fit
- Other (please specify)
- Don't know

[Ask if answered 1-2 to Q12b.]

You previously mentioned that you do not currently use wood fuel indoors at home, but that you would like to do so in the next two years (i.e., late February 2023)...

Q12d Which, if any, of the following reasons are preventing you from using firewood currently?

(Please select all that apply)

- I'm unable to make modifications to my current home to use firewood (e.g., renting, living with parents, in a flat etc.)
- The cost of firewood
- I don’t know where to get firewood
- There’s no place to store firewood in my current home
- Too much manual work involved (e.g., chopping wood, starting fire etc.)
- I don’t wish to do the major building work needed to use firewood indoors
- I’m happy with the way I heat my home/cook for now
- I live in a chimney “smoke-free” zone
- Other (please specify)
- Don’t know

[All.]

Q13a Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

- Yes, limited a lot
- Yes, limited a little
- No
- Prefer not to say

[Ask if answered “Yes” to Q13a.]

Q13b Does your health problem or disability affect your use of woodlands, forests, or other greenspaces?

(Please select the option that best applies. If you would rather not share your experiences, please select the “Prefer not to say” option)

- Yes, they do
- No, they don’t
- Don’t know
- Prefer not to say

[Ask if answered “Yes” to Q13b.]

Q13c In which, if any, of the following ways does your health problem or disability affect your use of woodlands, forests, or other greenspaces?

(Please select all that apply)

- Lack of public transport to the woodlands, forests or other green space
- Lack of suitable trails and paths around the woodland/forest or other green space
- Lack of accessible facilities (e.g., toilets, cafe, visitor centre etc.)
- Lack of accessible activities (e.g., wildlife watching, trails, playgrounds etc.)
- Lack of information available to help inform a visit (e.g., information online about accessibility, facilities, paths etc.)
- Lack of information at the woodland, forest or greenspace (e.g., lack of signage, maps, staff etc.)
- Lack of information in a suitable format for my disability (i.e., braille signs, accessible website etc.)
- The attitude of staff (i.e., staff treat me differently, discriminate against me because of my disability)

- The attitude of other visitors (i.e., visitors treat me differently, discriminate against me because of my disability)
- The cost of reaching the woodland, forest or other green space (e.g., public transport, taxis, petrol etc.)
- The cost once at the woodland, forest or other green space (e.g., entrance fee, refreshments, activities etc.)
- Concern that woodlands, forests or green spaces are not safe places
- Other (please specify)
- Don’t know

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