



**ELMs 159: HOW TO INCENTIVISE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ACCESS**

**AND BIODIVERSITY CREATION APPENDIX**



**BY THE MENDIP HILLS TEAM**



**APPENDIX 1 COMPILED BY RACHEL THOMPSON MBE CONSULTANT TO THE TRAILS TRUST**



## The ELMS 159 Test Team

The Mendip Hills Test team are advisors and consultants familiar with working in the test area and have backgrounds in access, land management and biodiversity.

### From The Trails Trust

Rachel Thompson MBE facilitated the public access elements of the test. Rachel is co-founder of and consultant to The Trails Trust. She has 37 years' experience of rights of way creation and development through working in partnership with landowners and farmers. She is the author of *Creating Multi-user Public Rights of Way A Guide for Local Groups*. The Paths for Community scheme 2011 -2013 was in part based on the pioneering work by TTT in developing access in partnership with landowners.

Lynn Myland is chair of the Isle of Wedmore Access Group, a Trustee of The Trails Trust and a member of the Somerset Local Access Forum. Lynn oversaw and assisted with the Test on behalf of The Trails Trust Trustees. She also stepped in to help with surveying and interviewing 7 of the non-farming participants when the team lost the second facilitator. Lynn has chaired many access groups focusing on delivering best value, improving access for vulnerable and disabled users through landowner negotiation and reward and or planning 106 and CIL investment.

### From the Mendip Hills AONB Unit

Tim Hasleden is the MHAONB Project Development Officer. Tim assisted with research and development, carrying out biodiversity surveys and providing advice on habitats, nature recovery, connectivity and landscape character. He also assisted with the monitoring and evaluation, linking with the AONB Management Plan and liaising with the AONB Partnership and other partners.

### From the farming community

Agriculture consultants Mike Clements BSc (Hons) and Mike House BSc (Hons) brought invaluable local knowledge and farming expertise to the team. Each has in depth knowledge of the local agricultural sector – mixed (family farm / industrial farmers) - within specific areas of the Mendip Hills AONB (north and south). The consultants helped to identify and introduce landowners and land managers, assisted with the research questions design and encouraged participation from the agricultural sector, which might be otherwise have been difficult to engage. The two Mikes, affectionally known as Clemo and Housey between them interviewed 43 participants. The interviews were brilliant in giving the user group members an understanding of the opinions and experiences of landowners and farmers whilst Clemo and Housey learnt a lot about access and became truly trusted advisors on a difficult subject.

### From Natural England

Pippa Langford CMgr, MCMI Principal Specialist Recreation and Access. Pippa's experience, knowledge and development of access policy, information, furniture and national schemes including the Paths for Communities Government scheme 2011 – 2013 was invaluable to the

test helping with the design of the research questions and data analysis and providing data, information and support as required.

#### Information Technology Support

The team was supported by IT consultant Dr Kelly Davies who assisted with designing the research questionnaire and helped Tim with data analysis and writing the biodiversity sections of the report.

## Route Survey T32A Walcombe / Milton WMA: EXAMPLE






<b>Access Surveyor:</b> R Thompson June 2020					<b>Biodiversity Surveyor:</b> Tim Hasleden July 2020							
<b>LHA area</b>		Somerset CC		<b>Parish</b>		St Cuthbert Out		<b>Participants</b>		3		
<b>Rights of Way Improvement Plan / Test area access priorities</b>												
1.Features	Y	2.Local economy	Y	3.Avoid road	Y	4.Circular	Y	5.By water	N	6.Cross road	N	
7.Cul de sac	N	8.Local journey	Y	9.Town route	N	10.Heritage	Y	11.Linear	Y	12.Long distance	N	
13.To open space / woods			N		14.Through open space /woods			N		15.Spatial access	N	Priority =7
<b>Access Route Survey Report</b>												
<b>Location (Place / OS sheet / ref)</b>				<b>Route data</b>								
1. Old Coach Road		ST 555471		Route Type		Length x M		Width x m (AV)		Acreage -open access		
2. Walcombe		ST 552471		Mixed		375		3		N/A		
<b>Current Land Use</b>												
Grazing / green lane												
												
Map of route (shown in red).						Photo 1: Access 1 from Old Coach Road BR						
												
Photo 2: Access 2 into green lane corridor						Photo 3: Exit into Walcombe						
												

Photo 4: Field showing longer, uncut grass margin			
Route Attributes			
Status, users, surface		Existing Infrastructure (+ required)	
Current ROW status	Footpath	Number of structures	3
Route heritage	Unknown	Stiles	3
Current users	Walkers	Pedestrian gates	0
Aspiration status	Bridleway	Bridle gates	0
Long distant route proximity	West Mendip Way < 1 km, Monarch way <1km NCN 3 <2 km	Field gates	0
Surface (un)sealed Type / Condition /Score	Unsealed grass / stone / very good 1	Bridges	0
Works category		Signs	Footpath
Exits and links to other routes and places			
Exit 1 status	ROW (BR)	Exit 2 status	UCR
Links to (row)	Old Coach Road / Pen Hill / Biddle Combe BRs	Links to (row)	Welsh's Green BR Limekiln Lane BR via T32 B
Visibility	Very good	Visibility	Very good
Scores /	1 / 1	Scores /	1 / 1
Any safety action on crossing or exit? No, importantly the route bypasses A39 Wells Bristol Hill			
Access report: route description, importance and works required			
<p><u>Description of route including boundary, surface and access point descriptions (see photos)</u></p> <p>The route starts at the southern end of the Old Coach Road bridleway (pre-turnpike road) running parallel to Bristol Hill A39. Access the route heading west via wooden stile (1), cross grass field on a well-used path to second wooden stile (2) into a green lane corridor, turn left with boundary wall on one side, fencing and shrubs on the other to third wooden stile (3) into the hamlet of Walcombe.</p> <p><u>Community connection to nearby places</u></p> <p>This aspirational route is a short essential and valuable route allowing safe travel north of Wells, avoiding the main A39 by linking numerous bridleways to link the city with the Horringtons and Wookey Hole and also with the wider Mendip Hills AONB.</p> <p><u>Current Use</u></p> <p>Walkers</p> <p><u>Notes on route heritage &amp; customary use / features along the way</u></p> <p>The short lane corridor may indicate an ancient way, this is unknown. This corridor offers high biodiversity value / public containment. The route is close to the Milton Lodge arboretum, some fine tree specimens are visible over the wall. A valuable connection between city and countryside.</p> <p><u>Notes on works required</u></p> <p>Three stiles would need to be replaced with equestrian gates or with York 2 in 1 gates, incorporating adjoining field gates, if desired. The aspirational route could be re-routed around the field, or adjoining field boundary.</p> <p>Further notes and comments.</p> <p>An essential green travel route. Routes WMA and WMB link together and if it was possible to bypass the Old Bristol road at Rookham would with the Pen Hill and Old Coach road bridleways make a wonderful estate ride / walk with links from Wells and other nearby communities.</p> <p>Biodiversity enhancement suggestions: None</p>			

Biodiversity report requested: yes		
End of access section		
<b>Biodiversity Report</b>		
<b>Suggestions to improve biodiversity value along route</b> <i>(linked to questionnaire data capture form section 3, 12.3 and based on desktop study / field survey)</i>		
Biodiversity enhancement category	Priority	Top recommendations
Drystone wall repair	Low	The hedgerow and mature trees along the green lane from Walcombe provide a valuable green corridor and habitat for wildlife including bird and bat species. This habitat should be protected, and the connective corridor could be enhanced by planting specimen trees in the adjacent field along the proposed route in order to join up to the woodlands to the east. Part of the field has already been left with a grassland buffer strip / margin providing a valuable area for wildlife (photo 4). To further improve this value for wildlife, the unmanaged margin could be widened, plus the whole field could have a slight change in management by reducing intensity, cutting / grazing later in the summer (end of August/September) in order to create a meadow during the summer, beneficial for invertebrates/pollinators, small mammals, ground nesting and woodland birds, Barn Owls and bat species.
Hedge planting	Medium	
Hedgerow restoration	Medium	
Woodland / copse creation	Medium	
Woodland enhancement	Low	
Tree avenue creation	Medium	
Specimen tree planting	High	
Pond / wetland creation	Low	
Pond / wetland restoration	Low	
Ditch restoration	Medium	
Grassland creation / enhancement	High	
Heathland creation / enhancement	Low	
Buffer strip creation	High	
Wildflower margin establishment	Medium	
Installation of bird boxes	Medium	
Installation of bat boxes	Medium	
<b>Data accessed</b>		
<b>Desktop study along route</b>		
Landscape Character Area and key characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Character Area 141 Mendip Hills (Natural England).</li> <li>Local Landscape Character Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Wells Bowl – Setting of Wells with bowl-shaped landform and steep slopes with wooded combs and pasture, parkland and springs. There are also small villages and deserted settlements. This is very varied type, with small and large fields and variable hedges changing to drystone walls towards the Mendip Plateau.</li> </ul> </li> <li>National Historic Landscape Characterisation Dominant Broad Types: Enclosed Agriculture (typically pre-modern form).</li> </ul>	
Land-based designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mendip Hills AONB.</li> <li>SSSI Impact Risk Zone.</li> </ul>	
Site-specific designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listed buildings in Walcombe.</li> </ul>	
Known protected / priority species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tree Sparrow.</li> <li>Brown Hairstreak.</li> <li>Bat species.</li> <li>There are likely to be many other protected / priority species - contact Environmental Records Centre for a more comprehensive list.</li> </ul>	
Priority habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deciduous woodland / hedgerow.</li> </ul>	
Natural England Schemes and targeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) Target Area.</li> <li>National Habitat Network – Network Enhancement Zone.</li> <li>Parts of route in High Spatial Priority area for Woodland Habitat.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faecal and groundwater/surface water Nitrate and Phosphate issues (High Priority).</li> <li>• Bathing water quality area (Medium Priority).</li> </ul>
Ecological connectivity / landscape cons. priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodland.</li> <li>• Hedgerows.</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Somerset Local Nature Partnership area.</li> </ul>
<b>Field survey along route</b>	
Main land use types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pastural land.</li> <li>• Wooded green lane.</li> </ul>
Main habitat / terrain types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mature hedgerow.</li> <li>• Pasture farmland.</li> </ul>
AONB special qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limestone aquifer.</li> <li>• Wooded combes.</li> </ul>
Features of interest and overview of dominant species seen at time of survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mature trees along field edge and green lane, comprising mainly Ash, Oak, Hawthorn and Hazel.</li> <li>• Longer grass left around edge of field along hedgerow providing valuable habitat for invertebrates including grasshoppers and butterfly species (Red Admiral and Speckled Wood spotted).</li> </ul>
Strengths of current land management for nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green corridor between Walcombe village and field with mature hedgerows and trees.</li> <li>• Field margins left ungrazed / unmowed with longer grass (photo 4).</li> </ul>
Weaknesses / threats of current land management for nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Majority of field containing relatively species-poor, improved grassland.</li> </ul>
Notes	<i>N.B. this biodiversity survey and suggestions should not be seen as exhaustive and should only be used as an initial guide. Further, more detailed surveys, assessments and consultation with a Natural England advisor are recommended.</i>
<i>End of biodiversity section</i>	



ELMS TEST 159 QUESTIONNAIRE

## ENVIRONMENTAL LAND MANAGEMENT TEST 159

### Mendip Hills

‘How to incentivise green infrastructure access & biodiversity creation’

*A questionnaire for landowners and land managers – seeking opinions on current and future public access with biodiversity measures*





## Introduction to ELM Test 159

The Government's vision for a future environmental land management (ELM) scheme is based on rewarding public goods with public money, creating a thriving, self-reliant and resilient farming sector, ensuring world class animal welfare standards and food production and a trusting and productive relationship between farmers and government.

Public goods are commodities or services that benefit all the members of society.

The ELMs public goods have been defined as

- Clean and plentiful water.
- Clean Air.
- Protection from and mitigation of environmental hazards.
- Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.
- Thriving plants and wildlife.
- Beauty, heritage and engagement.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is working across England to develop and collaboratively design ELMs with a wide range of stakeholders, farmers and land managers through tests and trials.

Test and trials have six priorities

- Land Management Plan.
- Role of advice and guidance.
- Payments.
- Spatial prioritisation.
- Collaboration.
- Innovative delivery solutions.

An ELMs test is currently running in and around the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. ELMs test 159 'How to incentivise green infrastructure access & biodiversity' is seeking to inform Defra and the future ELM scheme regarding landowners and land managers' experiences and opinions on public access, including

- Experiences about existing public access on rights of way (footpaths, bridleways and byways) and within open access land and woodland.
- Potential solutions to avoid and mitigate issues.
- How additional access and associated biodiversity enhancements should be valued (including improving existing access, upgrading access so that more user types can use existing routes and creating new access opportunities).
- The advice that will be needed to help landowners and land managers plan.
- How collaboration with others could be managed and rewarded.
- How access creation and improvement and biodiversity enhancements within access space can be incorporated into future environmental land management plans.

The Mendip team includes

- Facilitators from the multi user access charity The Trails Trust.

- Specialist advisors from the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty unit.
- Natural England principal specialist recreation and access.
- Consultants from the local agricultural community.
- Specialist IT consultant.

The Mendip team has identified and surveyed a number of routes and open spaces (aspirational access opportunities) across the test area, informed by the local community through the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and other means, that would improve the connectivity, accessibility and safety of the entire rights of way network provision for everyone and where space for wildlife and biodiversity can also be enhanced. The team will be using these surveys as interview focus examples.

The team aims to work with fifty chosen participants (landowners and land managers) to explore experiences of existing public access (routes and open space) and opinions about how access can be included and valued in ELMs. The test participants have been selected from an assessment of aspirational access and geographical location and owner and holding types (over which aspirational routes pass or access to open space could be developed).

The data collected from the test will be collated, anonymised and analysed to inform a future scheme on the reward for public goods delivery that landowners and land managers expect in order to create, manage and maintain access within their land management plan.

Before starting the questionnaire please complete and sign the consent form on page 4 and the personal data form on page 5. Thank you.

### Participant Consent Form

This consent form is important to us and is necessary to ensure that

- you have understood the purpose of your involvement.
- you agree to participate.
- you understand that you are a test participant on a voluntary basis.
- we do not anticipate any risks associated with your participation.

Please note: you have the right to stop or terminate your participation, to withdraw from the interview or withdraw data without justification or explanation, at any point or time.

Name .....(Participant)

of.....Holding / Organisation

hereby consent to participate in the ELMs TEST 159

I understand that my participation will include

- completing a questionnaire regarding my opinions about public access and biodiversity measures and
- participating in an interview with members of the test team 159 (usually two), which will last approximately for two hours and will take place at a date and time to be confirmed (at my convenience)

I understand that the information and opinion that I give will be anonymised and that the anonymised data of both myself as participant and the holding or organisation that I am representing will be given to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Test and Trials team to assist with informing a future Environmental Land Management scheme.

I understand that my personal data will not be stored on a computer and will be held securely during the test period.

Signed .....Date.....

Thank you for your participation from ELMs 159 Mendip Test Team



Please return this form with the questionnaire, thank you.

The data on this form is shared with the test team only. Any personal data recorded for the test purpose will be anonymised.

This form will be destroyed at the end of the test when the final report is submitted to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Elm Test and Trials Team.

### Questionnaire Personal Data Form

Code 1.1	Participant - Personal Details of the person participating in the interview	
NB Participant options	If you don't know the answer please state 'D'	
	If you don't want to answer please state 'N'	
	If the data request is not applicable to you please state N/A	
1.	Please sign the consent form on page 4 and return with the questionnaire.	
2.	Test participant number	Allocated by the test team
		Your number is:-
3.	Title	
4.	Forename & surname	
5.	Phone number (s)	
6.	Email address	
7.	Home address Line 1	
8.	Home postcode	
9.	Holding address line 1 if different to 7.	
10.	Holding address post code if different to 8.	
11. a/b	(a) Age and (b) gender	
12.	Single Business Identifier (if known)	
Landowner – if you are not the landowner please state		
13.	Landowner's name	
14.	Landowner's contact telephone / email	
Code 1.2	Organisation – if you are taking part on behalf of an organisation, for example a charity or limited company please state	
1.	Organisation name	
2.	Organisation address line 1	
3.	Organisation post code	
4.	Your title and role in organisation	
Code 1.3	Tenancy	
1. Term		

Thank you. Please return this form with the questionnaire.

Please start here

## ELMs 159 Section 1: The participant

Please look at the lists in section one and tick the option(s) in each category listed that best describe you, your land holding, mission and business - following the option requests below.

List		Tick or highlight to mark option(s) on lists
1.4	About you	➤ Tick ONE
	If you ticked 'other' describe here	➤
1.5	Organisation type	➤ Tick ONE
	If you ticked 'other' describe here	➤
1.6	Tenure of holding	➤ Tick ONE
	If you ticked 'other' describe here	➤
1.7	Decision making	➤ Tick ONE
	If you ticked 'other' describe here	➤
1.8	Tenancy type	➤ Tick ONE
	If you ticked 'other' describe here	➤
1.9	Mission	➤ Tick ONE
	If you ticked 'other' describe here	➤
1.10	Primary purpose	➤ Tick ONE
	If you ticked 'other' describe here	➤
1.11	Secondary / diversification	➤ Tick ANY that apply
	If you ticked 'other' describe here	➤
1.12	Holding(s) size	➤ Tick ONE in the acres or hectares list
1.13	Designations and features	➤ Tick ANY that apply
	If you ticked 'other' describe here	➤

1.14 Is your holding currently in a countryside stewardship scheme?	Circle one	YES	NO
➤ If YES Please go to list 1.14 and tick ONE scheme that applies			
➤ If NO Please go to list 1.15 and tick ONE statement that applies			
If you ticked 'other' describe here	➤		
1.15 Did you use an agent or an advisor to help you apply?	Circle one	YES	NO
1.16 Is the holding classified as organic?	Circle one	YES	NO

Write any comments on section one here. Add a sheet of paper if you need to.

**Discussion 1** with interviewer on section 1 responses.

## ELMs 159 Section 2: Existing public access on the land holding

Section 2 explores the public access that exists or has existed on the land holding. The questions ask for your experiences of public access rights, user types and activities, route infrastructure and

structures. We will bring a map to the interview or can check access rights for you by reference to a land holding map if necessary.

Please look at the lists in section two where requested. Tick or highlight the option(s) in each category listed that best describe your experiences of existing public access on your holding, in answer to the following questions.

**Existing or former public access on the land holding**

2.1	What designation of recorded public rights of way currently exist across the land holding? Choose any that apply	➤ ANY list 2.1		
2.2	Which access users / activities do you see taking place? Choose any that apply.	➤ ANY list 2.2		
If you ticked 'other' please describe here:				
2.3	Have you ever granted any permissive routes or open access space on the holding for e.g. walking / horse-riding etc	Circle one	YES	NO

List	If you answered 'YES' to 2.3 tick or highlight the lists below if 'NO' go to 2.10			
2.4	Is the access over a designated route or access area?	➤ Tick ANY		
If you ticked 'other' please describe here:				
2.5	Which types of users are / were permitted to access the land?	➤ Tick ANY		
If you ticked 'other' please describe here:				
2.6	What circumstances prompted the giving of permission?	➤ Tick ONE		
If you ticked 'other' please describe here:				
2.7	Is the permission formal or informal?	➤ Tick ONE		
If you ticked 'other' please describe here:				
2.8	Which scenarios best match the use of the route or space for which permission has been granted?	➤ Tick ANY		
If you ticked 'other' please describe here:				
2.9	Are all the permissions for access routes or space and activities that you have ticked still available?	Circle one	YES	NO

2.10	Do you permit any other types of public activity on your land holding?	Circle one	YES	NO
➤ If YES Please tick ANY that apply in list 2.10				
If you ticked 'other' please describe here:				

If you answered NO to 2.9 please explain why the access is no longer available in this box. Use a separate piece of paper if necessary.

**Discussion 2** with interviewer on existing access rights and permissions.



2.11	Have you ever encountered people regularly accessing your land along a specific route or in an open space for which no recorded rights exist and for which you have not specifically given permission? <i>(Examples might be customary use of a route (such as a green lane) which people have always used but is not to your knowledge a recorded public right of way, use of a public footpath by horse riders and or cyclists or use of a private woodland for mountain biking /dog walking etc).</i>	Circle one	YES	NO
2.12	If you said YES, have you taken any measures to prevent or neutralise such use?	Circle one	YES	NO

if you answered YES to 2.11 please tell us about the access being used by the public. If you answered yes to 2.12 please tell us about any measures you have taken in the box below. Use a separate piece of paper if necessary.

**Discussion 3** with interviewer on customary access by the public.

### Access infrastructure and land terrain

2.13	What different types of public access <u>infrastructure</u> exist on your land holding? For example: routes that are contained within corridors (for example a green lane) or routes that cross open land (for example a cross field path).			
➤ Please tick or highlight ANY that apply on list 2.13 (a)				
2.14	Do you have any preference for what type of infrastructure people are able to use? (using list 2.13 examples)	Circle one	YES	NO
➤ If you answered YES please rank on list 2.13 (b) each type of infrastructure (that you have ticked) in order from 1 up to 5 where 1 is the <b>least preferred</b> and 5 is most preferred				
2.15	What types of terrain exist on your land holding?			
➤ Tick or highlight <u>any</u> that apply on list 2.15 (a)				
2.16	Do you have any preference for which type of terrain / cultivated area people are able to use on your holding?	Circle one	YES	NO
2.17	If you answered YES please <u>rank</u> on list 2.15 (b) each type of terrain / cultivated area (that you have ticked) in order from 1 up to 10 where 1 is the <b>least preferred</b> and 10 is most preferred.			

### Maintaining structures and surfaces for public access

2.18	What structures do you have on the land holding that are used for public access?			
➤ Tick or highlight any that exist in list 2.18				
If you ticked 'other' please describe here				
2.19	Do you consider that the access structures are generally well maintained for public use?	Circle one	YES	NO

2.20	Do you consider that route surfaces are well maintained so that they are accessible for 95% of the year?	Circle one	YES	NO			
2.21	How much work do you engage in to maintain public access on your land holding?	Circle one*	1	2	3	4	5

\*Score - 1 is minimal, 3 is moderate, 5 is high workload

2.22	Are you supported by anyone to help with maintenance (through labour / materials / finance)?	Circle one	YES	NO
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if you answered YES to 2.22 please tell us about the maintenance support that you receive in the box below. Use a separate piece of paper if necessary.

**Discussion 4** with interviewer about access infrastructure, structures and maintenance.

**Your experiences with existing public access**

2.23 (a)	Thinking about the existing public access over your land do you think it impacts on current operations? If 'YES' see 2.24 a/b below	Circle one	YES	NO
2.23 (b)	Thinking about the existing public access over your land do you think it impacts on future plans? If 'YES' please discuss concerns in discussion 5 below.	Circle one	YES	NO

2.24 (a) If you have answered 'YES' to 2.23 (a) please go to list 2.24 and tick any of the impacts that you have experienced on your holding in column (a).

2.24 (b) Do you think that the solution or mitigation offered will resolve the impact or concern? Please indicate with a tick for 'yes' and a cross for 'no' in the YES / NO column (b).

2.25	What are your overall experiences of access on your land holding?	Circle one*	1	2	3	4	5
*Score - 1 is negative, 2 is somewhat negative, 3 is neutral, 4 is somewhat positive and 5 is positive.							

**Discussion 5** with interviewer about access experiences.

## ELMs 159 Section 3: Valuing public access as a public good

This section explores how to incentivise and value access as a public good specifically

- A) The creation of rights of way using the community aspirational surveyed route(s) or space as an example.
- B) Capital works to install new route infrastructure on the ground and improve and upgrade existing route infrastructure, for access and biodiversity.
- C) Annual access and biodiversity improvements and maintenance (beyond statutory duties).

### Examples

- Upgrading an existing public footpath to public bridleway so that additional users are catered for (horse riders and cyclists).
- Creating a new route so that (for example) the public can avoid travelling along a busy road or access a direct crossing point.
- Enhancing biodiversity along upgraded or newly created routes.
- Providing permanent protection for access and wildlife by creating a restricted byway as a wildlife corridor route.
- Providing access to open space or woodland for additional users (e.g. horse riders, cyclists).
- Carrying out capital improvements, such as replacing stiles with gates and additional annual maintenance such as mowing, within existing access space.

Note that it is not intended that the necessary land for access will be purchased.

### **A) How could the valuation for access creation be set?**

List		➤	TICK
3.1	At a set rate based on land valuations or other value?	➤	ONE
3.2	Payment rates based on length and standard widths (where achievable) or on calculated area?	➤	ANY

3.3	Additional users in open access land (including woodland). Should payment be based on			
a)	the land area available for spatial access rights (open access).	Circle one	YES	NO
b)	the user rights granted (walking / horse- riding / cycling etc). Circle one	Circle one	YES	NO

3.4	Are there any other valuation criteria that should be considered?	Circle one	YES	NO
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Your responses will be discussed during the interview

### **B) Payments for capital improvement works to new and existing access routes and areas**

How could the valuation for one-off capital works to install new routes on the ground and / or improve and upgrade existing routes for biodiversity and access for people be set?

See lists 4.7 (biodiversity works) and 4.8 (access capital works) for examples.



3.5	A set payment rate capital-item agreement (for example as mid – tier subsidy in the current scheme)?	Circle one	YES	NO
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If you answered 'NO' please give us your suggestions in the box below 3.6.

**C) Revenue payments for annual maintenance and improvement tasks.**

How could the (revenue) valuation for annual / seasonal works to improve and maintain biodiversity and access be set? See list 4.9 (annual maintenance works) for examples

3.6	Set payment rates for activities?	Circle one	YES	NO
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If you answered 'NO' please give us your suggestions in the box below.

Please give us your ideas about incentivising, valuing and rewarding access creation, installation, improvements and maintenance in the box below. Use a separate piece of paper if necessary.

**Discussion 6** with the interviewer on incentivising and rewarding access

## ELMs 159 section 4: willingness to participate and incorporate access into an environment land management scheme

This section explores how willing you are to be rewarded via an access scheme to:-

- A) Create new access rights, (for example upgrading an existing footpath to bridleway or restricted byway or creating new rights to open access space (including woodland)) - using the surveys as examples.
- B) Include biodiversity enhancement within the access space, using the surveys as examples.
- C) Undertake or oversee capital route creation works, improvements and annual / seasonal maintenance tasks.

### **A) New access creation in ELMs**

Note: the access route or space aspiration has been surveyed on foot only where there is an existing access right or other agreement. Choose one survey to focus on (if multiple surveys have been carried out).

4.1 (a)	Which access priorities identified in the survey do you agree are beneficial for you to deliver to the community, on your land? (See list 4.1)
	➤ Please tick <u>any</u> of the priorities that you agree are beneficial in terms of the aspirational public access in list 4.1 (a)
4.1 (b)	Which priorities that you have ticked do you consider are the <u>most</u> beneficial?
	➤ Please rank up to 5 priorities that you have ticked from 5 – 1 where 5 is the <b>most beneficial</b> and 1 is least beneficial on list 4.1 (b)

4.2 (a)	Wider benefits and opportunities could stem from the access identified if created. See list 4.2
	➤ Please tick <u>any</u> wider benefits or opportunities in list 4.2 (a) that you agree could stem from the access if created.
4.2 (b)	Which of those that you have ticked do you consider to be most beneficial?
	➤ Please rank in list 4.2 (b) up to 5 priorities that you have ticked from 5 – 1 where 5 is the <b>most beneficial</b> , 3 is somewhat / partially beneficial and 1 is least beneficial

4.3	How willing are you to include the creation of <u>the community</u> aspirational access route(s) or open space into an ELMs plan for your holding?	Circle one*	1	2	3	4	5
*Please rate on a scale 1 to 5 (where 1 is not willing, 3 is undecided and 5 is very willing).							
4.3 (a)	Which of these is a factor determining your responses? ➤ Tick ANY in list 4.3 (a)						
4.3 (b)	Which factors influence you <u>the most</u> in your response? Please rank up to five factors with 1 as <u>least</u> influencing factor, 3 neutral and up to 5 the most positive influencing factor on your willingness to provide for access in ELMs.						

If you are unwilling to include creation of the community access route in a future ELMs plan please answer these questions

4.4	Can your concerns about the proposed access be mitigated using the solutions in list 4.4?	Circle one	YES	NO
➤ If YES please tick which solutions will mitigate concerns on list 4.4				
4.5	Would you consider access to <u>an alternative (or relocated) route or open space?</u>	Circle one	YES	NO
4.6	Would you consider a time limited permissive access trial?	Circle one	YES	NO

**B) Inclusion of biodiversity enhancement within the new access creation space in ELMs.**

The aspirational route or space has been identified as being in an area that could be enhanced to provide for biodiversity in addition to access (see survey(s)).

4.7 (a)	How willing are you to include the suggested biodiversity measures along with the proposed access within an ELMs plan for your holding?	Circle one*	1	2	3	4	5
*Please rate on a scale 1 to 5 (where 1 is not willing, 3 is undecided and 5 is very willing).							
➤ If you are willing, please tick which of the highlighted biodiversity enhancements you would be willing to carry out in the public access area (if created) in list 4.7							
4.7 (b)	Which of the highlighted biodiversity enhancements that you have ticked, do you consider to be most beneficial in delivering enhanced biodiversity?						
➤ Please rank up to 5 enhancements that you have ticked from 5 – 1 where 5 is the <b>most beneficial</b> , 3 is partially / somewhat beneficial and 1 is least beneficial.							



**C) Capital works, improvements and annual or seasonal maintenance tasks in ELMs**

Please tell us if you or a contractor (overseen by you) would be willing to undertake:-

4.8 (a)	Capital works to create <u>new or upgraded</u> access routes or within open access space?	Circle one	YES	NO
➤ If YES tick the works willing to be undertaken on list 4.8(a)				
4.8 (b)	Capital works to <u>improve existing rights of way</u> or within existing <u>open access space</u> ?	Circle one	YES	NO
➤ If YES tick the works willing to be undertaken on list 4.8(b)				
4.9	Annual access and biodiversity <u>maintenance</u> along rights of way or within in open access space (beyond cross compliance)	Circle one	YES	NO
➤ If YES tick the measures willing to be undertaken list 4.9				
➤ Tick 'other' in 4.8 / 4.9 if you think other measures should be included				

If you have ticked 'no' 'none' or 'other' in response to any of the questions in section 4 please explain in the box below. Use a separate piece of paper if necessary.

**Discussion 7** with the interviewer on access creation, biodiversity enhancement, capital improvements and annual maintenance in holding plans

ELMs 159 section 5 advice and collaborative working

What advice do you consider will be needed to help landowners and managers plan and how should this advice be delivered?

How do you consider that the need to work collaboratively with other land holding owners / managers should be managed and rewarded?

**Advice**

5.1 Do you think that specialist advice and guidance would need to be provided to help you plan?	Circle one	YES	NO
➤ If YES tick ANY that you think apply in list 5.1			
5.2 How should specialist advice and guidance be portrayed and delivered?			
➤ Tick ANY that you think would be helpful in list 5.2			
5.3 Would you expect to source your own guidance on some topics?	Circle one	YES	NO
➤ If YES tick ANY that you would expect to source yourself in list 5.3			

**Collaboration with others to deliver access development or improvements.**

5.4 How willing are you to work collaboratively with other land managers to create access and biodiversity?	Circle one*	1	2	3	4	5
5.5 How willing are you to work collaboratively with other land managers to improve and maintain access?	Circle one*	1	2	3	4	5
➤ *Please rate on a scale 1 to 5 (where 1 is not willing, 3 is undecided and 5 is very willing).						
➤ Tick ANY collaborative working that you would be prepared to undertake in list 5.5						
5.6 Should additional funding be available to facilitate collaboration within an ELM scheme?	Circle one	YES	NO			
➤ How should collaborative working be valued? Please discuss any ideas you may have						

Please record any comments that you have about the type and delivery of advice and collaborative working and how that should be funded here. Use a separate piece of paper if necessary.

**Discussion 8** with the interviewer on advice and collaborative working

ELMs 159 Section 6 The reward system for public goods – access with enhanced biodiversity.

Which of the following statements do you agree or disagree with?

In future, an access scheme (which may include creating access rights and developing, improving, maintaining routes (green infrastructure) with enhanced biodiversity should be

6.1a) incorporated <u>inside</u> a proposed tier system following the countryside stewardship model of basic, mid-tier and higher level?	Circle one	YES	NO	Don't know
6.1b) incorporated <u>inside</u> tier 1 ONLY and therefore be available to all ELMs participants who may need to collaborate?	Circle one	YES	NO	Don't know
6.1c) available to all scheme participants <u>outside</u> of any tier system?	Circle one	YES	NO	Don't know

Final willingness overall following these discussions

6.2 How willing are you to participate in an access and biodiversity scheme within ELMs following these discussions?	Circle one*	1	2	3	4	5
D) *Please rate on a scale 1 to 5 (where 1 is not willing, 3 is undecided and 5 is very willing).						

If you have any final comments on the development of an access and biodiversity ELM scheme please record them here, please use a separate piece of paper if necessary.

**Final discussion 9** with interviewer.

Thank you very much for participating in ELMs Test 159.

ELM 159 section 1 The Participant			SEE QUESTIONNAIRE - TICK OR HIGHLIGHT CHOOSING THE NUMBER OF OPTIONS REQUESTED							
<b>1.4 Participant describe you</b>	<b>Tick 1</b>	<b>1.7 Decision making</b>	<b>Tick 1</b>	<b>1.10 Primary purpose</b>	<b>Tick 1</b>	<b>1.12 Holding Size</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Tick 1</b>	<b>Hectares</b>	<b>Tick 1</b>
1.Landowner		1.Landowner		1.Cereals		1.Small holders	0 - 50		0 – 20	
2.Land Manager		2.Tenant		2.General cropping		2.Small farm	50 - 250		20 – 100	
3.Farmer		3.Partnership		3.Horticulture		3.Medium	250 - 500		100 - 200	
4.Business person		4.Trustees		4.Specialist pigs		4.Commercial	500 - 1000		200 - 400	
5.Custodian of the land		5.Manager		5.Specialist poultry		5.Estate	1000 +		400 +	
6.Food producer		6.Other		6.Dairy		<b>1.13 Designations / features</b>			<b>Tick any</b>	
7.Environmental goods supplier				7.LFA grazing livestock		1.Landscape (i.e. National PK /AONB)				
8.Societal goods supplier		<b>1.8 Tenancy type</b>	<b>Tick 1</b>	8.Lowland grazing livestock		2.Scheduled monuments				
9.Other		1.Lifetime		9.Mixed farm		3.Forts / war relics				
		2.Generational		10.Non-classified		4.World heritage site				
<b>1.5 Organisation Type</b>	<b>Tick 1</b>	3.Farm business		11.Commerial forestry		5.Registered battlefield				
1.Sole trader		4.Grass keep		12. Woodland conservation		6.Registered park / garden				
2.Family farm		5.Informal		13. Orchards		7.Points of interest				
3.Agri industrial		6.Other		14. Conservation		8.Viewing points				
4.Industrial		7. Not applicable		15.Industrial / commercial		9.Protected species				
5.Limited company				16.Development land		10.Special protection area				
6.Partnership		<b>1.9 Mission</b>	<b>Tick 1</b>	17.Equestrian		11.Special areas of conservation				
7.Trust		1.Agriculture		18.Small holding		12.Site of special scientific interest				
8.Charity		2.Horticulture		19.Sports		13.National nature reserve or Ramsar				
9.Estate		3.Mineral extraction		20.Field sports		14.Local nature reserve				
10.Government		4.Contracting		21. Other		15.Local wildlife or geological site				
11.Utility		5.Food production				16.Drinking water protected zone				
12.Development		6.Woodland		<b>1.11 Secondary purpose</b>	<b>Tick ANY</b>	17.Inheritance tax exemption				
13.Educational establishment		7.Wildlife / biodiversity		1.Equestrian		18.Other				
14.Other		8.Landscape		2.Tourism accomodation		19.None				
		9.Local Charity		3.Sales		<b>1.14 BFP /ES Sch</b>	<b>In scheme</b>	<b>Tick 1</b>		
<b>1.6 Tenure of holding</b>	<b>Tick 1</b>	10.Government		4.Subletting		1.Higher tier				
1.Wholly owned		11.Crown		5.Development		2.Mid tier				
2.Mostly owned		12.Duchy		6.Field sport		3.Capital (CS)only				
3.Non private landlord		13.Ministry of Defence		7.Sports		4.HBB scheme				
4.Mix owned / tenanted		14.Government Agency		8.Other		<b>1.15</b>	<b>Not in scheme</b>	<b>Tick 1</b>		
5. Tenanted		15.Local Government		9. None		5.Not considered				
6. Mostly tenanted		16.Church				6.No features to protect				
7.Commons agreement		17.Utility				7.Too complex				
8.Leased		18. Other				8.Not enough payment				
9.Other						9.Other				

ELM 159 section 2 existing public access								
2.1 Existing ROW	Tick any	2.5 Permitted users	Tick any	2.10 Other activities permitted	Tick any		2.18 Access structures	Tick any
1.Footpath		1.Ramblers		1.Dog walking field			1.Stile	
2.Bridleway		2.Dog walkers		2.Metal detecting			2.Pedestrian gate	
3.Restricted byway		3.Runners		3.Horse riding on margins			3.Kissing gate	
4.Byway (BOAT)		4.Horse-riders		4.Mountain bike course			4.Bridle gate	
5.UUR (ORPA)		5.Cyclists		5.Rough shooting			5.Bristol gate	
6.Open access		6.Carriage drivers		6.Hunting			6.York gate	
7.Waterway		7.Motor cyclists		7.Caving			7.Field gate	
		8.Motor vehicle users		8.Carriages in parks			8.Foot bridge	
<b>2.2 Use /activity</b>	<b>Tick any</b>	9.Canoeists		9.Other			9.Horse bridge	
1.Rambling		10.ATV / disabled					10.Vehicular bridge	
2.Dog walking		11.Other					11.Waymarks	
3.Running				<b>Access infrastructure</b>			12.User educational notices	
4.Horse-riding		<b>2.6 Permit Reason</b>	<b>Tick any</b>	<b>2.13 Route Infrastructure types</b>	<b>a) Tick any</b>	<b>b) Rank</b>	13.Rights of way signpost	
5.Cycling		1.Single user request		1.Corridor route			14.Permissive path signpost	
6.Carriage driving		2.User group request		2.Boundary / margin route			15.Other	
7.Motor cycling		3.LHA request		3.Unenclosed / open route			16.None	
8.Motor vehicle use		4.Higher Level Subsidy		4.Mixed route (elements 1,2,or 3)				
9.Canoeing		5.Other		5.Open access / woodland area				
10.ATV / disabled								
11.Other		<b>2.7 Formality</b>	<b>Tick 1</b>	<b>2.15 Terrain types</b>	<b>a) Tick any</b>	<b>b) Rank</b>		
12. None		1.Informal		1.Woodland				
		2.Formal - licence		2.Orchard				
<b>2.4 Route / space</b>		3.Formal - lease		3.Arable				
(Permitted)	<b>Tick any</b>	4.Other		4.Hill land				
1.Footpath		<b>2.8 Permit scenarios</b>	<b>Tick any</b>	5.Grassland improved pasture				
2.Bridleway		1.No existing access rights on route		6.Grassland wildflower-rich				
3.Carriageway		2.No access rights in open space		7.Heathland / moorland				
4.Open access		3.Additional user type on a footpath		8.Beach / Coastal				
5.Waterway		4.Additional user type on bridleway		9.Open Water / Wetland				
6.Other		5.Additional user in open space		10.Conservation area				
		6.Other		11. Other				

ELM 159 section 3 valuation and payments and 4 (part) access creation and biodiversity (continued overleaf)							
<b>3.1 Valuation / payment criteria</b>	<b>Tick 1</b>		<b>4.2 Benefits / opportunities</b>	<b>a)Tick any</b>	<b>b)Rank</b>	<b>4.4 Mitigating solutions continued</b>	<b>a)Tick any</b>
1.National land value average			1.Public health and well being			7.Legal (dedication)	
2.Local land value average			2.Tourism accomodation			8.Annual assessments	
3.Devaluation of land calculation			3.Wider rural economy			9.Route diversion (permanent)	
4.Scheme agreed value			4.Direct sales to public			10.Route diversion (temporary)	
5.Other value			5.Facility development			11.Improved structures	
			6.Education - public / user			12.Improved surface	
<b>3.2 Payment variations</b>	<b>Tick any</b>		7. Opportunities - livery etc			13.Protection of utilities	
1.Route length per meter			8. Other			14.Reduction of widths	
2.Corridor width standard at 4 m				<b>a)Tick any</b>	<b>b)Rank</b>	15.Use of barriers	
3.Standard width margin 3 m			<b>4.3 Factors affecting willingness</b>			16.Other	
4.Cross land standard width 2m			1.Reasonable reward			17.None	
5.Access area per acre / hectare			2.Community need				
6.Additional width existing route upgrade			3.Enhancing biodiversity			<b>4.7 Biodiversity works in access space</b>	<b>a)Tick any</b>
7.Type of right granted			4.Economic opportunity			1.Drystone wall rebuild	<b>b)Rank</b>
8.Other			5.Education opportunity (users)			2.Hedge planting	
<b>4.1 Identified access priority</b>	<b>a)Tick any</b>	<b>b)Rank</b>	6.Need for collaboration			3.Hedgerow restoration	
1.Feature / access to countryside			7.Need for advice			4.Woodland / copse creation	
2.Local economy /tourism promotion			8.Impact of user			5.Woodland enhancement	
3.Avoiding busy road (M /A / B / local)			9.Impact of routes			6.Tree avenue creation	
4.Circular route for leisure / recreation			10.Other			7.Specimen tree planting	
5.Route by water			11.None			8.Pond / wetland creation	
6.Route crossing road, railway, river				<b>a)Tick any</b>		9.Pond / wetland restoration	
7.Continuation of cul de sac			<b>4.4 Mitigation solutions</b>			10.Ditch restoration	
8.Route enabling local journey			1.User education			11.Grassland creation /enhancement	
9.Route around town / development			2.Clearer signage / waymarks			12.Buffer strip creation	
10.Heritage of space or route			3.User containment			13.Wildflower margin estblishmnt	
11.Linear - connecting communities			4.Clearer explanation / requests			14.Installation of bird boxes	
12.Proximity to long distant trail			5.Monitoring			15.Installation of bat boxes	
13.Route to open access space / woods			6.Police action			16.Heathland creation / enhancement	
14.Route through open access space			Continued....			17.Other	
15.Spatial access within open space						18.None	



ELM 159 interview data capture - section 4 continued and 5 advice and collaboration						
4.8 Capital works in ELMs	a)NEW	b)EXISTING	5.1 Advice subject	Tick any	5.3 Own source	Tick any
	Tick any	Tick any	1.Legal rights of way creation		1.Occupier's liability	
1.Structures replace stiles with gates			2.Route location planning		2.Liabilities for trees	
2.Structures replace old gates with new			3.Type of route		3.Health and safety	
3.Remove unnecessary structures			4.Prospective users / rights		4.Other	
4.Replace / upgrade (owned) bridges			5.Access structures		5.None	
5.Surface - drainage works			6.Surface types / improvements			
6.Surface - improvements			7.Other structures / ownerships			
7.Clearance (nettles brambles etc)			8.Habitat enhancement		<b>5.5 Collaborative working scenarios</b>	<b>Tick any</b>
8.Install / replace signposts			9.Permissions re SSSI / heritage		1.Single route crossing two holdings	
9.Install / replace waymarks			10.Sub-contractors		2.Single route crossing several holdings	
10.Install educational signage			11.Works plan		3.Community circuit linking heritage / business	
11.Biodiversity measures			12.Accountable route inspection		4.Community trail linking urban to country	
12.Other			13.User education & information		5.Linear long distance route	
13.None			14.Interaction with users		6.Cost of machinery and tools hire	
			15.Maintenance		7.Grants for structures / installations	
<b>4.9 Annual maintenance</b>	<b>Tick any</b>		16.Diversification opportunities		8.Grants for biodiversity measures	
1.Adjustment / repair structures			17.Collaboration		9.Creating wildlife /biodiversity corridor	
2.Remove redundant structures			18.Budgeting		10.Extending wildlife /biodiversity corridor	
3.Maintain /repair structures			19.Cross compliance		11.Improvement and maintenance	
4.Drainage			20.Other		12.Obtaining advice / planning	
5.Mowing			21.None		13.Other	
6.Tree inspections / works					14.None	
7.Clearing vegetation			<b>5.2 Preferred advice delivery &amp; portrayal</b>	<b>Tick any</b>		
8.Signage repair and replacement			1.Manual			
9.Waymark replacement			2.By person (agent)			
10.Educational replacement / removal			3.Platform – internet			
11.Biodiversity / habitat management			4.You tube video			
12.Other			5.Diagrams			
13.None			6.Photographs			
			7.Text			
			8.Film			
			9.Other			
			10.None			

**TABLE 2.24 BARRIERS TO ACCESS**

(a) TICK ANY THAT YOU HAVE **EXPERIENCED** / HAVE IMPACTED ON **CURRENT** OPERATIONS ONLY

(b) IS THE MITIGATION / SOLUTION PROPOSED EFFECTIVE? TICK FOR 'YES' CROSS FOR 'NO'

	EXPERIENCES /IMPACTS ON CURRENT OPERATIONS		TICK ANY (a)	MITIGATION / SOLUTION	YES / NO (b)
1	Behaviour	Dislike of certain users or individuals due to poor behaviour		User education via countryside code promotion (national)	
2	Commercial use	Use of access routes by commercial enterprises		Communication between businesses on frequency	
3	Conservation	Damage to habitat / biosecurity		Contain, divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage	
4	Conservation	Wildlife disturbance		Contain, divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage	
5	Criminal	Theft, vandalism, interference, fly tipping occurring through access points		Farm Watch, police action, wildlife cameras (grants)	
6	Crops	Damage to crops / grassland		Contain, divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage, mow route so obvious	
7	Dogs	Dog fouling		Education, bin provision,	
8	Dogs	Dog bag disposal		Education, bin provision, scheme reward	
9	Dogs	Worrying of stock (especially sheep)		Education, possible containment,	
10	Field sports	Disruption of shoots / game / fishing / hunting		Contain, divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage	
11	Littering	General rubbish left		Education, bin provision, scheme reward	
12	Liability	Health and safety issues (especially on industrial sites) e.g. quarry operations, chemical storage		Contain, divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage	
13	Liability	Interaction vehicles / users		Contain, divert away from yards and other operations (where possible), shepherd users, education, explain, signage	
14	Liability	Occupiers liability Acts – visitors / trespassers		Reduce liability - dedicate as highway / open access land under reward scheme	

	IMPACTS ON OPERATIONS		TICK	MITIGATION / SOLUTION	YES / NO
15	Liability	Tree maintenance along routes / space		Annual assessments / maintenance through scheme	
16	Liability for maintenance / improvements	Maintaining structures – gaps, stiles, gates, bridges, signs, waymarks		Maintain through scheme – essential for accessibility / ease of use / encourage users on to preferred network routes / away from operations	
17	Operations	Interruption to periodic heavy machinery / movements i.e. harvesting		Contain, temporary divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage	
18	Racing (permitted)	Motor / horse / bike / scrambler courses near right of way		Contain, temporary divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage	
19	Route location	Miscellaneous route issues – divert / rationalise use on ‘preferred’ routes		Good signage, furniture and conditions - encourage users to use preferred routes rather than existing right of way.	
20	Safety	Child safety / employee safety (related to land holding)		Route design / accessibility / awareness of sensitive areas (e.g. near farmhouse), user education.	
21	Stock - injury	Injury to stock / horses		Good structure / furniture / installation / design and maintenance is essential – provision through reward scheme	
22	Stock rearing	Seasonal disturbance e.g. lambing / calving		Contain, temporary divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage	
23	Stock - security	Stock let out (through access point) / escaping on to roads / neighbours land		Good structure / furniture / installation / design and maintenance is essential – provision through reward scheme	
24	Surface	Damage through use		Improve surface maintenance, ditching, drainage, stock control on paths – possible through reward scheme	
25	Unintended trespass	Users straying from route / open access space		Education – signs and waymarks, user containment if persists. Provision through reward scheme.	
26	Intended trespass	By any user (including motorised)		Reduce width of access point, motorbike stiles provision under scheme, education	
27	Water	Interruption of supply		Improve protection of utility infrastructure – provision through scheme?	
28	Wildlife / biodiversity	Disturbance – certain times of year		Temporary route diversion / signage / education	
29	Miscellaneous				

## Analysis of landowner and land manager (50 test participants) responses to the ELMS 159 questionnaire and option lists recorded at interview.

Test objectives to be met -

Randomly select, through trusted advisor participation and existing Trails Trust landowner / land manager connections, 50 holdings within or close to the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Specific areas will be targeted to ensure a range of sectors and geographies are included so that access pressures are represented across the test holdings.

Hold 50 farm table discussions between local advisors and the chosen participants to explore their attitude and willingness to provide access as part of a future ELM scheme.

Discussions explored the:

- Barriers to putting in access
- Potential solutions (including advice)
- Valuation for the creation of different types of access – which include routes that cross land or contained within green corridors.
- Willingness to create, enhance or maintain access
- Delivery of environmental outcomes through the development of green corridors.
- Collaborative mechanisms required to engage neighbouring landowners to engage in the creation of joined up routes planned to cross multiple holdings, discussions will engage with these landowners to create joined up routes
- Incorporation of access into a land management plan.

Farm table discussions Interview technique

50 test farm table interviews were undertaken with randomly selected participants from across the test area. Interviews took an average of 2 hours. A total of 72 interviewees took part, either by themselves, two people together (usually partners or colleagues) or family groups of 3. Where the 'number of participants' is quoted in the data that follows that represents the agreed view of all interviewees present at the 50 interviews undertaken.

The interviews were normally conducted by one test team member with the test facilitator taking notes, completing the questionnaire and option lists. The notes were transcribed into an interview discussion document by the facilitator and signed off by the interviewer.

By necessity due to COVID 19 restrictions some interviews were carried out by video. There is no discernible difference in the results except it was far more fun to talk face to face with tea and biscuits even in a windy barn sitting on straw bales.

In the data sets that follow, see individual questions (charts / analysis) for full sets of data in each section. Each section's results are included in a table at the beginning of each section with the key findings highlighted.

## Questionnaire Section 1: Discussion 1 about the 50 test participants

Section one questions and options were designed to record information about the participant, the holding and business that they own and or manage within the test area.

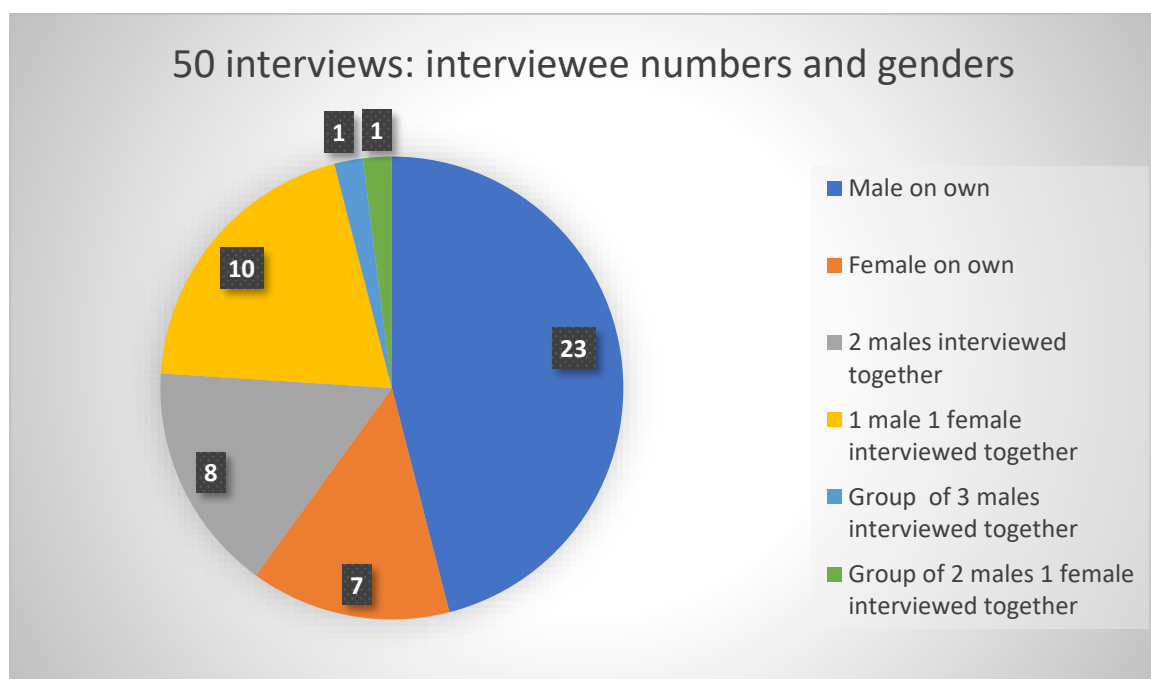
Question	Result in brief
1.1 – 1.3	Personal details which have been anonymised except we have displayed the number of interviewees, their gender and age RESULT: 23 (46%) of interviews were conducted with a male interviewee on his own. 7 (14%) were conducted with a female on her own. The total number of female interviewees was 18 (25%). The total number of male interviewees was 54 (75%). Average male age is 53, average female age is 56 (where age given)
1.4	Participant identity - how do the participants see themselves? RESULT: 24 (48%) identify as landowner, 15 (30%) as farmer. 5 (10%) identified as custodians of the land.
1.5	Organisation type - how is the business organised? RESULT: 16 (32%) in partnership, 8 (16%) a running a family farm. 8 (16%) are a limited company
1.6 <b>Key finding</b>	Tenure of holding who owns the holding? RESULT: 30 (60%) participants wholly own their land holding, 11 (22%) mixed owned / tenanted, 9 (18%) mostly own their land holding.
1.7 <b>Key finding</b>	Decision making – who makes the decisions? RESULT: 24 participants (48%) said ‘the landowner’, 19 (38%) said ‘the partnership’
1.8	Tenancies and grass keep – what type of tenancy is held where holdings are mostly owned or mixed owned and tenanted? RESULT 20 (40%) participants farm land that is on a leased, rented or grass keep basis. In six cases participants with lifetime (10%), farm business (25%) and generational tenancy (30%) arrangements also take on additional grass keep.
1.9 <b>Key finding</b>	Mission - what is the participant’s main mission? RESULT: 28 (56%) agriculture, 9 (18%) other 4 (8%) wildlife / biodiversity
1.10 <b>Key finding</b>	What is the participant’s primary purpose? RESULT: 17 (34 %) Lowland Grazing Livestock, 9 (18%) Dairy. Other 7 (14%)
1.11 <b>Key finding</b>	Does the participant have secondary purpose or diversification on their holding or other employment? RESULT: 47 (94%) participants have a secondary purpose, diversification or employment only 3 (6%) said none (see data table)
1.12 <b>Key finding</b>	What size is the participant’s holding? RESULT: small farm (28%), medium farm (26%) or estate (28%)
1.13 <b>Key finding</b>	What designations or protections are attached to the land holding, what features exist? RESULT: 30 (60%) are operating their business in a protected landscape (Mendip Hills AONB). 24 (48%) have wonderful views to offer. 23 (46%)

	scheduled monuments 20 (40%) have SSSI designations 20 (40%) protected species on the holding.
1.14 <b>Key finding</b>	Is the participant's holding or part of the holding is currently in a countryside stewardship scheme? RESULT: 27 (54%) are in CSS schemes 23 (46%) are not (includes landowners interviewed whose tenants might be in CSS).
1.15 <b>Key finding</b>	Did the participant use an agent to help them apply for a countryside stewardship scheme? RESULT: 28 (56%) participants had used an agent to help them apply
1.16	1.16 Is the holding classified as organic? <u>RESULT</u> : 8 participants had farmed organically on all or some of their holding, 6 continued to use organic methods, 2 had given up organic farming.

### Questionnaire Section 1 Interview discussion 1. Test participants analysis

Questions 1.1 to 1.3 collected personal details which have been anonymised.

Range of interviewees present at interviews.



RESULT: 23 (46%) of interviews were conducted with a male interviewee on his own. 7 (14%) were conducted with a female on her own.

The total number of female interviewees was 18 (25%). The total number of male interviewees was 54 (75%).

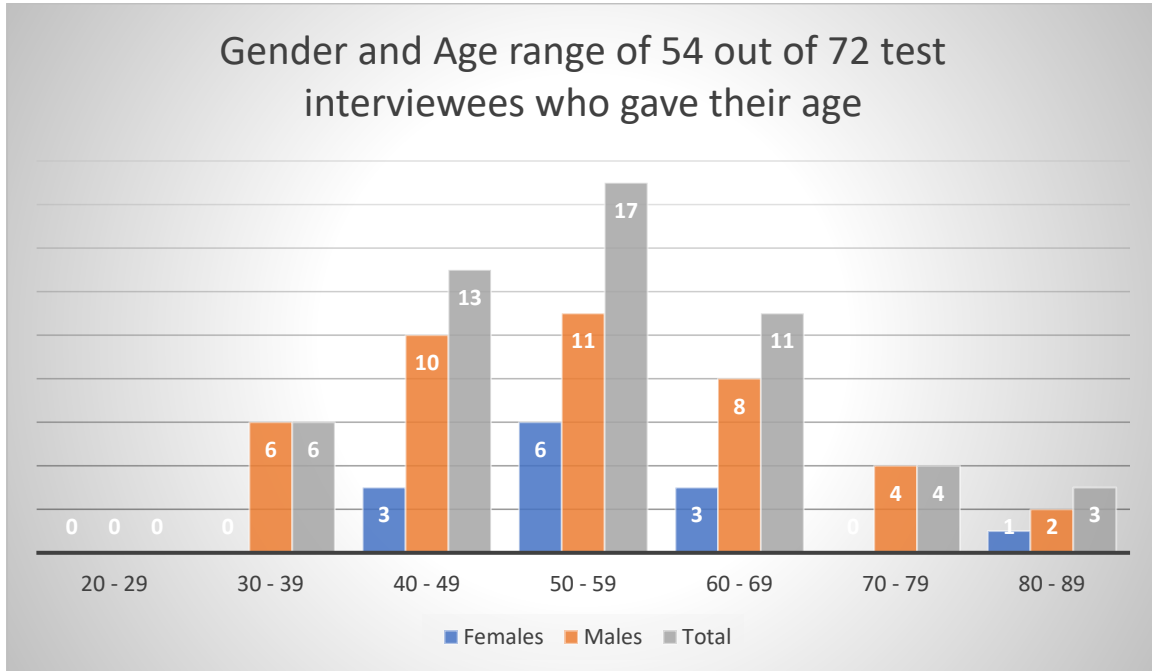
#### Snapshot of participants interviewed.

Participant 5 (male) is the deputy land steward for a Crown Estate with a 1000+ acre estate in the test area and comprising some 140,000 acres lying mostly in South West England.



Participant 79 (female) farms lowland grazing livestock on a 50 – 250 acre holding with secondary interests including a caravan and camping site and an equestrian livery business in addition to full time employment managing a bathroom and kitchen business.

Interviewees age range from those who stated their age.



**RESULT:** average male age is 53, average female age is 56

Snapshot of participants by age.

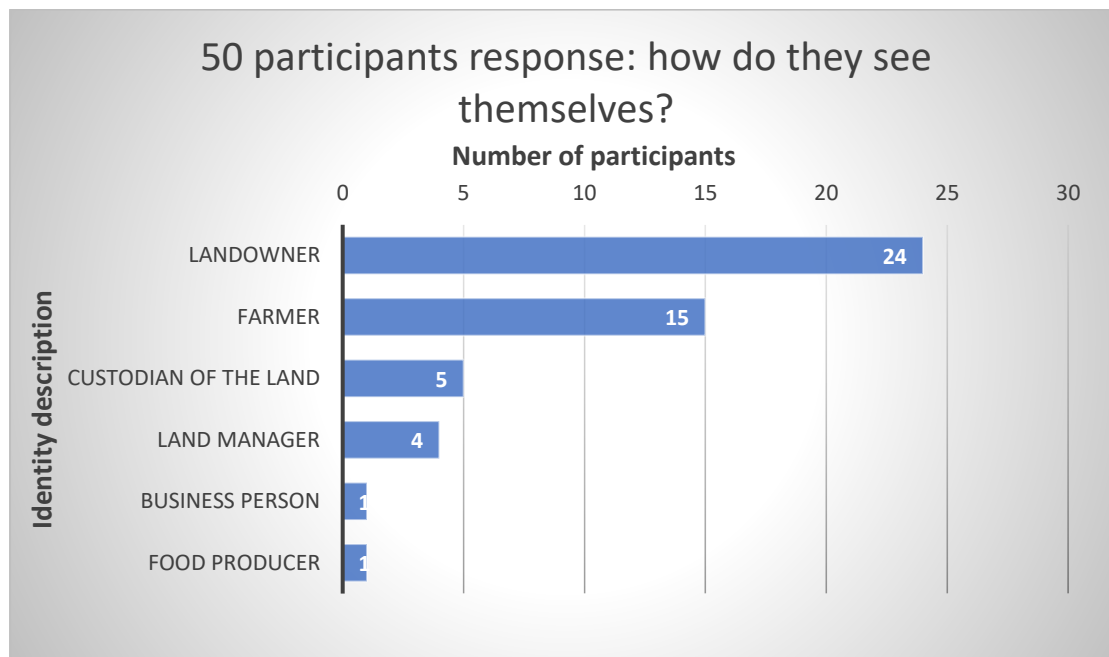
The youngest male participant (30) described himself as a farmer. He is engaged on a mixed family farm of 250 – 500 acres with additional interests in an agricultural contracting business (including erecting industrial / agricultural buildings), sub-letting industrial units and development.

The oldest male participant (82) described himself as a farmer. He is engaged in a mixed family farm partnership (dairy and sheep). He said that ‘breeding the sheep dog puppies’, that we were shown after the interview, ‘is more ‘more profitable than farming 2,000 acres.’

The youngest female participant (42) described herself as a landowner. She is engaged in agriculture (low land grazing livestock) and sub - letting on a holding size of 500 – 1000 acres and has other substantial industrial and property interests.

The oldest female participant (81) is married to the oldest male participant and is engaged in supporting the mixed family farm.

#### 1.4 Participant identity - how do the participants see themselves?



**RESULT:** 24 (48%) identify as landowner, 15 (30%) as farmer. 5 identified as custodians of the land.

Options not chosen include environmental goods supplier / societal good supplier / other.

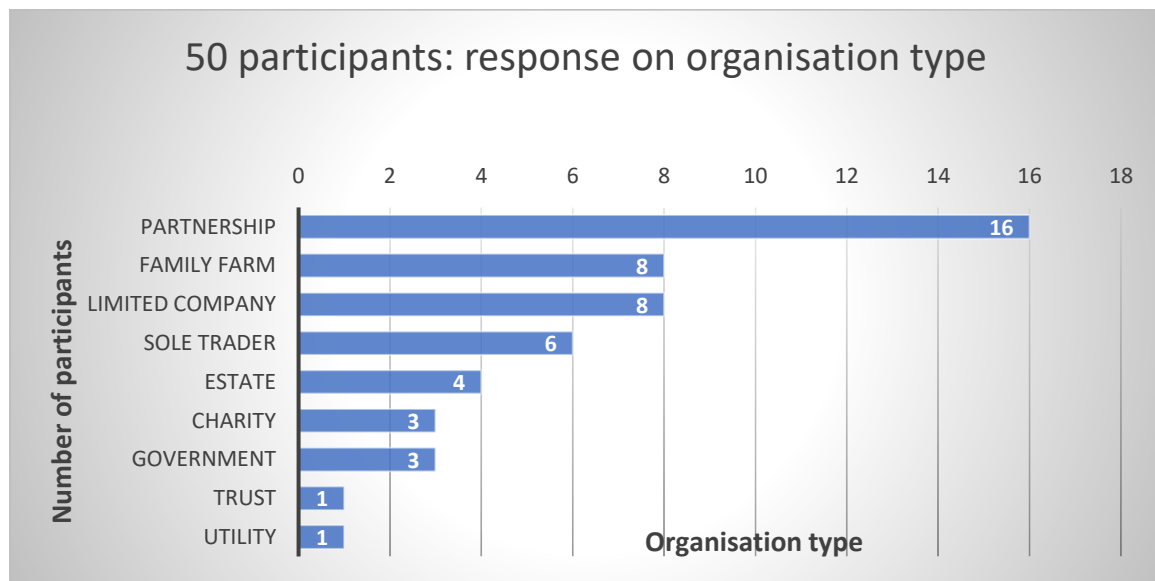
#### Snapshot of participants' responses on how they see themselves.

Participant 1 (landowner), who manages part of the land holding whilst also pursuing a career as a barrister in London chambers, said that the family own an historic landed estate of some 3,000 acres comprising farmland, woodland and forestry, gruffy ground (former lead mining areas SSSI) and property. The farmland is let on various mixed farm interests mostly dairy and arable, a large equestrian centre and a forestry area is leased to Forest England / Forestry Commission.

Participant 3 who considers himself to be a custodian of the land, said that all of the land is farmed and / or managed for the benefit of landscape quality and heritage 'it is really important it is conserved, especially being the entrance to the AONB, and passed on in the same condition'.

Participant 58 who is a farmer and former National Farmers Union Regional Chairman) said that the family partnership runs a large commercial farm situated in the heart of the Mendip Hills AONB above Cheddar Gorge with several SSSIs and Roman Town remains. Specialisms include lowland grazing livestock (sheep and suckler cows), tourism accommodation, including glamping, and film locations.

## 1.5 Organisation type - how is the business organised?



**RESULT:** 16 (32%) said they are in partnership, 8 (16%) are running a family farm. 8 (16%) are a limited company. Options not chosen include agri – industrial, industrial, development, educational establishment, other.

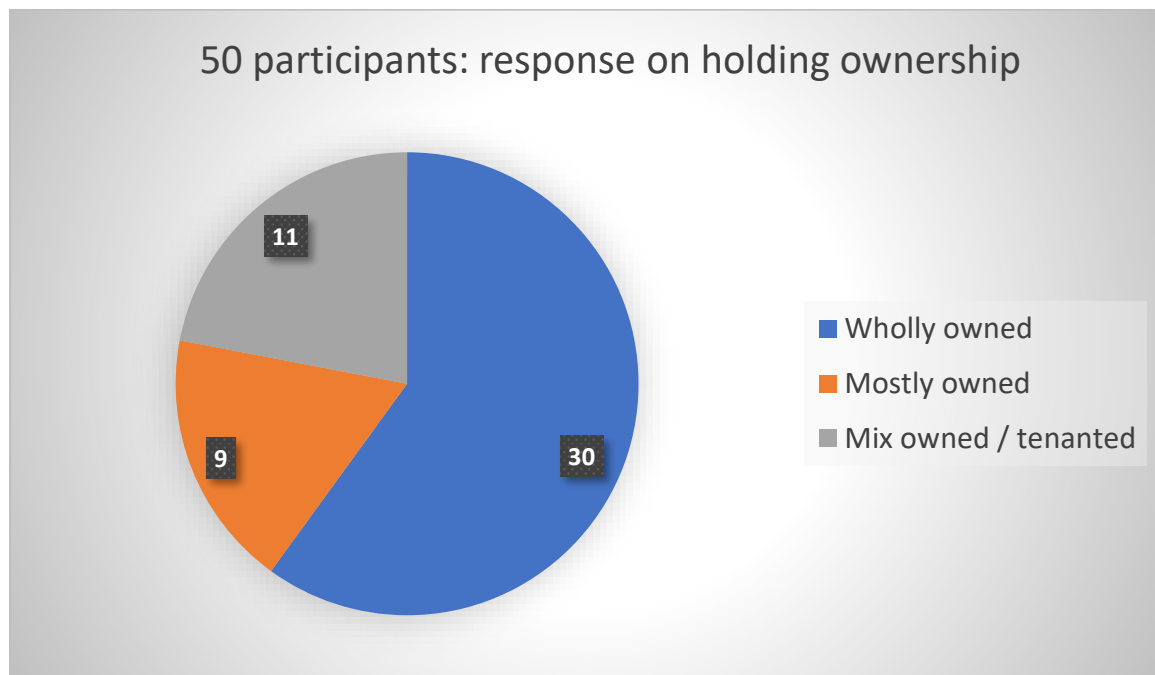
### Snapshot of a farm business organisation.

Participant 24 is an elderly gentleman who farms lowland grazing livestock on hill land as a sole trader. He was supported at the interview by his son and nephew (and the farm dog). The three of them farm and conduct most of their business in a joined up, supportive, intertwined fashion so the interview was wide ranging as well as humorous with lots of tea and biscuits.

None of the group are or have been in a countryside stewardship scheme (CSS). They said that they disliked 'being told what to do or being controlled on their own land'. The participant's nephew had been in the former ELS scheme – compared to that 'CSS schemes are badly worded, poorly rewarded, not worth doing'.

Between them they own and run a wide range of secondary interests which include industrial units on the edge of Weston – Super – Mare, sub-letting property, contracting and running a commercial shoot. They have their own bore holes for water. There are horse shoe bats 'in the caves' but they were not sure if these were lesser or greater horseshoe bats.

## 1.6 Tenure of holding – who owns the holding?



**RESULT:** 30 (60%) participants wholly own their land holding, 11 (22%) mixed owned / tenanted, 9 (18%) mostly own their land holding.

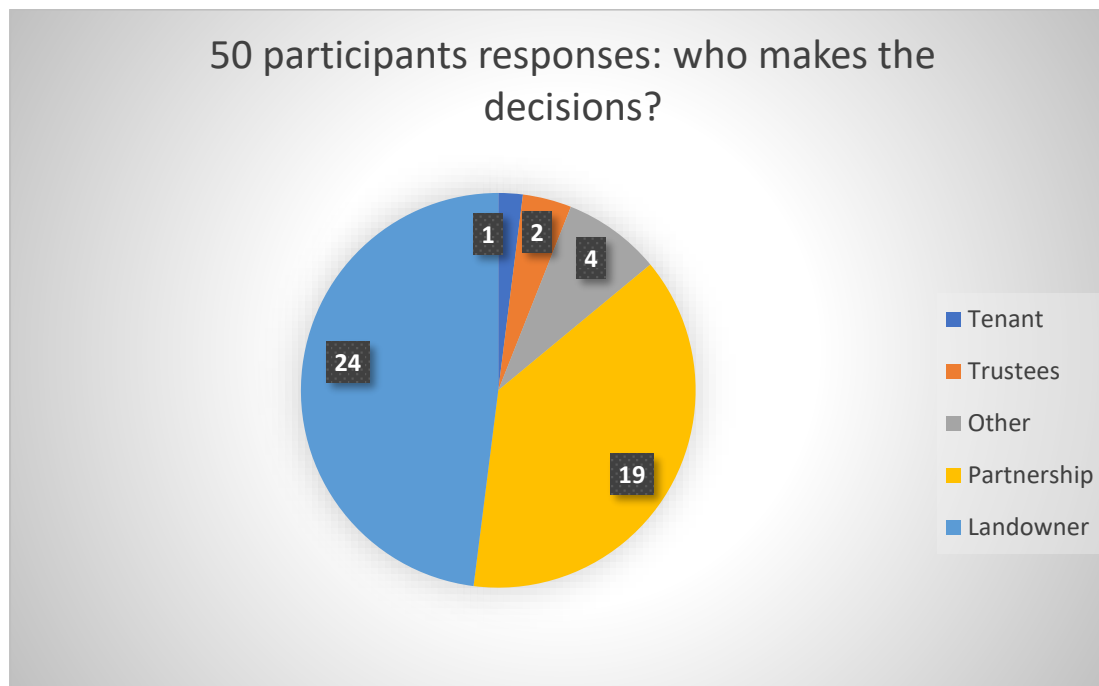
Options not chosen include: non-private landlord, tenanted, mostly tenanted, commons agreement, leased, other

### Snapshot of holding ownership types.

Participant 7 - a countryside manager and his colleague an area ranger represented a charity whose mission is to care for houses, buildings, gardens, coast and countryside on behalf of the nation. The charity owns around 240,000 acres in England (plus additional acreage within the British Isles). The holding within the Mendip Hills Test Area covers around 1650 acres and includes special landscape such as Crook Peak and Wavering Down, part of Cheddar Gorge and surrounding area, Tor Hill Woods, Ebbor Gorge and Sand Point on the North Somerset Coast.

Participant 102 farms around 400 acres as a mixed owned and tenanted farm business. 100 acres is owned by his father and farmed on a generational tenancy, the remainder is farmed on various agreements a five-year tenancy grass keep and Gentleman's Agreements. The business encompasses farming, agricultural contracting business (including erecting industrial / agricultural buildings), sub-letting industrial units and development. The participant's father (the landowner) hauls aggregate for the local quarry.

## 1.7 Decision making - who makes the major decisions?



RESULT: 24 participants (48%) said 'the landowner', 19 (38%) said 'the partnership'.

Other was described as company senior management (3), Ministry of Defence (1).

Option not chosen: manager

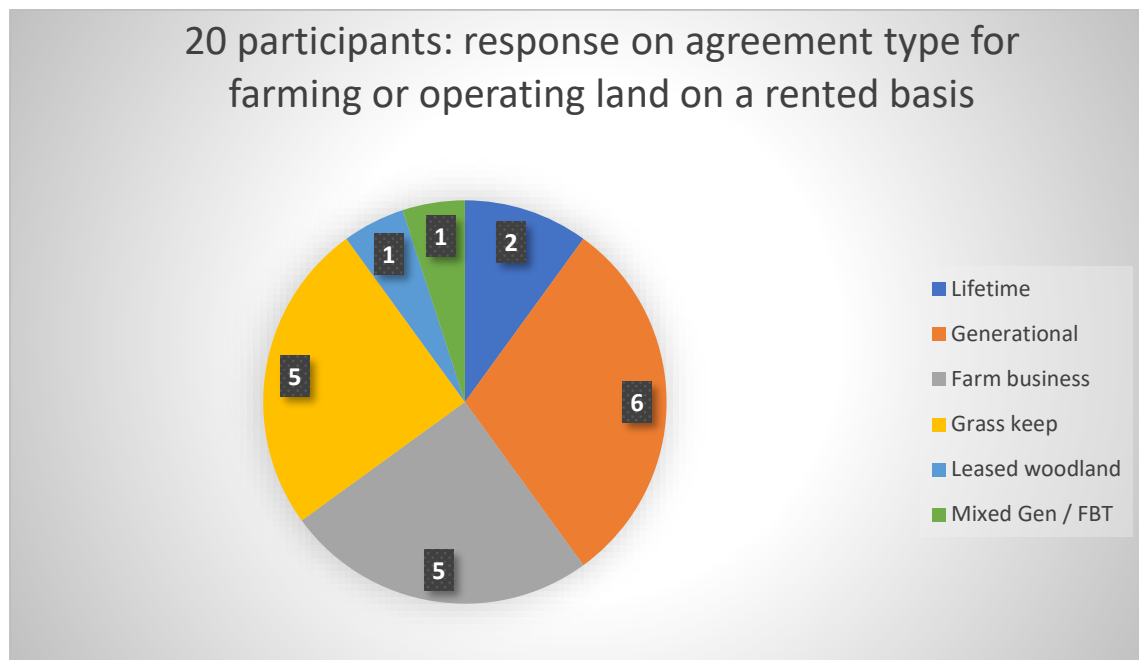
### Snapshot of responses about decision making.

Participant 98 are a husband and wife partnership farming a medium sized family, specialising in dairy (around 300 cows) and equestrian livery (for around 50 horses). They make decisions together. The farm business is very much a family affair with parents and offspring working in the farm office doing administration and keeping costs down. The dairy is operated as a 'one- man unit'. One participant said (of the other) 'he works horrendous hours, if I had to replace him I would have to pay at least two people possibly three, it would never be viable.'

Participant 7 representing a national land-owning charity said that most decisions are made through local partnerships which include local rangers and countryside managers in consultation with tenants and other interested parties (where appropriate).

Participant 102 said that the day to day business decisions are made by the participant on a 'family decision / Gentleman's agreement basis - that needs sorting out'.

1.8 Tenancies and grass keep – what type of tenancy is held where holdings are mostly owned or mixed owned and tenanted?



**RESULT:** 20 participants farmed land that is on a leased, rented or grass keep basis. In six cases participants with lifetime (10%), farm business (25%) and generational tenancy (30%) arrangements also take on additional grass keep.

Option not chosen: informal

Snapshot of a partially owned / partially rented holding on farm business tenancy with additional grass keep.

Participant 49 operates a medium sized mixed farm with lowland grazing livestock on the North Somerset Levels not far from the Somerset coast. Around 200 acres is owned and the remainder is held on a farm business tenancy and grass keep.

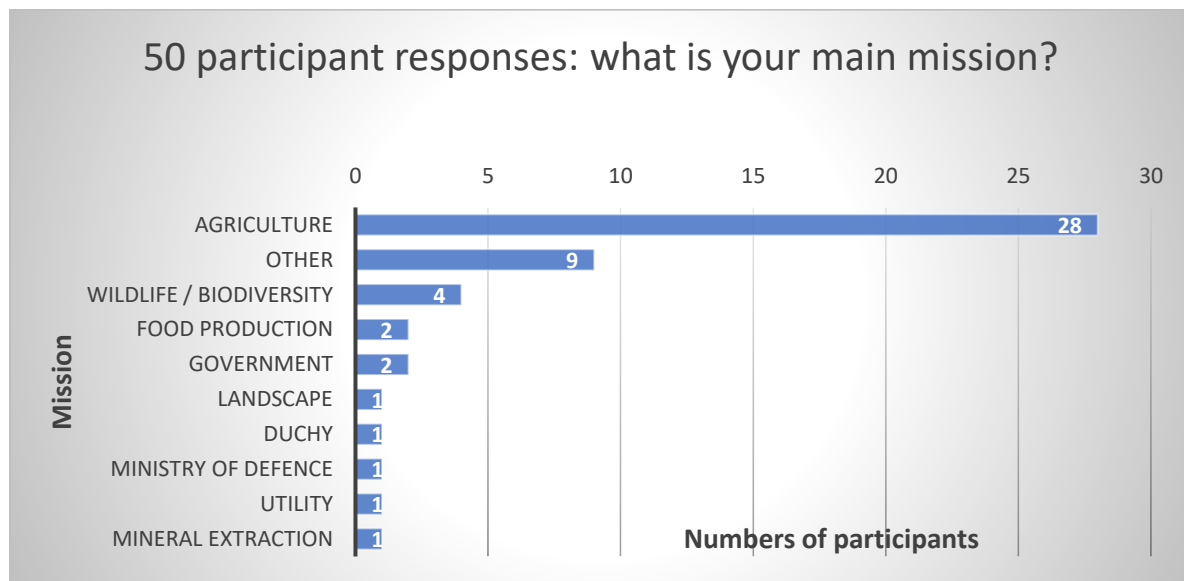
Diversification interests include business and residential letting and the production of feed for the equestrian market (hay /haylage).

The participant confirmed that the holding is not in a Countryside Stewardship scheme saying 'it only pays a small amount of money so I just as well go and earn more money by making a few extra loads of hay for the horses, also there are too many restrictions.'

He was keen to take part in the test because 'it is important to be in the vanguard, not left in the Guards Van – knowledge is king!'



## 1.9 Mission - what is the participant's main mission?



**RESULT:** 28 (56%) participants said agriculture. 4 (8%) said wildlife / biodiversity. Other (9) were described as multifaceted businesses (5), property letting (1), world class regeneration (1), equestrian centre (1), and landscape, access and heritage (1).

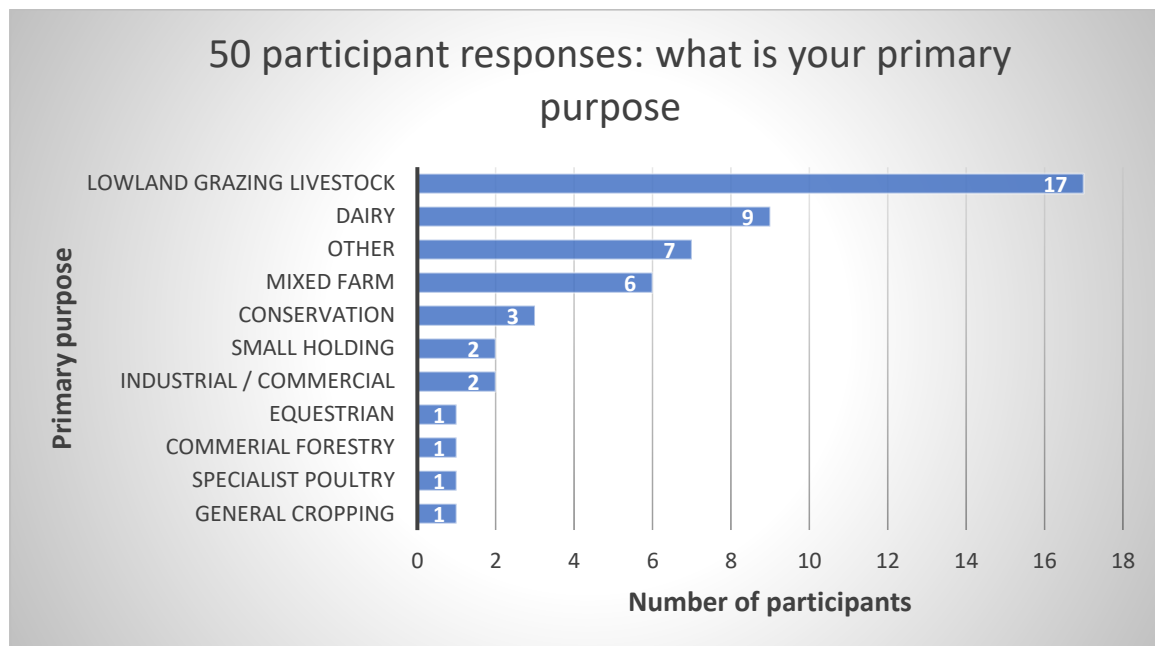
Options not chosen include horticulture, contracting, woodland, local charity, crown, government agency, local government, church.

### Snapshot of participant's responses on mission.

Participant 4, a chartered surveyor who manages a large estate, said that the Mendip land includes part of Cheddar Gorge and a cave complex and is divided into three parcels, mostly open access land and managed for conservation and public access, therefore the company's mission is wildlife and biodiversity. The primary purpose is tourism and commercial interests – the income from this supports the environmental and conservation work, which is considerable.

Participant 56, a farmer involved in the management of the AONB, who farms 6,000 sheep, 40 cattle and woodland pigs in partnership, owning and managing a renowned regenerative agroecological farm on the Mendip Hills AONB plateau, said that their mission is regenerative sustainable farming. (Regenerative farming adheres to principles which mimic the rhythms of the natural world resulting in increased biodiversity, soil enrichment, improved watersheds and mitigation of global warming.) This Mendip farm has just been certified as one of fifty leading regenerative farms in the world.

### 1.10 What is the participant's primary purpose?



**RESULT:** 17 (34 %) participants said Lowland Grazing Livestock, 9 (18%) said Dairy. Other 7 (14%) were described as nature recovery (1), multi-faceted (1), investment income (1), farming people and livestock (1), tourism & commercial enterprise (1), water delivery (1), military operations (1).

Options not chosen: cereals, horticulture, specialist pigs, LFA grazing livestock, non-classified, woodland conservation, orchards, development land, sports, field sports.

#### Snapshot of participants' responses on primary purpose.

Participant 17 said that the company farms 4,000 acres - 2,000 acres is owned outright and 2,000 acres held on farm business tenancies. 450 acres is registered organic. The business is principally dairy, farm to supermarket through the production of cheese. The company also operates a large agricultural contracting business.

Participant 112 said that her estate (250 – 500 acres) is a multifaceted business. The main mission is agriculture, primary purpose mixed farm (let out sheep grazing and equine fodder production) with secondary businesses being equestrian livery, a vineyard and a tourism-based business offering wedding, conference, accommodation and hospitality.

1.11 Does the participant have secondary purpose or diversification on their holding or other employment?

Secondary purpose (diversification) or employment

Property let	9	Woodland	2
Equestrian	8	Access & Recreation	2
Secondary animal production	5	Cheese production	1
Conservation	4	Development	1
Contracting	4	Events	1
Tourism	4	Investment initiatives	1
Employed	3	Licensing	1
Field sport	3	Multi-faceted	1
Land let	3	Orchards	1
Connecting people & nature	2	Plant hire	1
Councillor	2	Sales	1
Equine feeds	2	Slaughterhouse	1
Industrial units	2	Tack shop	1
Solar	2	Vineyard / wine	1
Wedding venue	2		

**RESULT:** 47 (94%) participants have a secondary purpose, diversification or employment only 3 (6%) said none

Snapshot of participants' responses on secondary purpose.

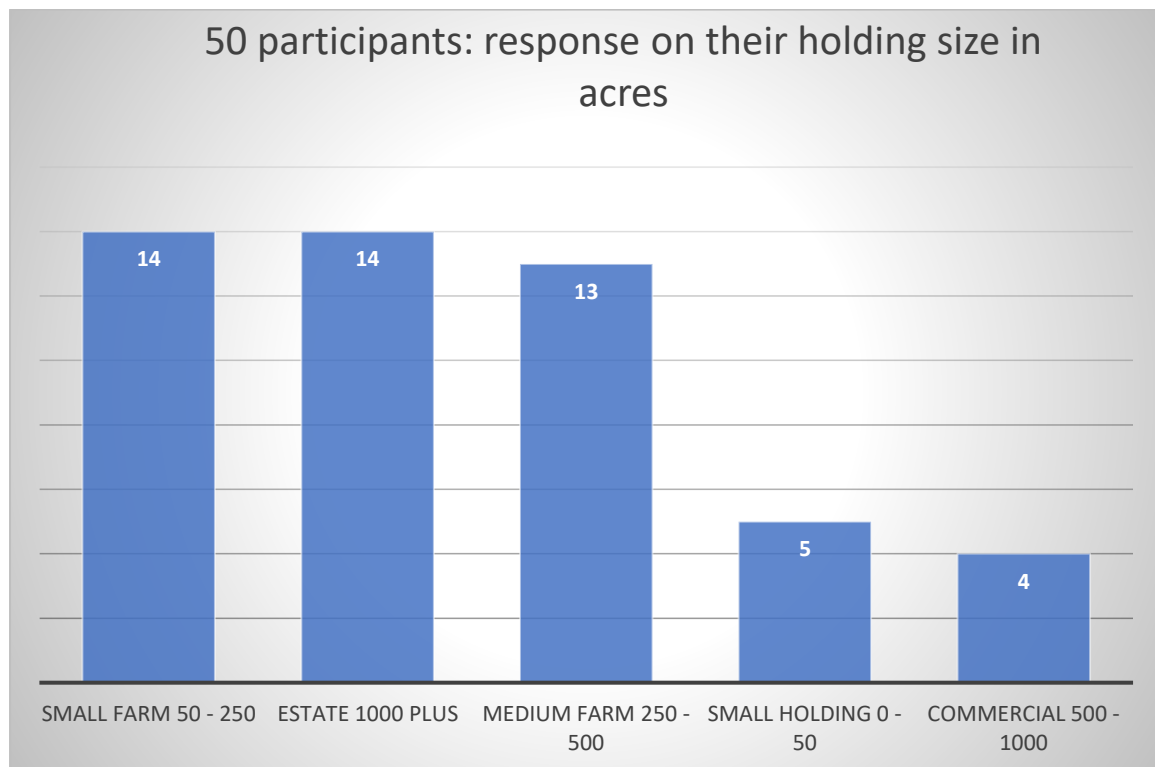
Participant 33 said that the partnership has multi-faceted interests including tourism accommodation, subletting units and other property, development and an award-winning leisure and recreation park and farm shop. There are 170 acres dedicated to solar electricity production on the holding.

Participant 88 who farms a small farm in partnership with his wife and brother said that he derives a secondary income from proficiency training of those who need licences in activities such as crop spraying and using chain saws.

Participant 94 said that the company's secondary purpose is sub-letting land for agriculture and providing for public access and recreation, including sailing and fishing.

Participant 100 a sole trader, farming just over 500 acres, said that the farm is dependent upon its dairy business for income, with no secondary income or diversification the ability to remove the agriculture tie would make it 'easier to diversify.'

### 1.12 What size is the participant's holding?



**RESULT:** an almost equal number of participants have a small farm 14 (28%), medium farm 13 (26%) or estate 14 (28%)

4 participants represented organisations that own UK land holdings of 250,000 acres+

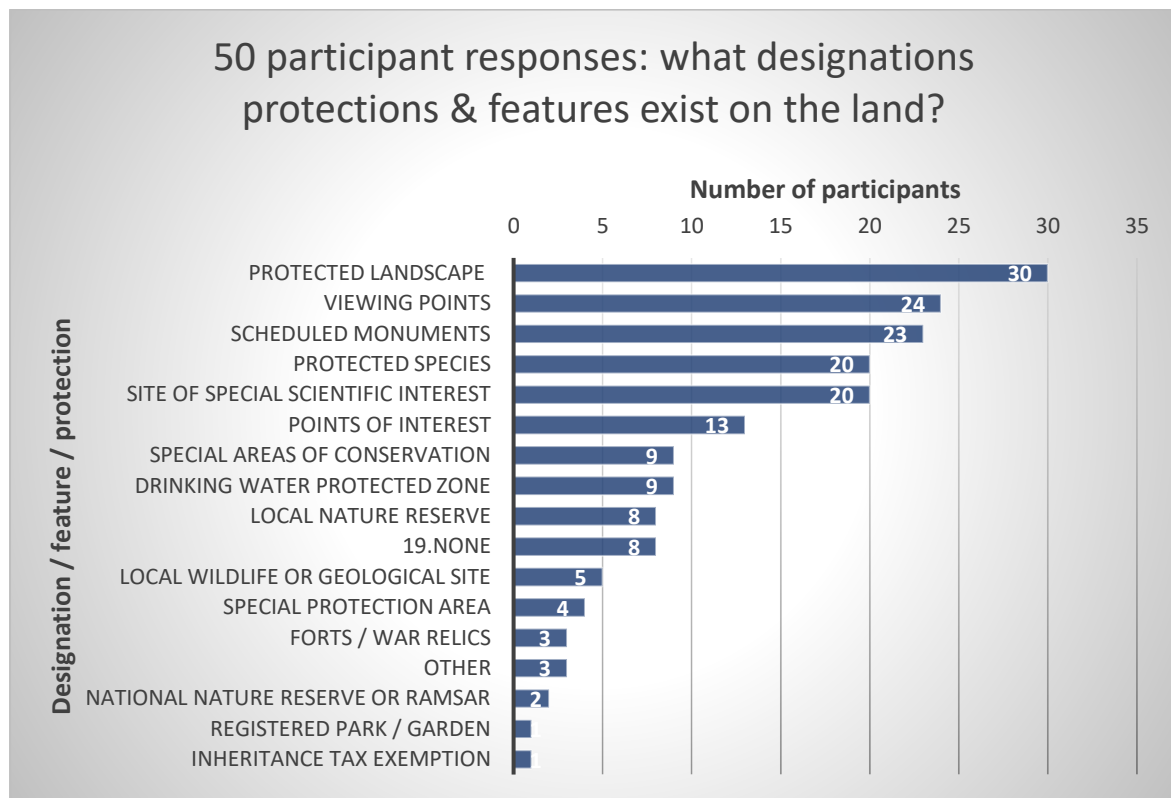
#### Snapshot of participants' responses on holding sizes.

Participant 8 (0 – 50 acres) manages a reserve in two disconnected parcels (SSSI). The primary purpose is conservation for the protection and preservation of butterflies. The secondary purpose is to engage with the public to promote learning and engagement about butterflies.

Participant 64 (500 – 1000 acres) farm a family farm in partnership on a mix of owned and tenanted land in three different locations within or close to the Mendip Hills AONB. The main holding at is farmed on a generational tenancy, out-lying land held on a farm business tenancy and a wholly owned holding farther afield.

Although the participants' primary purpose is dairy, they also have sheep and offer tourism accommodation to let.

1.13 What designations or protections are attached to the land holding, what features exist?



Options not chosen: world heritage site, registered battlefield

**RESULT:** 30 (60) participants are operating their business in a protected landscape (Mendip Hills AONB). 24 (48%) say they have wonderful views to offer. 23 (46%) scheduled monuments 20 (40%) have SSSI designations 20 (40%) protected species on the holding.

Snapshot of participants' responses about designations, protections and features.

Participant 2 said that he owned the commons which include specialised limestone grassland and the highest point of the Mendip hills. The area includes Burrington Combe, the Rock of Ages, the Burrington Hill fort and WW2 bomb decoy town remnants.

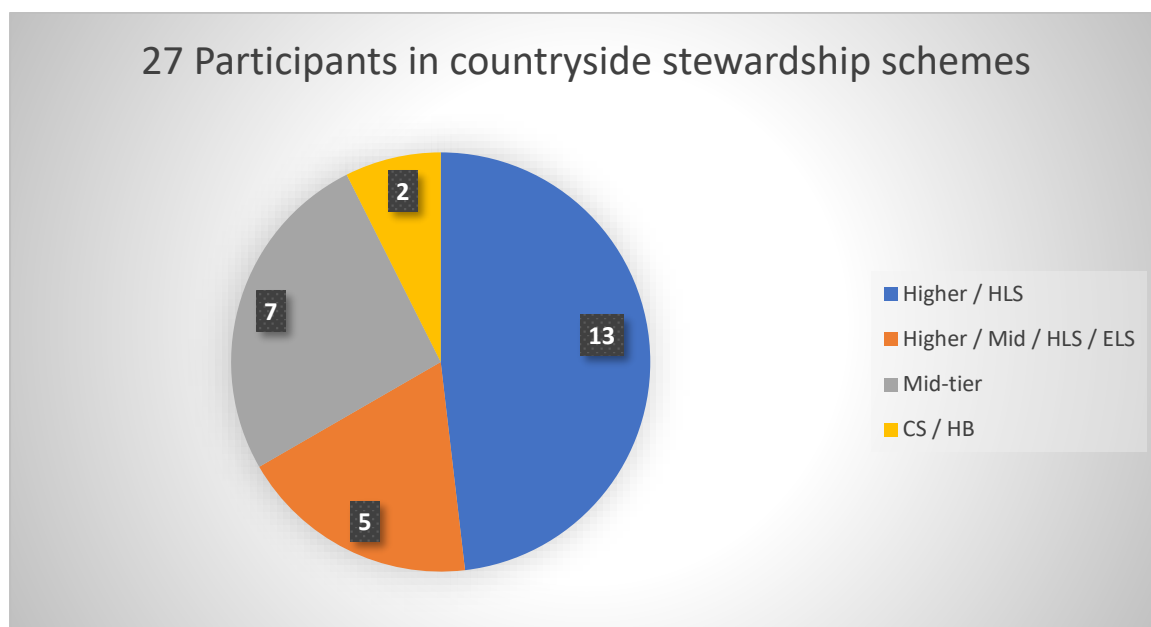


Participant 36 said that an interesting feature on his land is a type 24 WW2 pill box, part of the Stop Green Line anti invasion defence of Britain, defending Bristol. (Anti invasion record S0003065). The participant is unsure if he owns the building itself.

Participant 52 said they have protected species on the holding, greater horseshoe bats and autumn crocus (meadow saffron). The location where the autumn crocus grows is fenced off as it is deadly to livestock.

## Discussion about countryside stewardship schemes.

1.14 Is the participant's holding or part of the holding is currently in a countryside stewardship scheme?



**RESULT:** 27 (54%) are in CSS schemes 23 (46%) are not (includes landowners interviewed whose tenants might be in CSS).

### Snapshot of participant's responses – those who are in a countryside stewardship scheme.

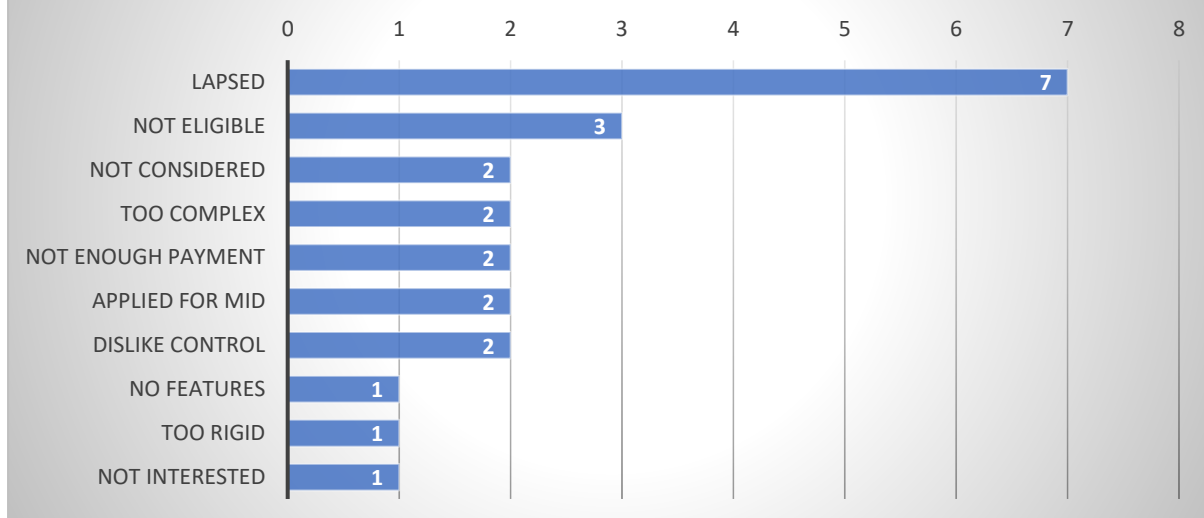
Participant 79 said that the holding has been in mid-tier countryside stewardship for 5 years. She had used an agent (she thought from FWAG) to apply who was 'absolutely brilliant – just laid it all out for me, what we could do and couldn't, really helpful'.

Participant 85 said that the holding is in a countryside stewardship Scheme – a mix of Entry Level (ELS) due to expire in 2022 and Higher Tier (HLS). A local agent advised and helped with scheme entry. Helpful advice was also given during ELS entry from the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG).

Participant 103 explained that the holding was formerly in an ESA scheme which he had liked for its simplicity and now he is in a 5-year ELS scheme which was 'more complicated'. If he entered a scheme now he would not use an agent, preferring to do the application himself but he considers the current schemes to be too complex.



## 23 (46%) participants are not in countryside stewardship schemes



### Snapshot of participants' responses – those who are not in a countryside stewardship scheme.

Participant 110 said that 'he was unaware that the basic farm payment is being phased out and replaced by ELMs.'

Participant 101 said that he had considered entry into the mid-tier scheme but considered the expected rewards insufficient and the amount of paperwork overly complex and time consuming with no guarantee of a scheme being approved

Participant 102 thought that the current basic payment subsidy and countryside stewardship system benefited large landowners who did not need the support 'encouraging landowners not to farm'. Being out and about locally due to his contracting business, he had observed farms with large acreages not being farmed saying 'my customers don't need to live off farming anymore.' A new system must be fairer and support the farmers who needed support.

Participant 112 said that her higher-Level countryside stewardship scheme lapsed in 2019. A local agent is used to assist and advise on scheme entry. She hasn't entered another scheme as she is 'waiting to see what happens with the changes going forward.'

1.15 Did the participant use an agent to help them apply for a countryside stewardship scheme?

**RESULT:** 28 (56%) participants had used an agent to help them apply

Snapshot about participants' use of agents to assist with countryside stewardship.

Participant 55 had been the county delegate for the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG). He and his wife are very knowledgeable about these schemes but even so an agent is employed to assist them apply.

Participant 59 said that the holding was formerly in Higher Level Stewardship (around 2007) which the participant had found 'very helpful' in enabling him to restore hedgerows, ditches and water courses. At that time, he was 'very well advised' by the local Wildlife Trust and the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG). The partnership had chosen not to re-enter a scheme because they 'had achieved everything we wanted to do.'

Participant 101 had not used an agent to assist him and would not consider using one saying 'they (agents) quite literally suck the life and money out of you.'

1.16 Is the holding classified as organic?

**RESULT:** 8 participants had farmed organically on all or some of their holding, 6 continued to use organic methods, 2 had given up organic farming.

Snapshot of participants' comments about organic farming.

In organic farming

Participant 33 said that the farm has been registered organic since 1999 and that he is passionate about the benefits of organic farming which requires patience 'sometimes you can have a dreadful crop but the following year it will be amazing.'

Left organic farming

Participant 102 said that the holding was registered organic in 2013 – 2018 (farmers and growers). The participant said that this involved 'loads of paperwork.'

## Questionnaire Section 2: Exploring existing public access on the land holding

Policy question to be answered –

1. What are the barriers to creating and enhancing access infrastructure networks within the defined area?
2. What are the potential solutions including advice? (Advice is covered in section 5)

In order to answer these questions, the team explored participants' opinions and concerns about both public and permissive access that exists over the holding, public use of routes and space, other permitted public activity, encounters and customary access, measures taken, preferences for types of infrastructure, structures, maintenance and support for maintenance, impacts on operations, barriers to access and solutions that could be provided through the ELM scheme.

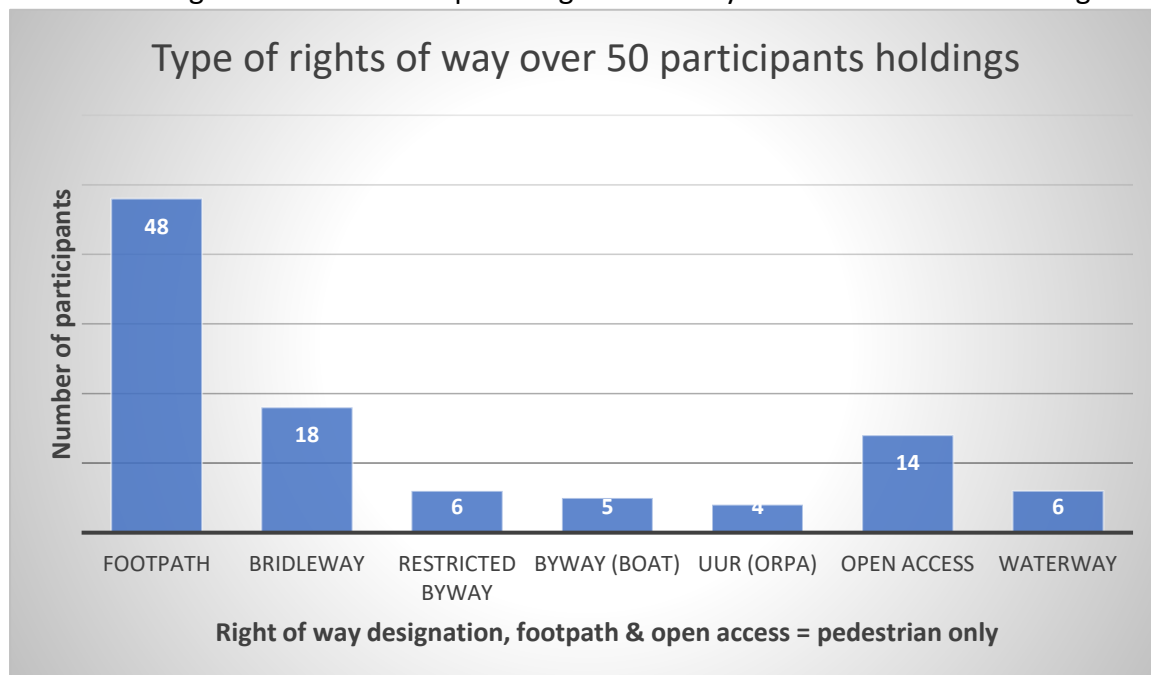
Question	Result in brief
2.1 <b>Key finding</b>	What designation of recorded public rights currently exist over the land holding? RESULT: 48 (96%) footpath, 18 (36%) bridleway, 14 (28%) open access space
2.2 <b>Key finding</b>	Which users and what activities taking place on the rights of way? RESULT: 48 (96%) walkers, 29 (58%) cyclists (including on footpaths) 17 (34%) horse riders. 7 (14%) person in a disabled conveyance.
2.3	Have any permissive routes or use of access space been granted on the holding? RESULT: 21 (42%) have granted permissive access
2.4 <b>Key finding</b>	2.4 Is the permissive access over a designated route or access area? RESULT: 15 had provided a footpath (1 to divert a public footpath away from operations). 14 a bridleway / horse path on their holding. Open access 1 access on foot 1 horse access. Note an equal willingness to provide bridleway / horse access.
2.5	What type of users are permitted to use the access route or space? RESULT: 18 said walkers, 14 horse riders, 5 cyclists.
2.6	What circumstances prompted the giving of the permissive access space? RESULT: 10 approach by a local user group / single user, 9 other, 3 HLS
2.7	Has the permissive access been formalised in any way? RESULT: 14 (67%) informal. 7 (33%) said formal / HLS. No leases granted.
2.8 <b>Key finding</b>	Which scenarios best match the use of the access space for permission granted? RESULT: 20 (95%) participants created a permissive route where no access rights already existed. 3 participants allowed horse riders and cyclists to use existing public footpaths.
2.9 <b>Key finding</b>	2.9 Are all the permissions for the access routes and / or spaces given still available? RESULT: 19 participants said YES (1 bridleway had since been designated as permanent). 2 participants said NO (1 higher lever stewardship (HLS) bridle route closed due to no longer being funded, 1 route closed due to land sale).

2.10 <b>Key finding</b>	Are other types of public activity permitted on the land holding? RESULT: 39 (78 %) participants said YES. 23 (46%) trail hunting, 20 (40%) metal detecting, 14 (28%) rough shooting.
2.11 <b>Key finding</b>	Have people been encountered accessing the land along a specific route or in an open space for which no recorded rights exist and for which no permission has been given? RESULT: 45 (90%) of participants said YES – see comments in 2.11 for examples. 4 participants said there were customary routes that the public use.
2.12 <b>Key finding</b>	Of those answering YES to encounters how many took preventative measures and what were the measures? RESULT: 37 participants (74%) take measures to prevent trespass / straying.
2.13 <b>Key finding</b>	What different types of public access infrastructure exist on the holding? RESULT: 37 (74%) participants have a PROW route crossing open land, 36 (72%) a boundary route 26 (52 %) a route that is double bounded.
2.14 <b>Key finding</b>	Preference for infrastructure type? RESULT: Scoring by 43 (86%) of participants showed a clear preference for corridor (164) and boundary routes (153). Routes over open land (41) and open access land is least preferred (20).
2.15 <b>Key finding</b>	What types of terrain exist on the holding? RESULT: 41 (82%) have (some) improved grassland, 32 (64%) have (some) wild flower rich grassland, 27 (54%) have (some) woodland.
2.16 <b>Key finding</b>	Preference for terrain type? RESULT: 32 (64%) said NO, 18 (36%) said YES
2.17	Scoring for terrain type RESULT: 18 participants showed a preference for new routes to cross grassland - improved 47, unimproved 33, hill land (grass) 26 or to go through woodland (38).
2.18 <b>Key finding</b>	What structures exist that are used by the public for access? RESULT: 100% of 49 participants with access have stiles, kissing gates, narrow pedestrian or Bristol gates installed on PROW. 21 (42%) at least one field gate, 17 (34%) at least one bridle gate installed on PROW. 43 (86%) believed that the PROW is waymarked, 39 (78%) believed PROW to be correctly signed. 28 (56%) had additional educational signage on PROW (either installed by them or a third party).
2.19 <b>Key finding</b>	Are the access structures well maintained for public use? RESULT: 44 (88%) participants said YES.
2.20 <b>Key finding</b>	Are route surfaces maintained so as to be accessible for 95% of the year? 39 (78%) participants said YES.
2.21 <b>Key finding</b>	How much access maintenance work do participants engage in? RESULT score average = 3 MODERATE (score =1 low, 5 high).
2.22	Are participants supported in maintenance work by a third party? Who? RESULT: 26 (52%) participants said YES, 12 (24%) NO 10, (20%) partially. 19 (38%) supported by LHA, 13 (26%) LHA and volunteers, users, another agency.
2.23a)	Does public access impact on current operations?

<b>Key finding</b>	RESULT: 36 (72%) said YES access has an impact or partial impact on current operations
2.23b) <b>Key finding</b>	Will public access impact on future operations? RESULT: 38 (76%) said YES they thought access will have an impact or partial impact on future operations.
2.24a) <b>Key finding</b>	What public access impacts have been experienced? RESULT: 47 participants recorded 625 public access impacts regularly experienced (see graphs and tables at the end of section).
2.24b) <b>Key finding</b>	Can these experiences be mitigated through ELM? RESULT: 47 participants said they agreed with 440 <u>mitigations or solutions</u> that could be offered through ELM (barriers can be overcome).
2.25 <b>Key finding</b>	Overall experiences of access – score (1 negative, 3 neutral, 5 positive) RESULT: 24 (48%) somewhat positive / positive, 15 (30%) negative / somewhat negative, 11 (22%) neutral. <b>ACCESS POSITIVITY RESULT AVERAGE = 3.2 (NEUTRAL)</b>

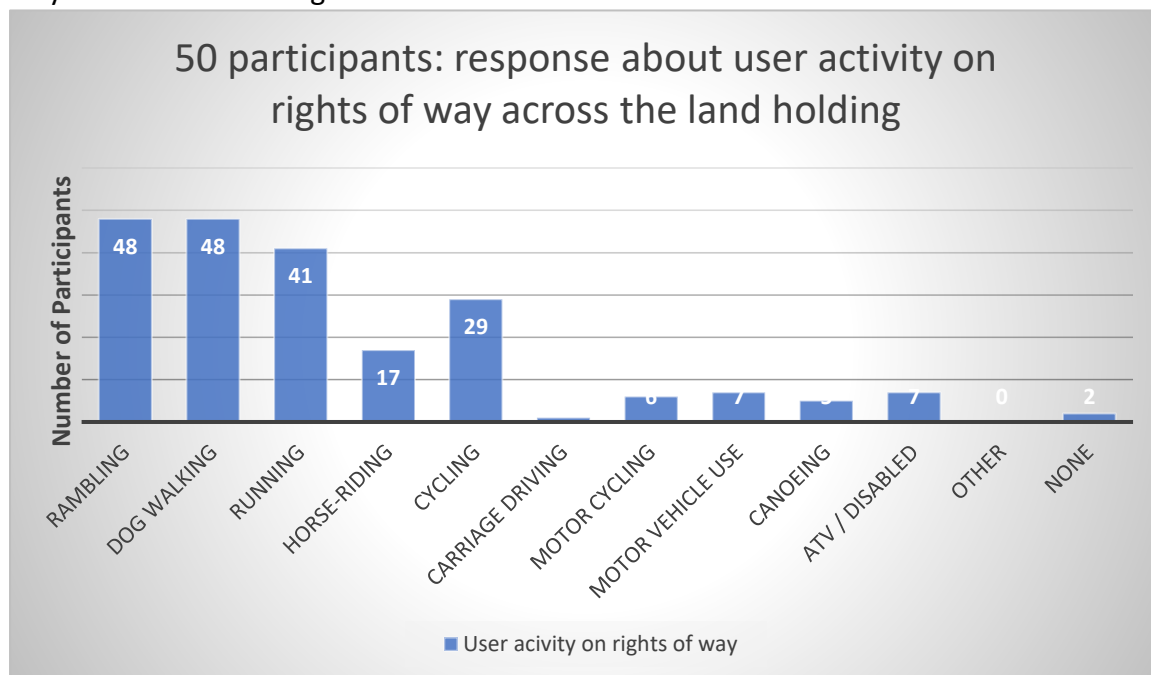
## Questionnaire Section 2. Interview discussion 2 analysis of existing access

### 2.1 What designation of recorded public rights currently exist over the land holding?



**RESULT:** 48 (96%) participants said they had rights of way designated as footpath (for pedestrian use only) across their holding. 18 (36%) had a bridleway (for use by walkers, horse riders and cyclists) across or adjacent to their holding. 14 (28%) had open access space (access on foot). 1 participant had no public access but referred to his grass keep experiences to respond to access questions.

### 2.2 Which users and what activities do the participants witness taking place on the rights of way across their holdings?



**RESULT** – 48 (96%) participants have seen walkers crossing their land on rights of way, 29 (58%) participants had seen cyclists using rights of way (including footpaths) across their

land, 17 (34%) had seen horse riders. Only 7 (14%) participants had seen a person in a disabled conveyance.

Participants' responses about use of public rights of way across the holding.

'Public footpaths crossing my land are used by ramblers / hikers and local dog walkers. Hikers like to go straight across the land holding on the footpath they are going somewhere whereas the local dog walkers like to wander around on a circuit not on the footpath which I am relaxed about.'

'I have a multitude of definitive public footpaths crossing my land including long distance paths Monarch's Way and West Mendip Way. One of the footpaths runs through the working yard and is dangerous especially when backing machines out – you can't see ten feet behind you, the farm yard was built at a time when horses and carts were in use, it's only a matter of time before someone is killed or injured. All the footpaths are very well used - Covid has exploded use of paths on our farm. During a sunny day I sat out in the front for two hours in April, during the first lockdown and I counted 288 people coming through, and that's during lambing, with a flock of 900 the sheep have to lamb outside.'

Asked about use by disabled people he said 'that he was pretty sure people did use all-terrain vehicles (ATV) in the forest and some forest roads will be suitable for people in wheel chairs, I don't see many disabled people though.'

'The footpaths are well used, I am not 'too worried' about the footpath through the farm buildings although you get bad eyes about. Two old ladies once fell in the rhyne and I had to fish them out.'

'Most of the public rights of way, footpaths and one bridleway are clustered around and lead to and from Wells. These are very well used mostly by dog walkers (people are always with dogs never with any children – have you noticed that?), runners, and ramblers. We see the odd bike on The Old Coach Road bridleway but never a horse rider.' (Note that the bridleway terminates on the A39).

'The estate had owned land (an ancient fort) over which a byway open to all traffic ran. This became very abused by vehicles so the estate disposed of the land.'

Asked about the existence of three open access land parcels inaccessible to the public he said 'that they did not know how these parcels of land became designated as open access land.'

Several participants noted

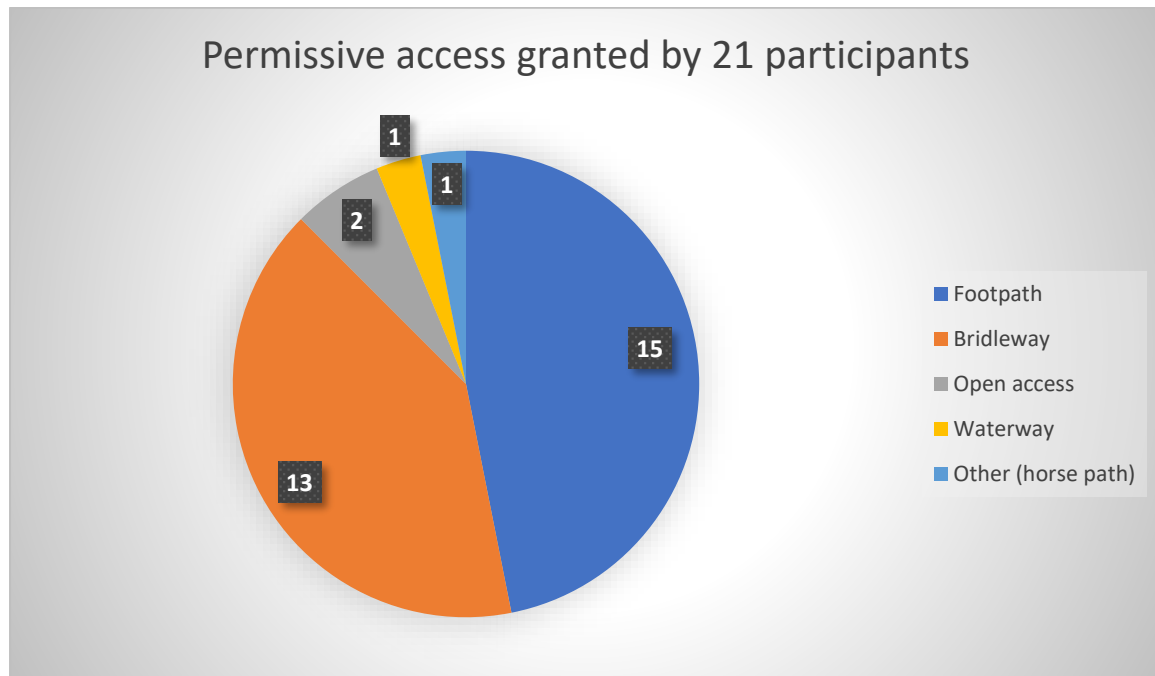
That the proliferation of rights of way over the land made decisions about where to put the cows and 'the bull has to stay in.'

The dangers of having the public in operational yards and near buildings.

2.3 Have any permissive routes or use of access space been granted on the holding?

**RESULT:** 21 (42%) participants said YES and described the permissive access type established.

2.4 Is the permissive access over a designated route or access area?



Option not chosen – permissive carriageway.

**RESULT:** 15 participants said they had established a permissive footpath (1 to divert a public footpath away from property). 14 had established a permissive bridleway or horse path on their holding. Open access permissions, 1 had established areas for pedestrians, 1 an area for horse riders.

Snapshot of participants' responses about granting permissive access.

'A public footpath runs down the farm drive past the farm house and gardens. An alternative permissive route to the east was signed and installed some ten years ago directing users away from buildings and gardens where weddings and functions are held the only problem being there are picnic tables in the route area and footpath users tend to sit



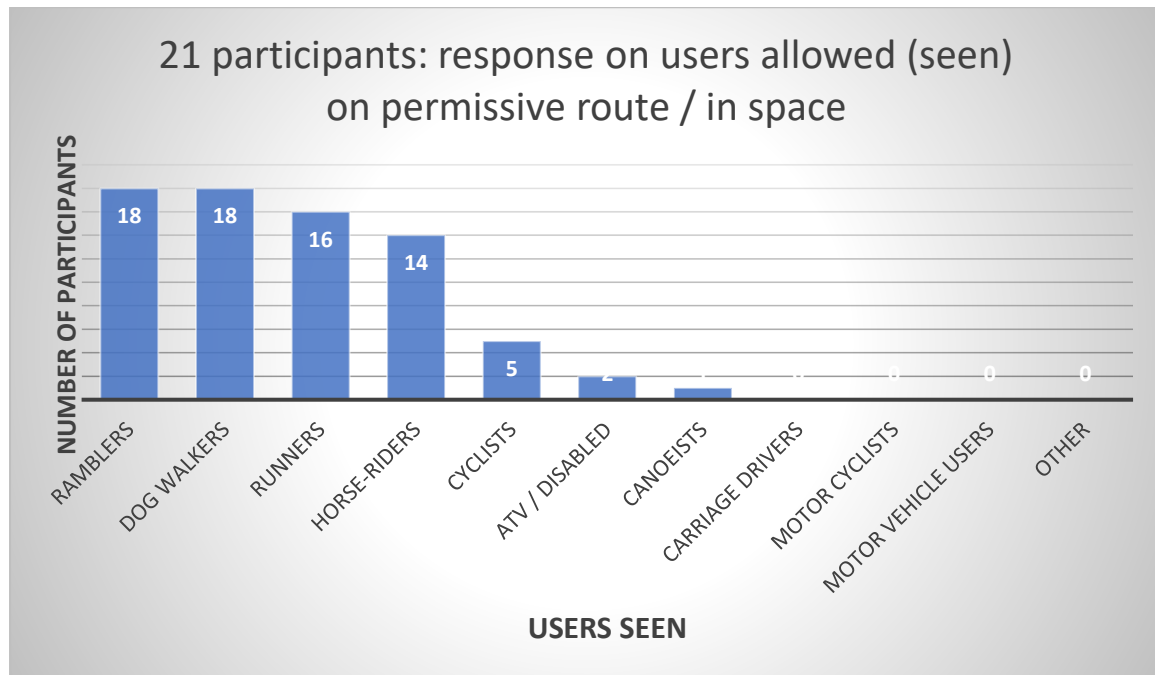
down on them and start having their lunch and watching the wedding!' 'Permissive informal footpaths and bridleways have been created by the charity acting on its own initiative where a public need has been recognised, these are all used by the same user groups that use the public rights of way crossing the land - ramblers, dog walkers, runners, horse riders and cyclists.'

'A permissive bridleway was allowed some years ago along a Drove, part of which had been pulled



out at one time, the partnership has re-established it as a green corridor and it is now a definitive public bridleway' (picture left).

## 2.5 What type of users are permitted to use the access route or space?



**RESULT:** 18 participants said that the permissive access was used by walkers, 14 said by horse riders, 5 said by cyclists.

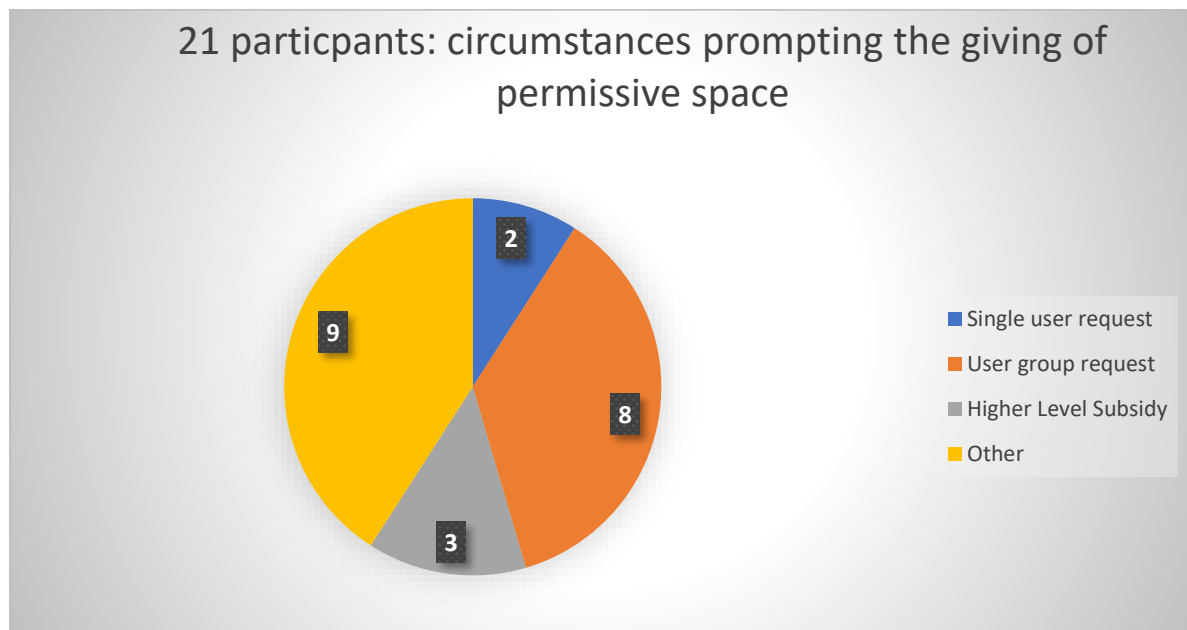
### Snapshot of participants' responses about permissive access.

'Due to the size of the estate there is a wide range of public rights of way and an extensive network of permissive paths for horses / walkers that were (in the main) agreed informally with a local user group). In addition, horse riders and cyclists use the paths and tracks (picture right) in the open access areas.'

'The Company is happy to work with local user groups to provide licenced permissive paths where there is a need. There is a circular walk around the Cheddar Reservoir embankment and a permissive bridleway (the aspirational creation route) linking Portmeade Drove from Axbridge to the byway, which is a useful link to Cheddar. A permissive footpath around the eastern edge of Chew Valley Lake helps to avoid a dangerous road.'



## 2.6 What circumstances prompted the giving of the permissive access space?



Option not chosen – local highway authority request.

**RESULT:** 10 (48%) participants said they had been asked for access by a local user group or single user, 3 established through HLS scheme, other 9 (42%)- charitable policy, own initiative (2), inherited, natural England request, customary (unsure), riding school route, track originally created for operations, diversion away from property.

### Snapshot of participants' reasons for permitting access.



'A number of permissive paths exist, both footpaths and bridleways (picture left). Some paths have been granted by the company), others 'inherited' when the land had been purchased and we have allowed access to continue. Some permissive access has been initiated and developed by us around the whole holding where a public need was noted rather than in response to a user request.'

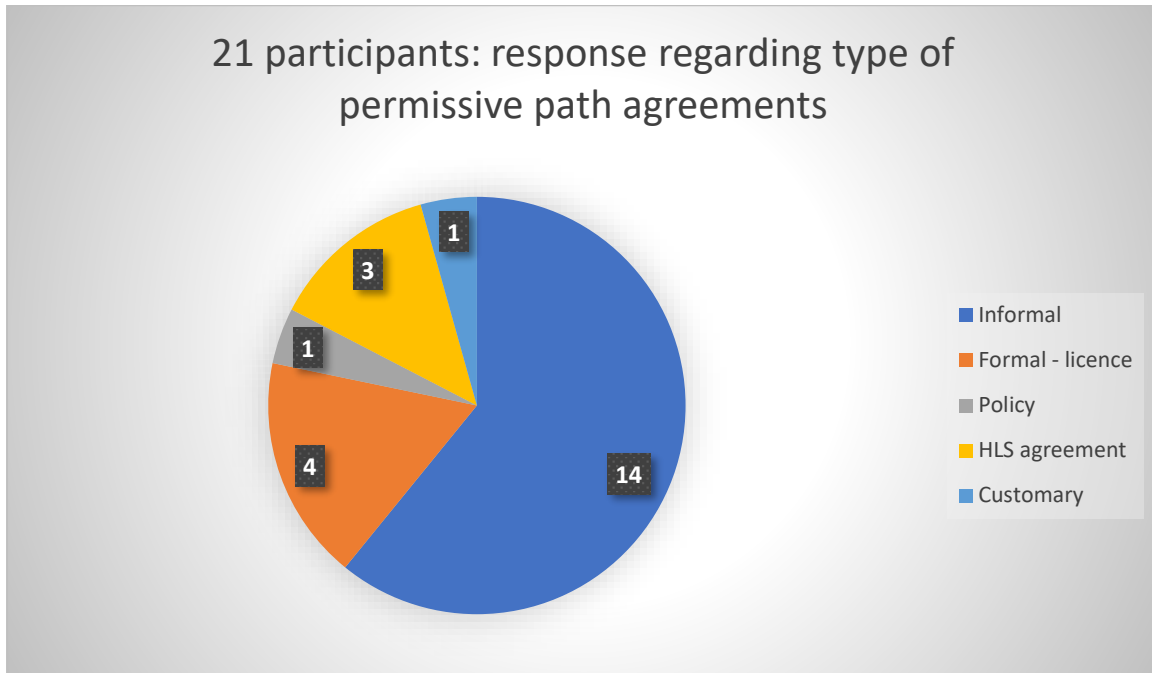
'A permissive path of long standing was agreed with Natural England and the Mendip Hills AONB warden along a route that walkers were continually using to access the Gorge. An annual payment was made for many years but this had stopped some time ago, the path is still available.'

'There is one permissive path in the wood. An operational track was made and afterwards it was left for people to use, they were concerned at the disturbance at the time so this was a nice thing to offer.'

'A permissive footpath was asked for by the ramblers to avoid using a stretch of road. A designated footpath originally ran in front of the house, this was temporarily diverted through the farmyard to move it away from the house, unfortunately there was no option

to divert this to a nearby field without increasing the walking distance along the road, hence the permissive route is used instead of the original which remains in front of the house.'

## 2.7 Has the permissive access been formalised in any way?



Option not chosen – permissive path lease

**RESULT:** 14 (67%) said informal. 7 (33%) said formal / HLS. No leases have been granted.

### Snapshot of participants' response regarding type of permissive path agreements.

'The path has existed since 1999 and was requested by a multi-user group access organisation. The path installation was originally funded by the Mendip Hills AONB unit and licenced by us as landowners. Now, we permit use by members of the local bridleways and byways association only, for the purpose of riding or walking with a horse.'

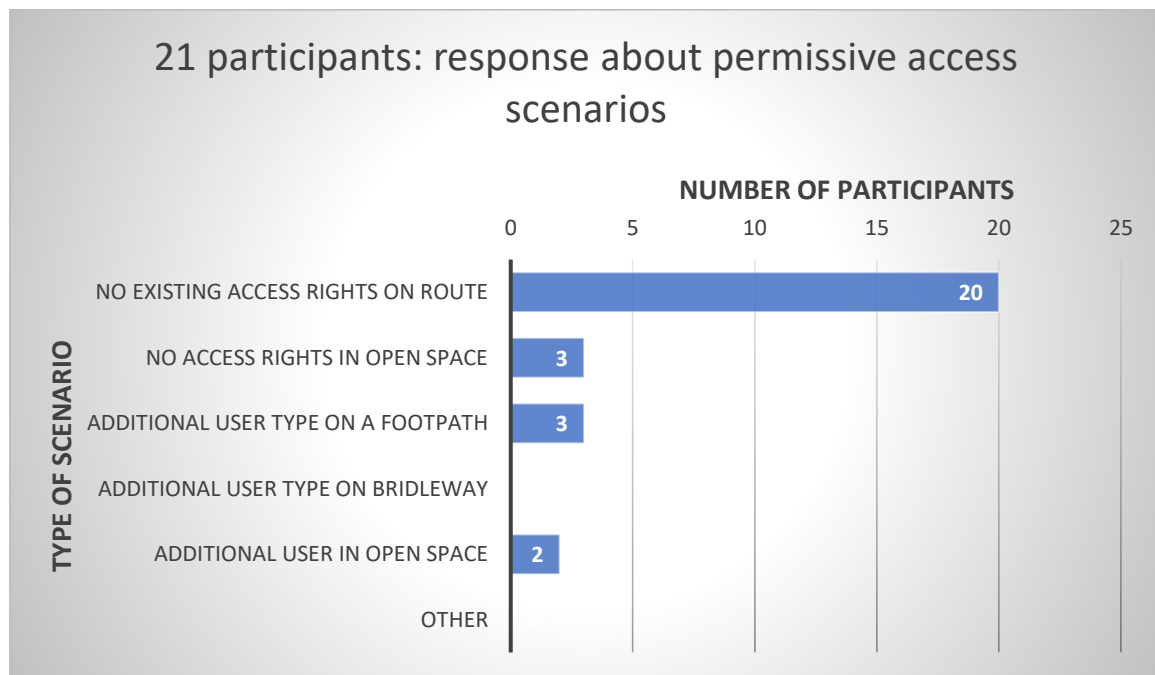
'Local horse - riders use a route on my land around the holding on an informal basis. There may have been an approach from a local rider at one time.'

'There was a formal licence but I think this has run out, nonetheless the path is still available.'

'There are a number of permissive routes and customary routes in the three woods owned or leased by the agency on a mixture of formal and informal permissions. In one wood (picture right) all the forest tracks and firebreak roads are informal permissive bridleways, allowed by the landowners.'



## 2.8 Which scenarios best match the use of the access space for permission granted?



**RESULT:** 20 (95%) participants created a permissive route where no access rights already existed. 3 participants allowed horse riders and cyclists to use existing public footpaths.

## 2.9 Are all the permissions for the access routes and / or spaces given still available?

19 participants said YES (1 bridleway had since been designated as permanent).

2 participants said NO (1 higher lever stewardship (HLS) bridle route closed due to no longer being funded, 1 route closed due to land sale).

### Snapshot of participants' response regarding permissive path current availability.

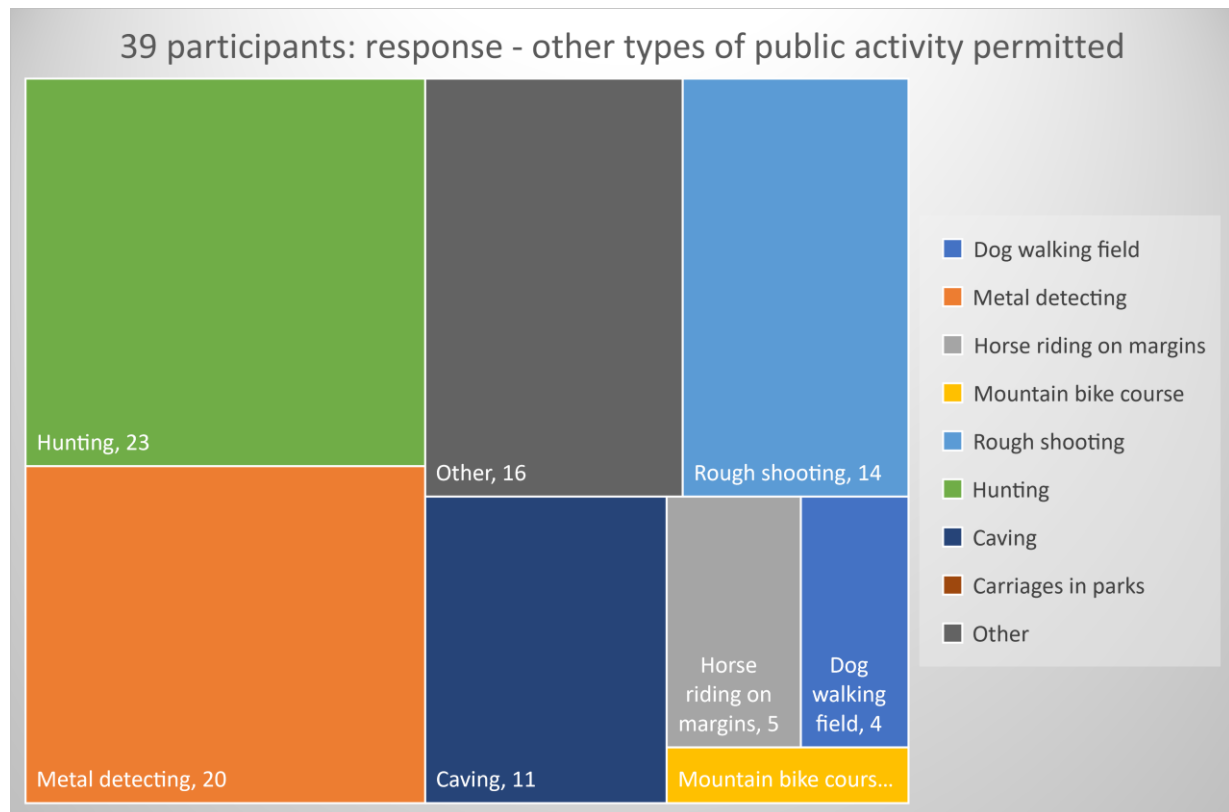
'The permissive footpaths and one bridleway were established under former HLS schemes and are still in place despite these no longer being funded. The footpaths run around the many 6 metre field margins, linking into the existing network. The bridleway was established to link up existing local lanes and to the Mendip Hills AONB.'

'The permissive footpath was first created through a former HLS scheme and rewarded on a linear basis. Once the scheme finished the parish council asked for the path, identified as a well-used community link, to be retained. This was agreed partly on the basis of avoiding an application to record an historic route which appeared to have crossed the land through the middle of fields to link with the existing public footpath.'

'Until recently there was a permissive bridleway across the main holding which was part of the HLS scheme which is now finished so that access is no longer available. The permissive path was used by a few ramblers and dog walkers, the occasional horse rider and cyclist. It had a very limited uptake and was mainly for the benefit of our guests as it didn't really go anywhere.'

## 2.10 Do you permit other types of public activity on the land holding?

39 (78 %) participants said YES. 11 participants said NO.



**RESULT:** 23 (46%) participants permitted trail hunting on horse-back, 20 (40%) permitted metal detecting, 14 (28%) rough shooting.

'Other' included motor cycling / scrambling (3), canoeing & sailing, fishing (2), educational tours, accompanied walks, walling classes, sledging! climbing, camping & caravanning, events, vineyard tours, archaeological digs, hawk walks, filming and various 'activities'.

### Snapshot of participants' response regarding types of activity permitted.

'We allow and welcome a wide range of public activities. These include metal detection, rough shooting and the support of a large number of village events that happen in normal years such as the church fete and the tug of war. We are very pleased for our land to be used as a free asset to support the community in these things.'

'I allow organised accompanied geology and wildlife walks and training such as drystone walling courses are permitted on the land.'

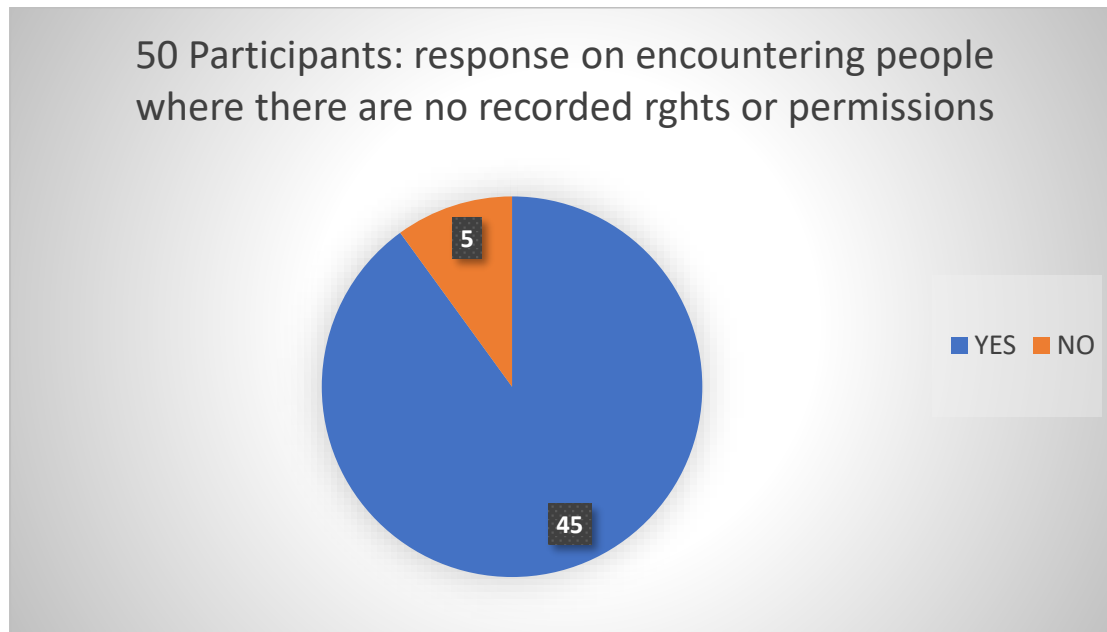
'Activities that are permitted are rough shooting (Wedmore Preserving Club only) and the local hunt is permitted to cross the holding. I am pleased to see local children out sledging, when it snows that hill is the best one for miles around!'

'I allow local people to exercise their dogs in a field near the village plus I permits metal detecting, rough shooting and hawk walks, which are organised walks with hawks and owls where people can experience free flying birds.'

'I am allowing local villagers keen on history to excavate the Roman Villa site (under the instruction of an expert). There have been lots of interesting things found,'

## Questionnaire Section 2. Interview discussion 3 customary access and encounters.

2.11 Have people been encountered accessing the land along a specific route or in an open space for which no recorded rights exist and for which no permission has been given?



RESULT: 45 (90%) of participants said YES they encounter people where there are no rights or permissions for specific activities on their land.

### Exasperation expressed about encounters plus the lack of education and standard of public behaviour in the countryside.

'People are all over the place.'

'The public have a perception that they have the right to roam everywhere, no one is on the case to educate them otherwise, it's left up to farmers – we are just trying to make a living from the land.'

'People are lost', 'straying', 'they can't find the footpath', 'they are not sticking to footpaths.'

'Walkers are 'encountered everywhere, frequently with dogs, causing issues for cattle, sheep and wildlife.'

'People are mixing with young stock who can give chase.'

'Everyone walks all the way around the four sides and not across the land where the footpath runs!'

'Dog walkers all over the place, horse riders not on correct routes, trail bikes, it's a free for all!'

'People do not adhere to the Countryside Code, this is a serious issue.'

'People off paths are damaging my hay crops.'

'The number of people accessing the Common has grown hugely over the last 30 years and many more again now due to lockdown. This presents big challenges of car parking, gates left open, fences broken down and litter.'



'Since the Covid lockdown, usage has increased ten times and noticeably 'new' walkers have arrived who seem to have no knowledge of the countryside. The car park at Deer Leap and the Ebbor Gorge view point have both become crowded and dangerous at times.'

'The reality is that there are multiple issues with unauthorised access over all the farm land, these days people go where they like, that's just the reality, it can be difficult to manage the public on a farm.'

'Trespass represents real difficulty. Every time there is an intruder, operations have to cease. Exercise can be going on 24/7 with operations and patrols at night. This has a serious domino effect on operations leaving squads without their live firing certification, meaning they are not available for active service.'

'We are worried about the path going past the houses and yards - lack of privacy, lack of security, lack of bio security.'

'There is a worry about creating new rights.'

'It's impossible to see or police what goes on, on much of the land, especially on the nature reserves which are a long way away from the farm.'

#### Participants expressed multiple concerns about dogs

'We are seeing a large increase in dog ownership and use of countryside access with dogs.'

'People need educating about dogs and be more aware.'

'Dogs can be an issue with the sheep people just let them run wild off the lead.'

'Dogs are being washed in water troughs.'

'Dogs are a grave concern because of potential disease transmission and injury to stock through worrying.'

'I have experienced dogs not under control chasing and worrying the sheep.'

'People are out exercising dogs that are more dangerous.'

'People just see a footpath sign and go in and go where they want - Priddy is the worst, we get van loads of dogs just taken in the fields to exercise.'

'We are taking a robust line with commercial dog walkers – they 'should be licenced and pay a fee as they are making money out of this landscape.'

'People hang up their dog bags on the bushes like Christmas decorations.'

'I called the police because a dog walker whose rescue dog chased the cattle would not recognise the wrong doing of this.'

'We have to be really careful where we put the sheep especially if off the main farmstead. During lambing four years ago 100 ewes were rounded up and chased by a dog resulting in the sheep having chewed legs.'

'As people and dogs roam off the designated paths there is damage to grassland and crops.'

'Someone threw a ball for a dog every day through the maize and you could see where the dog had zig zagged through it.'

'Sticks thrown for dogs are a nuisance as they get caught up in farm machinery at harvest and mowing times.'

#### There were multiple concerns about the actions of specific user groups

'Mountain bikers are frequently encountered riding both on and off the footpaths.'

'The paths are accessed through pedestrian gates and they (mountain bikers) prop the gate open with a stick and the last one goes through and doesn't shut the gate again – I have seen them do it.'



'They have to lift their bikes over a locked gate to access the public highway.'

'Cycling numbers are increasing but they are difficult to catch.'

'There are over a 100 wild trails built by mountain bikers on the steep sides of the hills and through the trees, the elevation there is a real attraction. Contractors are brought in to fell trees and put brush to block illegal trails but they are soon opened up again, this is very costly.'

'The descent speed of the bikers off the hill frightened the sheep and the cows in the fields below and injuries such as broken legs had occurred. Also I had to admonish people running through and frightening / scattering the sheep.'

'Scrambler bikes are an issue where they find an entry point and that would be a police matter if caught.'

'4 x 4 are using the private droves.'

'4 x 4 are wrecking the bridleway at Welshes Green this does need resolving.'

#### Concerns about incidents at night / stock disturbance and injury

'You feel like dragging a huge piece of machinery into every gateway given what goes on at night.'

'There is a lot of activity at night, shooters and glamping.'

'Recently I had people driving across my land at night leaving gates open, luckily there were no stock in those fields I think they were hare coursing.'

'There is a particular problem with bikers and runners at night with lights and the hash harriers' horn which also scatters the sheep causing lambs to be rejected. Mountain Bikes and Hash Harriers etc need to be controlled this season injuries and distressed stock issues have cost me around £3,000.'

'The land is very steep and is terraced and the cattle tend to sleep on the terraces at night. A number of cows have suffered broken shoulders, which we discovered in the mornings, we couldn't understand this and then on investigation we realised that mountain bikers who are noisy, with lights, going very fast downhill were terrifying the cattle and making them run (in the dark) and the broken shoulders were a consequence. I think these are just a few bad apples but nonetheless it's upsetting and costly.'

#### Other public activities complained about

Several participants mentioned people foraging ('they come equipped with blackberry picking bowls.') 'People pick mushrooms, including magic mushrooms (we don't accost them it's not worth the aggravation'), sunbathing ('some teachers organising a teddy bears picnic surprised a naked French sunbather down in the old quarry!'), paragliding, wild camping ('some kids had camped, without permission, I didn't mind but was disappointed that they had left all their rubbish behind'), lighting fires, barbecues, building tree houses, picnicking ('they were sitting in the middle of my hay crop!'), climbing, ('frequently climbers do not stick to the designated climbing routes.') flying drones, using footpaths to go fishing, driving horses and carts around fields ('I had to install cattle grids'), horse riders galloping around fields, falconry, general anti-social behaviour, swimming ('a lady in Devon had advertised wild swimming in an abandoned sand quarry owned by the Company so appropriate action had to be taken to neutralise that.')

We have no control over how or where people park once the car park is full. They park everywhere, all over the verges outside the boundary and often irresponsibly, blocking up gateways and negatively impacting on our neighbours.'

### Criminal activity and abusive reactions

Several participants said they were very worried about the extent of hare coursing and 4 x4 use for poaching and lamping wildlife especially hare and deer.

'There had in the past been a police raid on boys hiding on the land and stashing drugs. They had been captured and taken away but came back the next day 'let out on bail' to retrieve their goods. The police were no help.'

'Farmers are more at risk and have more to lose through retaliation.'

'We have been threatened with 'broken legs.'

'We may see 100 people over a weekend and feel the need to challenge at least one group every weekend. Most people are courteous and want to do the right thing but 1 in 30 are difficult and totally brazen, they don't really care and take no notice of our requests, or of signs or of anything else.'

'I speak to those mountain bikers that I see using the footpaths but they are really aggressive and can be threatening, these are people who feel entitled.'

'I do speak to people but receive a lot of abuse. How would they like it if I came to their garden and behaved like it or spoke to them like that?'

'People don't always take this kindly and can be cheeky in response.'

'It is generally not worth the aggravation to create an issue because some people have an attitude or can be spikey.'

### Customary routes

Four participants acknowledged a route or routes across their land that people had 'always used' but is not a recorded public right of way or a path where specific permission given.

'All the private droves on the nearby moor are used by the public, normally we see about 50 people a day on the drove, walkers, bikes, horses. During lockdown it was much busier and increased to about 300 people a day but of course it was nice weather. We and the other adjacent farmers use the droves too, for access to fields and buildings.'

'The (route) gate onto the road is kept padlocked, all the landowners along the route 'which is an agricultural right of way' have the code. This isn't to keep local walkers out, because they always use it, I don't challenge anyone, but because there had been several instances of fly tipping and the landowners had had to pay to have this dealt with. On another occasion there was a rave with loads of people up there.'

'Horse riders and probably cyclists have always used the paths and tracks in the open access areas – and in the wood.'

'It is inevitable that on such a large area of open access land, where new tracks are made by moving animals and bracken clearance, people will wander' (on horse-back and bicycle). This is to some degree accepted / tolerated.'

2.12 Of those participants answering YES to encounters how many take preventative measures and what were the measures?

37 participants (74%) said they took measures to prevent trespass and straying.

One participant summed this up 'it depends who you are dealing with, some people are genuinely unaware, we are seeing a lot more of this type, people who are not used to being in the countryside – others don't care and don't like being told, there are so many more people coming now.'

One farmer has engaged with local people for over thirty years advising on where to walk and how to approach cattle so he doesn't feel the need to lock gates or challenge anyone.

Measures taken to prevent or overcome trespass and straying

- Installations and actions such as erecting fencing and notices, cattle grids, gates, locking gates, bollards, barriers, keeping fences in good order, erecting fencing, installing CCTV
- Patrolling twice a day, face to face engagement including verbal instruction, having a quiet word, ('one dog walker is always throwing wooden stakes for his Labrador, a real nuisance left lying in the mowing grass so I asked him to put the stakes back in the hedge'), giving advice, interaction with people, having a friendly chat, engaging in humour

'I even had to have a quiet word with the Bishop!'

'They are challenged and informed 'you are not on the right of way and given a 30 second head start!'

'I say to people that they wouldn't want me trampling all over the lettuces in their garden.'

- Showing kindness, being relaxed about people wandering, not overly concerned

'Some young people on the Duke of Edinburgh scheme were lost and we gave them water and showed them the footpath to ensure that they avoided the main road. The A371 is very dangerous to walk along at this point.'

'People end up coming down the farm track, a bit lost especially the D of E students 'it's not a problem, we just advise people how to get back on the path or down to the road, I have mended the stile up on the path and cut back the overgrowth there so it's easy see and to use, we don't lock any gates, we would just lose the keys!'

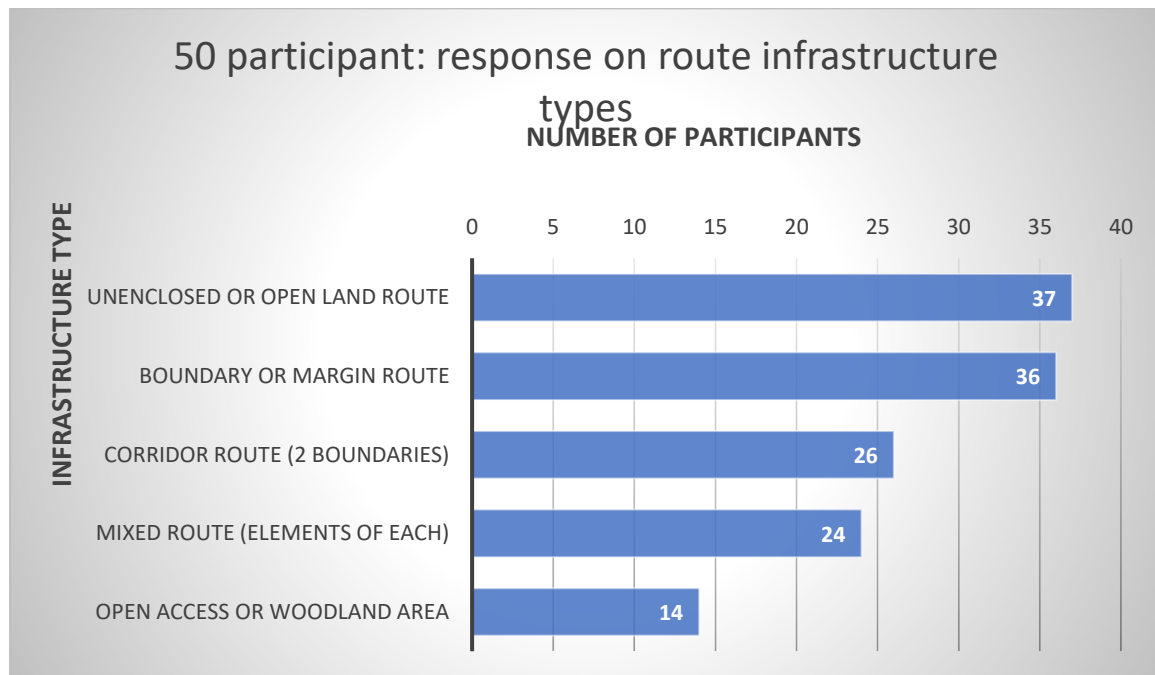
- Finding users another place to go which included giving scramblers a track, creating mountain bike descent trails and allowing permissive paths and space.
- Realigning rights of way to field boundaries to prevent straying and keep people safe.

'The resolution of these issues that the company is taking, is to work with the local highway authority rights of way officer, with whom we have a good relationship, to realign paths to

field boundaries, where there are wide six metre margins available. This gives the option of separating users away from livestock through the use of temporary electric fencing, which allows for the safety of both people and livestock.'

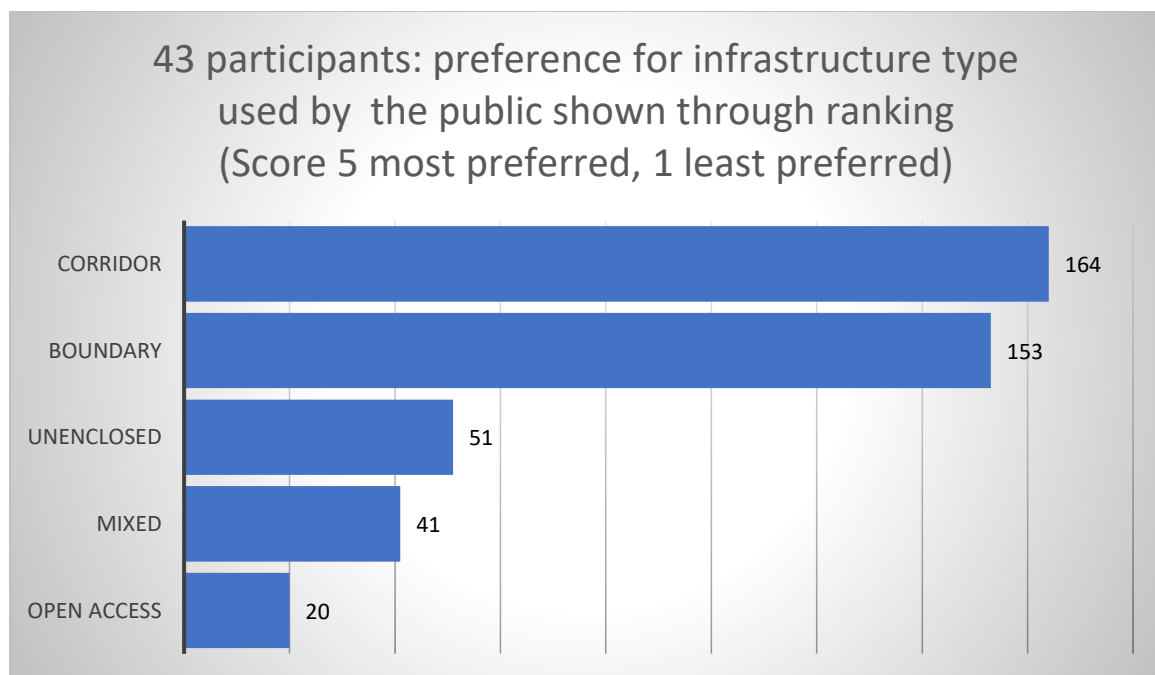
Questionnaire Section 2. Interview discussion 4 about public access infrastructure, terrain and structures

2.13 What different types of public access infrastructure exist on the land holding?



**RESULT:** 37 (74%) participants have a PROW route crossing open land (away from boundaries), 36 (72%) have a route that follows a boundary (wall, hedge, fence etc), 26 (52%) a route that is double bounded. 14 (28% have open access land / woodland).

2.14 Do participants have any preference the infrastructure type used by the public?



RESULT – 43 participants took part in ranking preference for infrastructure type. Ranking showed a clear preference for corridor (public contained) and boundary routes. (Boundary routes allow options for temporary public containment). Routes over open land and open access land is least preferred.

Snapshot of participants' responses about route infrastructure preferences.

Several participants said that they preferred boundary routes because

'They offer the option of creating temporary fenced corridors at certain times of year, separating people from crops and livestock'

'Cows and calves and people don't mix. People pick up their dogs when the cows come close, which is the worst thing to do.'

'It's easier to run electric fencing along when the sheep are in situ.'

'The whole holding is riddled with footpaths we are working with the Council to effect some sensible realignments, proper diversions going through the Council committee. This doesn't seem to be too much of an issue other than the time taken to do it.'

Other participants preferred corridors

'There were three separate incidents last year where the cows had 'shoved' people. We reported this to our insurers (National Farmers Union) although there was no proof and were advised that potentially claimants had up to three years to claim for potential injury.'



'All routes are fenced due to the health and safety requirements so there is definitely 'a preference for those and for boundary routes.'

'If we are to create a route, it would be important that people using it could not access the rest of the holding due to the need to give our visitors the peace and experience that they come for. It would have to be a corridor route or at very least a very well-marked boundary route on the edge of the holding.'

'We have fenced much of the access so that users are contained within a corridor. This results in the need for maintenance so the partnership arranges for the paths to be strimmed approximately 3 times annually.'

Other participants disliked corridor infrastructure

'People don't pick up dog mess and it becomes 'dog mess alley'. This happened recently when Bristol Water had temporarily fenced a path to install a water pipe nearby.'

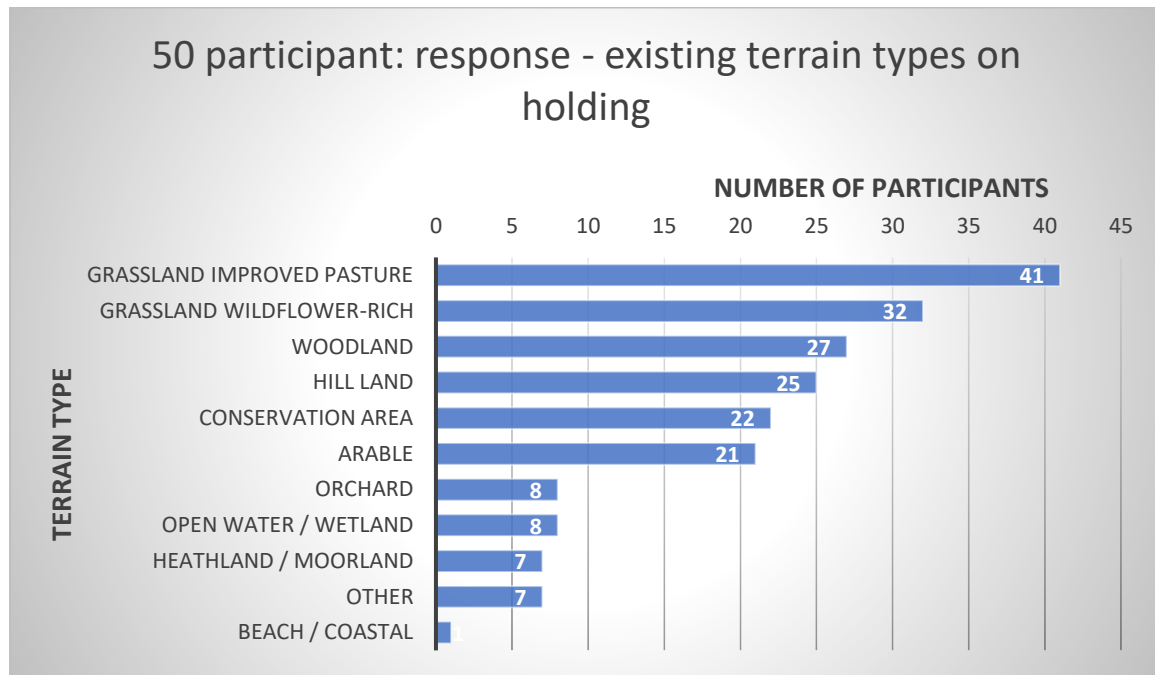
'We prefer open access land and open unenclosed routes as our mission is providing the public with access to the national natural landscape and views. Corridors are harder to manage, more likely to get chewed up surfaces but there might be a benefit in some

situations on agricultural type land let to tenants, where corridors and realignments would be helpful for stock issues.'

Other participants are not concerned

'One of the footpaths goes straight across a field but when it's grown for silage people are very good, they go around the edge.'

2.15 Describe terrain types that exist on the holding.

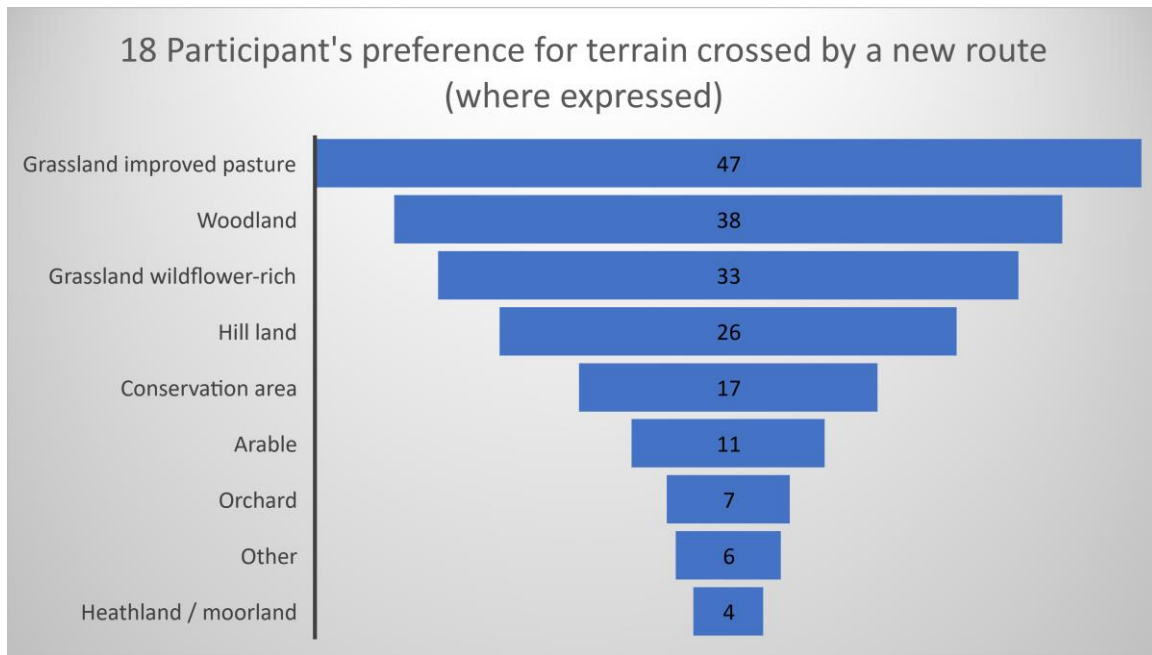


**RESULT:** 41 (82%) have (some) improved grassland, 32 (64%) have (some) wild flower rich grassland, 27 (54%) have woodland.

'Other' included scrub (3), cliffs (1), buildings / farm yard (2), hard track (1), embankment (1).

2.16 Do participants have any preference for the terrain type a new access route would cross over their holding? 32 said NO, 18 said YES

2.17 Those who answered YES ranked their preference from 1 (least preferred) to 5 (most preferred).



Options not chosen – beach / coastal, open water.

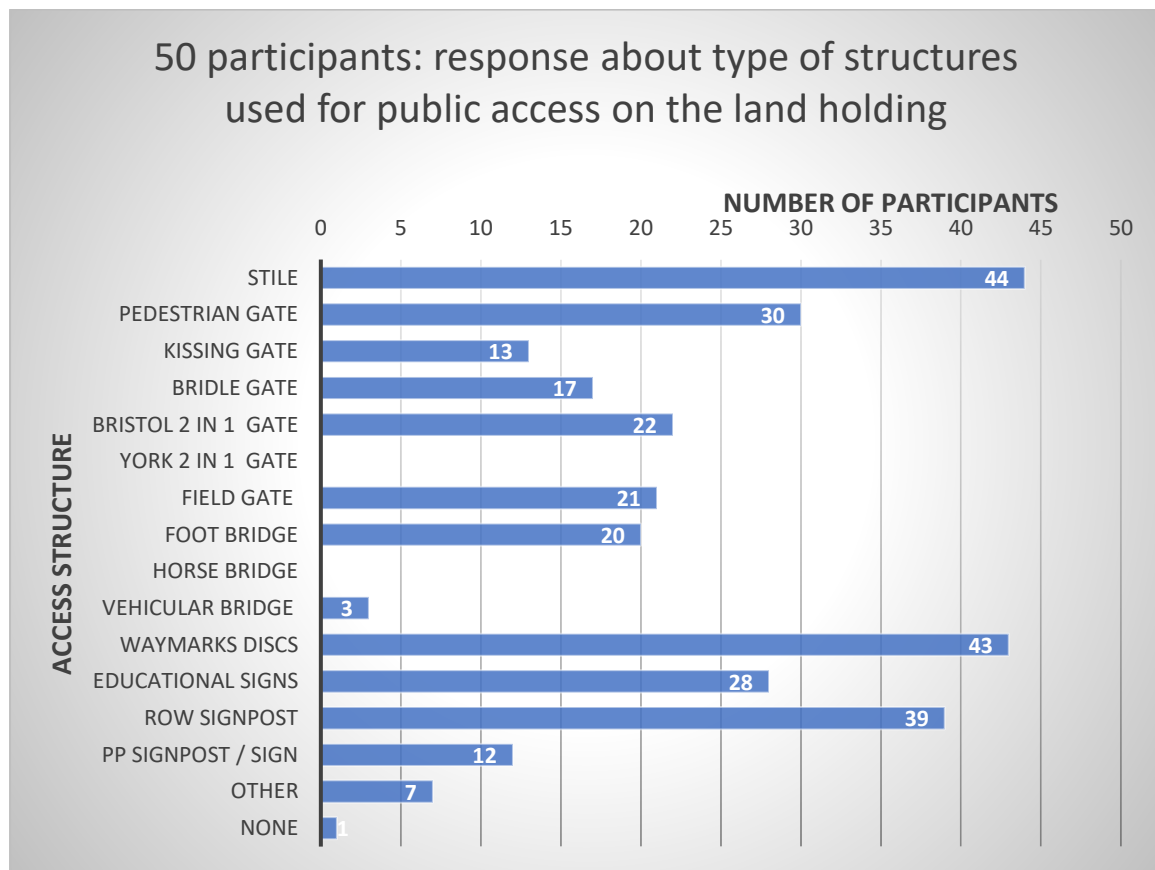
Other (see 2.15).

**RESULT** – ranking from the minority who had a preference (18 participants) showed a preference for new routes to cross grassland - improved 47, unimproved 33, hill land (grass) 26 or to go through woodland (38).

One participant noted that ‘the terrain is all grass land so we have no preference for which terrain would be crossed although with the expectation of walkers, cyclists and equestrians the route would probably need to have an improved surface.’



2.18 What structures exist on the land holding that are used by the public for access?



**RESULT:** 100% of the 49 participants with public access across their land have stiles, kissing gates, narrow pedestrian or Bristol gates (which need to be stepped over) installed on PROW.

21 (42%) have at least one field gate and 17 (34%) at least one bridle gate installed on PROW.

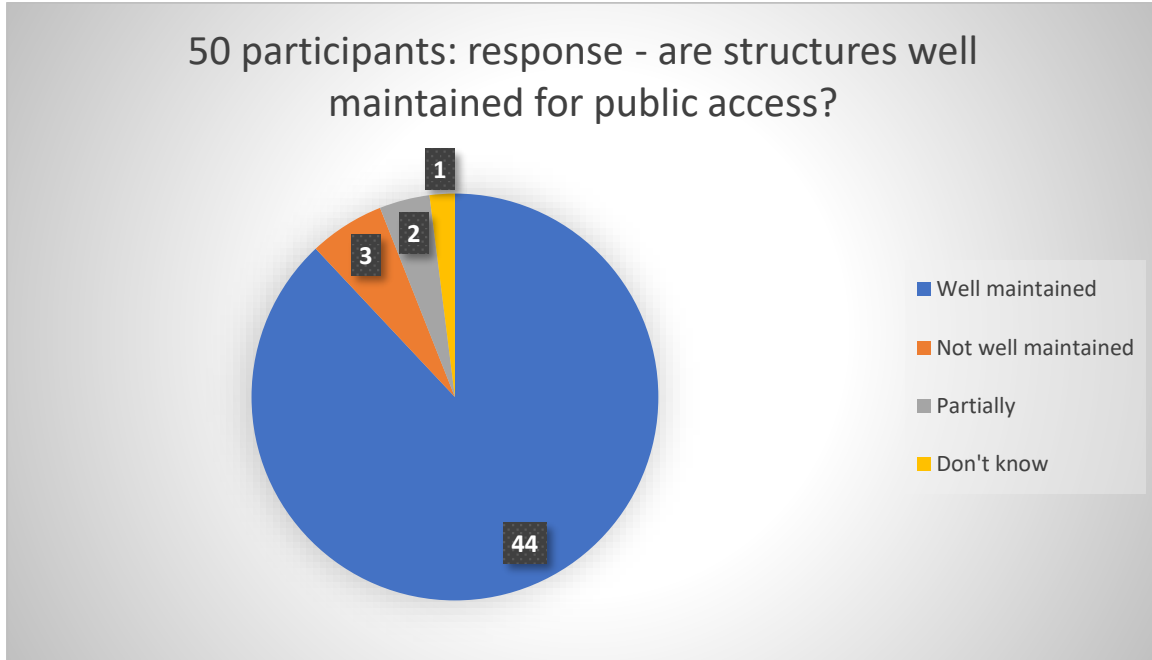
43 (86%) believed that the PROW is waymarked, 39 (78%) believed PROW to be correctly signed. 28 (56%) had additional educational signage on PROW (either installed by them or a third party).

‘Other’ included cattle grids, car park, squeeze gap, private drove signs, flight of old stone steps, interpretation board, barriers.



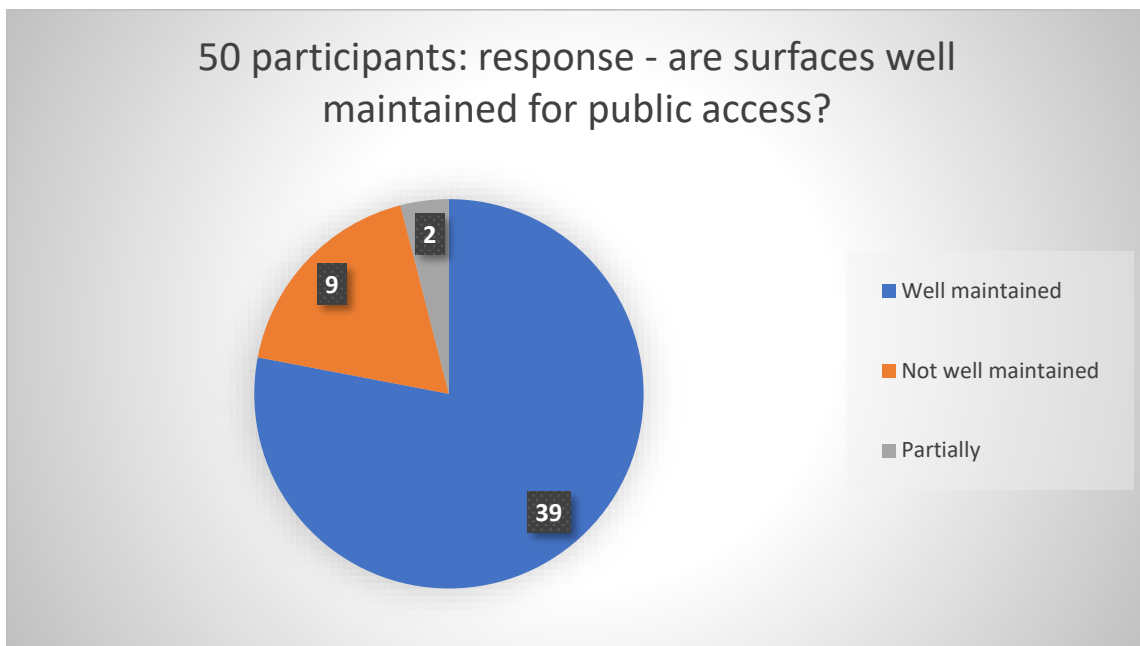
RESULT – 44 (88%) of participants have some stiles on installed on rights of way across their land – picture above left. 30 (60%) have some pedestrian gates in place (picture above right.) No one had a horse bridge or an equestrian 2 in 1 York gate.

2.19 Are the structures used by the public well maintained for public use?



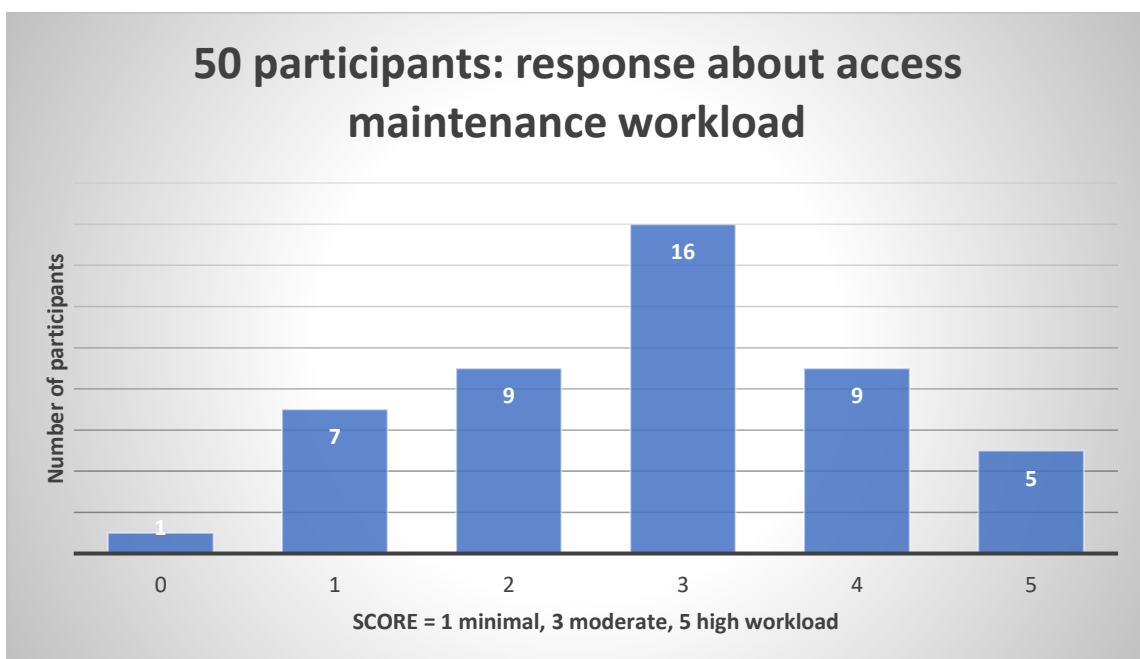
RESULT: 44 (88%) participants said YES structures are well maintained.

2.20 Are the path surfaces well maintained so as to be accessible for 95% of the year?



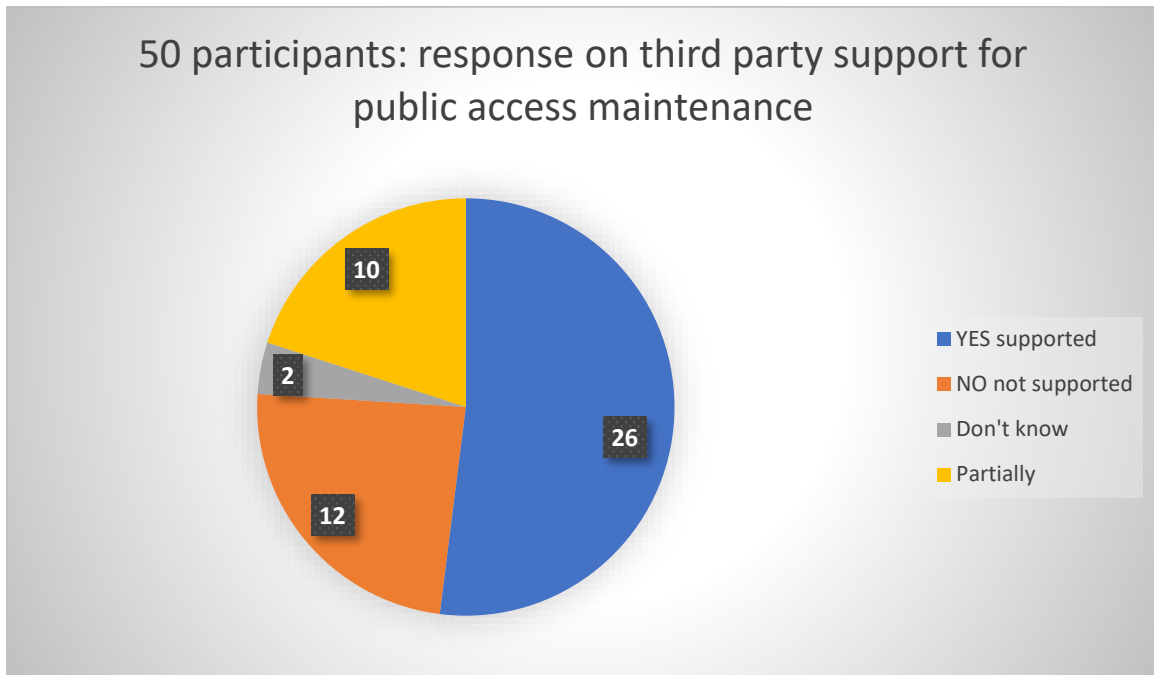
**RESULT:** 39 (78%) participants said YES surfaces are well maintained.

2.21 How much work does the participant engage in to maintain public access across the land holding?



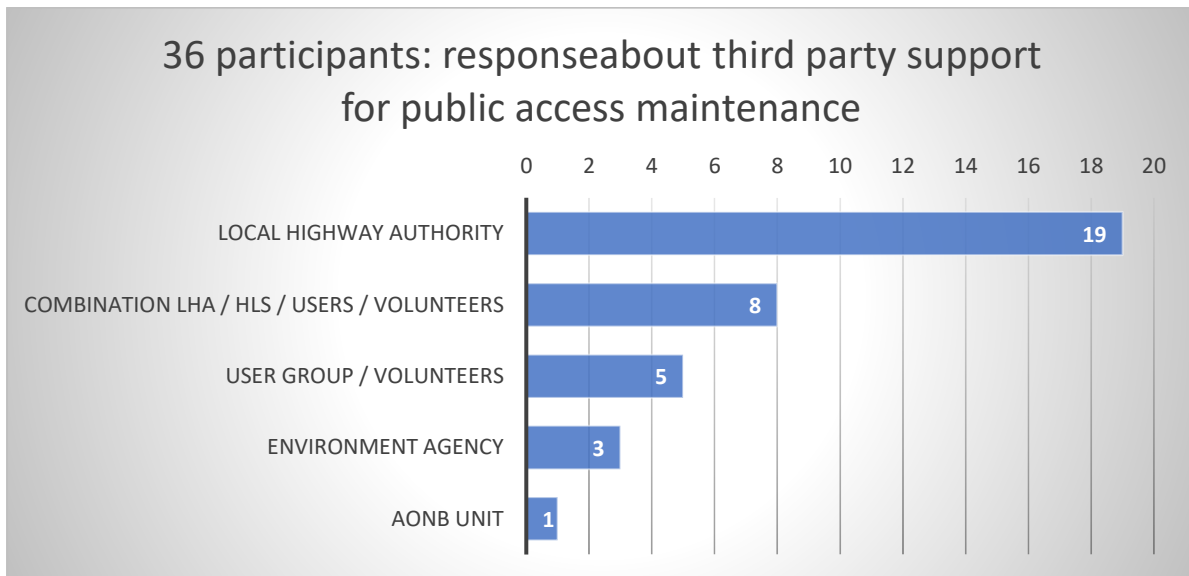
**RESULT:** total work score = 148, average = 3 therefore a MODERATE work load is engaged in to maintain public access on the holding

2.22 Are participants supported by a third party to help with maintenance through labour, material or finance?



**RESULT:** 26 (52%) participants said YES, they are supported. 12 (24%) are not supported 10 (20%) feel partially supported.

Who supports the participants with maintenance tasks?



**RESULT:** 19 (38%) participants felt supported by the Local Highway Authority.

13 (26%) felt supported through a combination of LHA and volunteers, users, another agency.

Snapshot of participants' responses about structures, surfaces and maintenance.

'We take our access responsibilities very seriously. The company has two employees whose job it is to know where all the routes are, regularly inspect them and clear, mow and spray surfaces (as appropriate) and deal with hedge growth etc. We give them all the resources they need. Immediately any furniture is out of repair, it is repaired or replaced. Photographs of the out of repair structure are sent to North Somerset Council. The Council provides new structures, we plant them and send a photograph of the completed works.'

'An enormous amount of work is carried out to keep access open and to keep people safe, we have a massive programme of works especially tree and rock work (rock fall prevention). The road safety work along the Gorge road, which was closed for two weeks to enable the removal trees suffering from Ash Dieback, had just cost the Estate £100,000.'

'A lot of work is done by the Agency maintaining access on all the tracks and in the carparks, way marking trails, keeping people safe and informed through notices and so on, but money is tight, a lot of signage needs updating and repair.'

'We are concerned that the increased usage of paths and honey pot areas has led to very muddy and boggy areas. These areas develop into wider paths as people try to avoid them by walking further around. Silage crops are reduced as busy paths soon split into three or four alternatives.'

'I work hard to maintain the footpath, mowing once per week in season, repairing the surface and erecting fencing.'



This verge is mown by a neighbouring farmer to help users travel from a bridleway (left) to crossing point beyond the bend (right).

'We go walking ourselves we lost our way once in Yorkshire and then noticed that the landowner had mown the grass along the footpath to show people the way. What an excellent idea.'

'Not much maintenance is needed, if a stile falls apart we go and mend it, obviously it's in our interests that the sheep don't get out. People sometimes saw the step off the stiles so they can get the dog over.'

'We do a fair amount of work keeping access open and accessible. In the past we have had

to remind the contractor not to plough right to the field edge as it made the path muddy but this has been sorted now we have the six metre grass margins in place.'

'That stile has been brilliant, really works, we had a real problem there because the path completed a motor bike circuit as well as a circular for horses, but the stile has stopped the motor bikes and the horses have got used to going over it.'

'We are so pleased with the new galvanised gates - pedestrian 'swing' gates and Bristol gates' – the gates are good, they don't rot out like the old wooden stiles. Someone had knocked out the dog gate, that's annoying because the sheep can get out.'

'I have been asked why farmers put gates in the muddiest part of the field!'

'Please can you consider the need for car parks to accommodate users who currently park poorly and dangerously on narrow rural roads?'

Frequent references were made to the good work done by the Environment Agency maintaining rights of way along rivers and rhyes and to Mendip Ramblers and Woodspring Ramblers for their work in installing structures.

Comments on the LHAS too

'Bath & North East Somerset Council make things really easy, they say 'can we come and install this today please? The lady Rights of Way officer is really excellent.'

'The access structures are in good condition. North Somerset Council has had access to grant money to replace many old structures with new. Now everything is much improved.'

'We are working with Somerset County Council to replace old wooden stiles with kissing gates. Wooden stiles are a nuisance because people kick out the bottom rails so their fat dogs can get out and the sheep then escape too.'

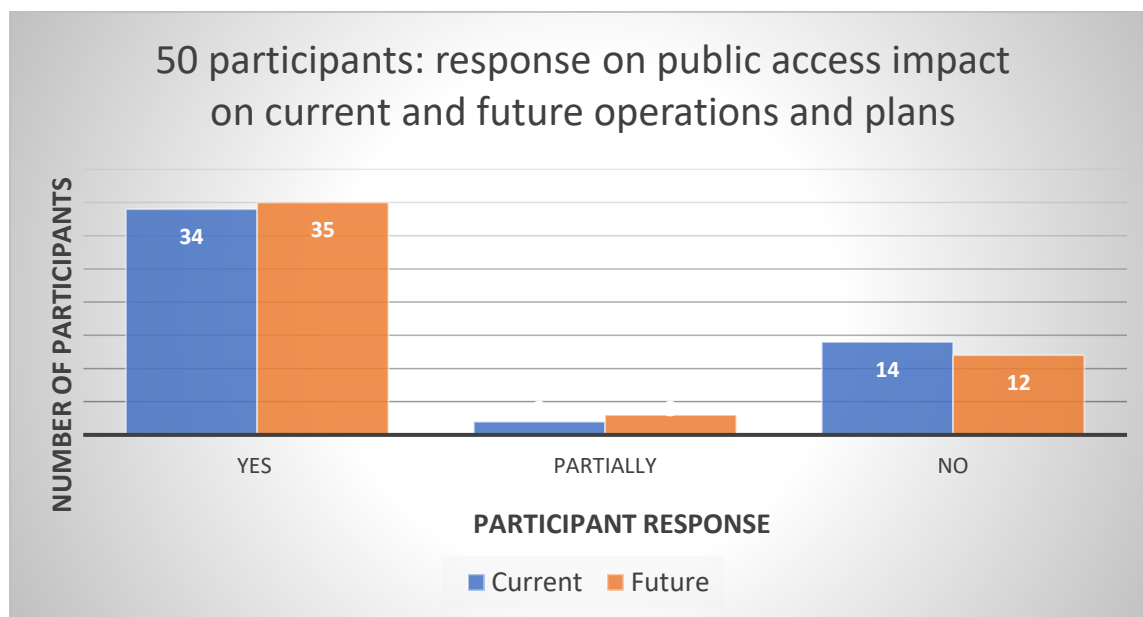
Comment made to landowner in interview 'I think that infrastructure used by the public for access that landowners might consider to be in good condition, acceptable and accessible, might not be viewed that way by users, especially by horse riders. There's a very old metal gate impossible to open from horseback where riders have to dismount and if elderly or disabled might not be able to remount – thereby debarred from using the route. Another gate opens uphill and is consequently very awkward and dangerous for the horse who could get trapped and spook.'

## Questionnaire Section 2. Interview discussion 5 about public access experiences, barriers and solutions

2.23 Does public access impact on the land holding and operations of the holding?

a) Does the existing public access over the land impact on current operations?

b) Will public access over the land impact on future plans?



**RESULT:** 36 (72%) participants said YES access has an impact or partial impact on current operations. 38 (76%) participants said YES access will impact on future plans.

### Snapshot of participants' responses on the current and future impacts of public access

'There have been no major problems over the 2,000 acre holding. We are very keen to permit access (on a designed controlled network) as part of the company's overall marketing strategy and serious planning to accommodate this is underway.'

'Access impacts are progressively worsening and that is going to continue, people just don't understand the impact they have on the places they are visiting and the amount it costs to manage access. They need to be much more educated about the effect dogs off leads have on wildlife and nesting birds and dog mess not picked up which can cause sheep to abort their lambs.'

'I don't consider access impacts on the company's farming operations and is not likely to in the future. This is due to the effort the company makes to keep paths open, accessible and well-marked and the continuing work to keep users away from stock and crops.'

'Apart from the fly tipping incidents I don't think access impacts on operations it's usually local people walking but more are out now, they do stick to the paths – you can see the line across the ground – all pretty good.'



‘The current level of access is severely affecting day to day stock welfare basis and financial implications. We feel very constrained about where we can turn stock out even though I trust my animals, the mixing of stock and people is a worry – especially when it comes to cows and their calves.’

## 2.24 Barriers to access

Participants were asked to engage in an ‘intuitive’, ten-minute, barriers to access test.

a) Consider the list of 28 access impacts encountered by the test team (see questionnaire table 2.24 following). Tick those regularly experienced. (Add any miscellaneous barriers).

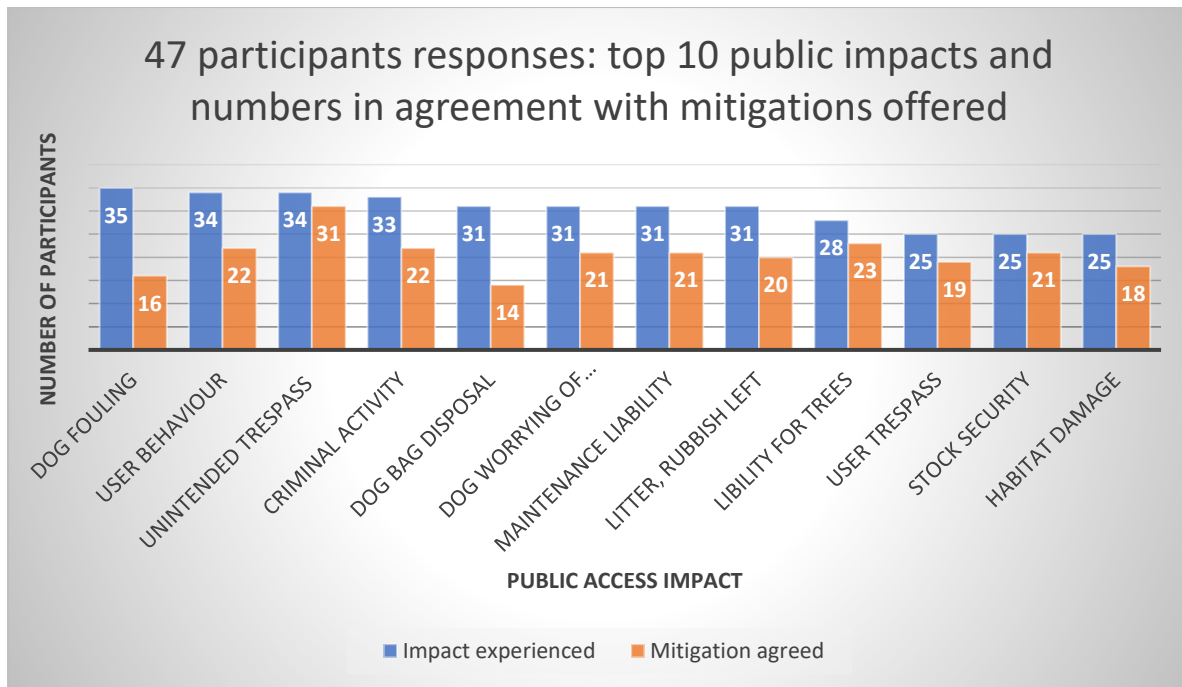
b) Will the proposed solutions or mitigations be effective in overcoming the barrier and resolving the issue?

RESULT (a) – 47 participants recorded a total of 625 public access impacts regularly experienced by them on their land holdings.

RESULT (b) - 47 participants said they agreed with 440 mitigations or solutions offered to deal with the public access impact.

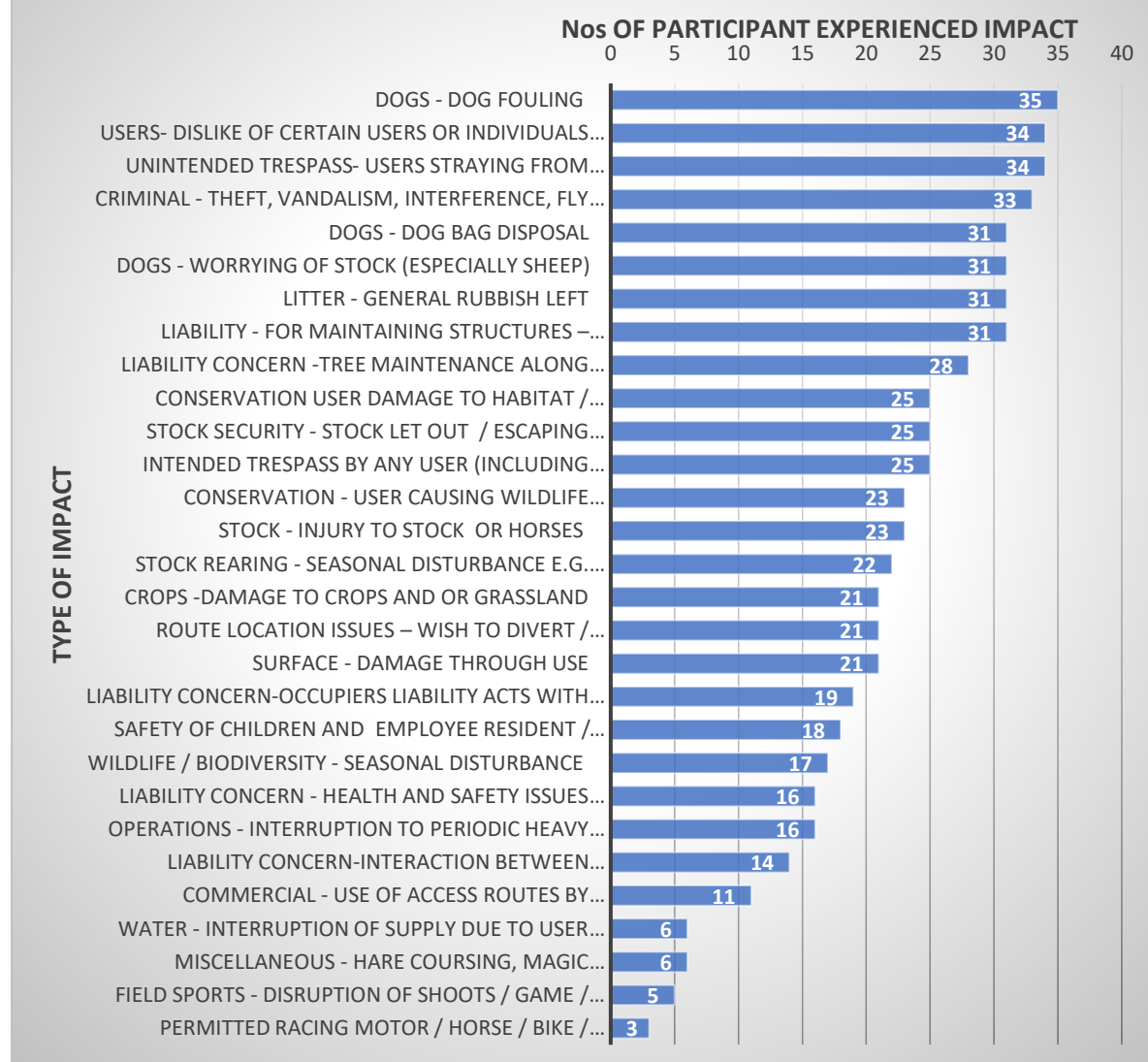
Top	% Participant impact experienced. Suggested mitigation through ELM?*	
1	Dogs - Dog fouling (education*)	74.5%
2	Users- Dislike of certain users due to poor behaviour (education*)	72%
3	Unintended trespass- users straying from route or open access space (containment / signage*)	72%
4	Criminal - theft, vandalism, interference, fly tipping (police / farm watch)	70%
5	Dogs - dog bag disposal (education*)	66%
6	Dog worrying of stock (education / containment*)	66%
7	Maintenance liability (improved structures, accessibility, preferred routes*)	66%
8	Litter, rubbish left (education*)	66%
9	Liability for trees (annual assessments*)	60%
10	Intended trespass (users) / habitat damage* / stock security* (improve access structure) (education / containment / barriers / improved structures / temporary divert)	53%





Public access impacts experienced by landowners and land managers and suggested mitigations agreed with.

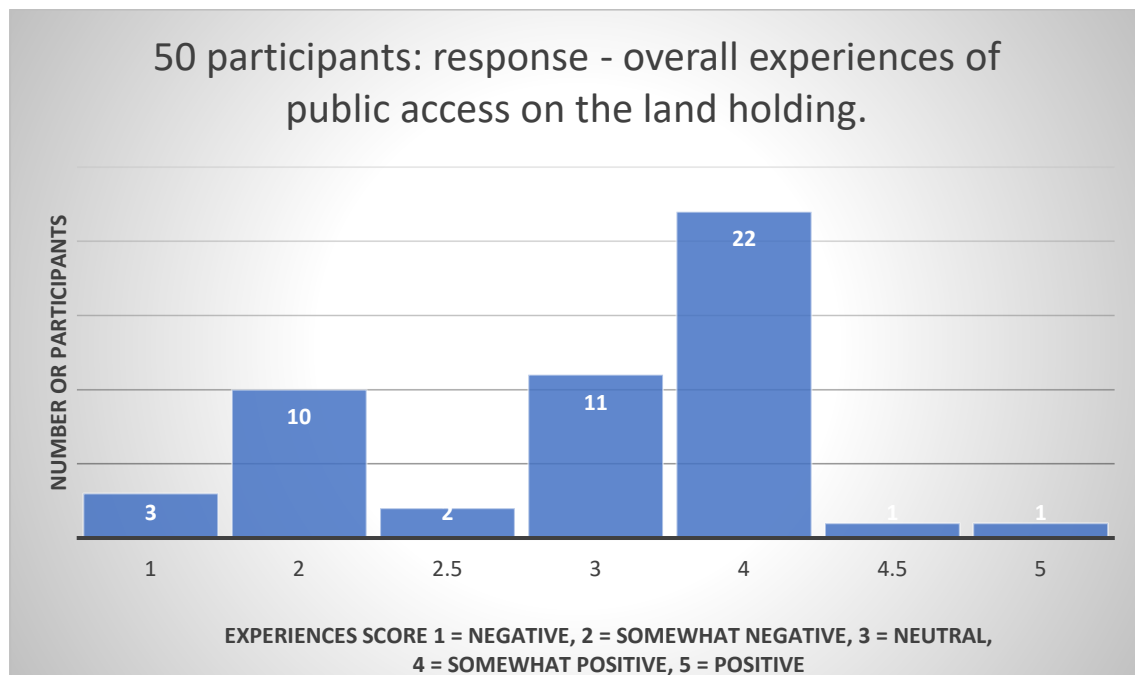
## 47 participant: all experiences of impacts suffered due to public access



<b>2.24 a) All barriers to access - experienced on current operations</b>	Participant numbers	Agreed mitigation	<b>2.24 (b)All suggested mitigations</b>
Dog fouling	35	16	Education, bin provision,
Dislike of users / behaviour	34	22	User education via countryside code promotion (national)
Unintended trespass	34	31	Education – signs and waymarks, user containment
Criminal - theft, vandalism, fly tipping	33	22	Farm Watch, police action, wildlife cameras
Dogs - dog bag disposal	31	14	Education, bin provision, scheme reward
Dogs - worrying of stock esp sheep	31	21	Education, possible containment,
General rubbish left	31	20	Education, bin provision, reward
Liability - for maintaining structures	31	21	Improved structure maintenance

Liability for trees	28	23	Annual assessments / maintenance
Damage to habitat / biosecurity	25	18	Contain, divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage
Stock security, access point	25	21	Improved structure design
Intended trespass	25	19	Reduce width of access point, motorbike stiles, education
Wildlife disturbance	23	16	Contain, divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage
Stock - injury to stock or horses	23	12	Improved structures / education
Stock rearing - seasonal disturbance e.g. lambing or calving	22	14	Contain, temporary divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage
Crops -damage to crops and or grassland	21	17	Contain, divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage, mow route
Route location issues	21	20	Realign / preferred route
Surface - damage through use	21	16	Improve surface maintenance, ditching, drainage, stock control on paths
Liability concern-Occupiers Liability Acts with regard to visitors / trespassers	19	12	Reduce liability - dedicate as highway / open access land
Safety of children / employees	18	16	Route design / accessibility / awareness of sensitive areas, education.
Wildlife seasonal disturbance	17	15	Temporary route diversion / signage / education
Health and safety issues	16	15	Contain, divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage
Operations - interruption	16	13	Contain, temporary divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage
Liability-Interaction vehicles /users	14	10	Contain, divert away from yards, operations, shepherd users, education, signage
Commercial use of access	11	6	Communication between businesses
Water - Interruption of supply	6	6	Improve protection of utility infrastructure
Miscellaneous - hare coursing, magic mushroom pickers	6	N/A	Not offered
Disruption of country sport	5	2	Contain, divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage
Permitted racing / adjacent rights	3	2	Contain, temporary divert, shepherd users, education, explain, signage

2.25 What are the participants' overall experiences of public access on their land holding?



**RESULT:** 24 (48%) somewhat positive / positive, 15 (30%) negative / somewhat negative, 11 (22%) neutral.

**ACCESS POSITIVITY RESULT AVERAGE = 3.2 (NEUTRAL)**

Snapshot of participant responses about overall experiences of access

From two participants with a positive score of 4

The organisation welcomes and encourages the engagement of people with countryside and the natural world, but recognises that it can be difficult to balance access and engagement needs with its primary objectives around wildlife and biodiversity.

The participant clearly enjoys engaging with people and advising them during his 'farm patrols.' He said that the fact that he 'farms on the doorstep of 14,000 people' and rarely has trouble 'is a testament to his approach'. If there is a 'conflict of interest or disagreement I like to hear the other side.'

From two participants with a negative score of 2

'The majority of people do the right thing but need educating with regard to not having dogs off leads and the consequences to livestock of not picking up dog mess'. They were 'sorry to say' their access experience is somewhat negative.

His overall access experiences were 'sadly somewhat negative'. He said that 'the things that some people do (referring to the experiences list) cause others (land managers and farmers) a great deal of unhappiness.'

Questionnaire Section 3. Interview discussion 6: valuing and incentivising public access as a public good.

Policy question to be answered: what is the valuation for the creation of different types of access – including routes contained within green corridors, that cross land or for recreational open access land which offers the freedom to wander.

Question	Result in brief
3.1 <b>Key finding</b>	Can access valuation be based on a set rate land valuation? RESULT: 24 agreed with a basic land valuation approach - 14 local, 1 regional, 1 national valuation, 8 devaluation. 25 participants wanted another valuation approach - see 3.4
3.2	How should the land required for a linear public access route be measured for valuation? RESULT: measure length by appropriate width (depending on infrastructure – corridor, boundary, path across open ground).
3.3	How should public spatial access on open land or in woodland be valued? RESULT: 44 (90%) agreed with area valuation - subject to the same base / other values as 3.1 / 3.4
3.4 <b>Key finding</b>	Are there any <u>other</u> valuation criteria that should be considered? Impact / recreational value / operational loss discussions RESULT: YES – 33 (68%) for creating a multi – user right of way, 45 (92%) open access space. Plus a reward for recreational value / enhancements (see comments).
3.5 <b>Key finding</b>	How should capital improvements be valued? RESULT: 40 (82%) participants agreed with a set payment rate for capital works on access routes or space – but note reservations (see comments).
3.6 <b>Key finding</b>	How should annual / seasonal activities be valued? RESULT: 42 (86%) participants agreed with a set payment rate for annual activities on access routes or space – but note reservations (see comments).

Discussion 6 A) Valuing the creation of rights of way through permanent dedication using the community aspirational surveyed route(s) or space as an example.

Examples given to participants to aid thoughts on valuation and reward

- Upgrading an existing public footpath to public bridleway so that additional users are catered for (horse riders and cyclists).
- Creating a new route so that (for example) the public can avoid travelling along a busy road or access a direct crossing point.
- Enhancing biodiversity along upgraded or newly created routes.
- Providing permanent protection for access and wildlife by creating a restricted byway as a wildlife corridor route.
- Providing access to open space or woodland for additional users (e.g. horse riders, cyclists).

Valuation for dedication: It was made clear to participants that valuation concerned dedication of a multi-user access rights over land (bridleway, restricted byway or open access land rights), with the land remaining in the owner's title. Land purchase to enable development of an access route is not (currently) being considered. 1 participant (owners of the military range) did not take part in the valuation discussions.



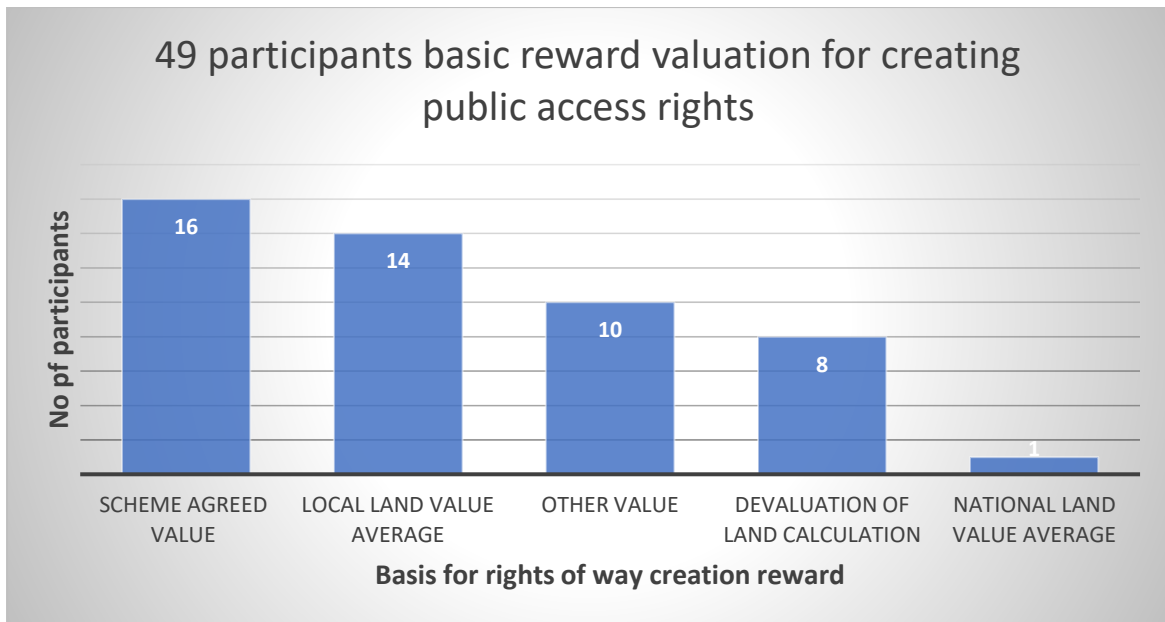
Typical example: 4 miles north of the city of Wells. What is the value of this boundary bridleway should it not already exist to society and to the farmer?

Encouraging multi-users on foot, horse and bicycle to explore beautiful circular walks and rides on the beautiful adjacent estate. A quiet lane for wandering along. A field for car parking with

children playing football and adults sitting looking at a stunning view of the Somerset Levels and Glastonbury Tor. A nearby bus stop serviced every half hour. A farmer selling his own ice cream, engaging with the public.

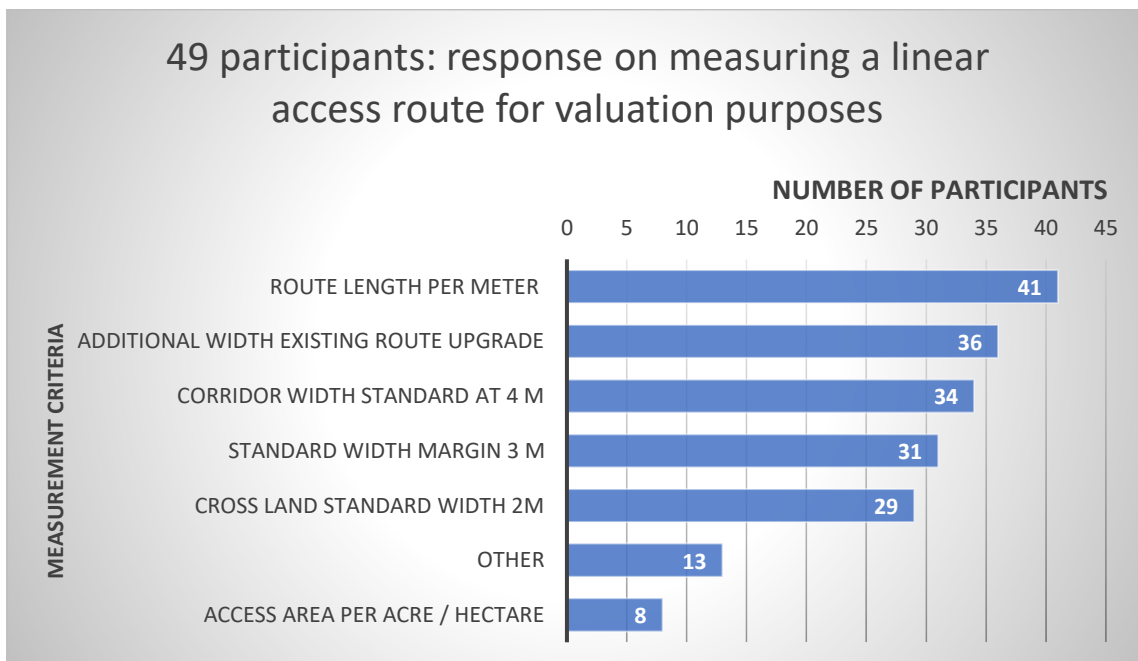
### 3.1 Can access valuation be based on a set rate land valuation?

This discussion focused on a basic value or reward (predicted to be one off capital payment) for dedicating public access, that all scheme participants could expect.



**RESULT:** 25 participants didn't agree with a basic land valuation approach and wanted a scheme value or other approach (9 of 'other'). 24 did agree with a basic land valuation approach. 14 said local land value was fairest, 1 regional (other), 1 national valuation, 8 wanted a devaluation calculation. 6 of those who agreed a basis for valuation also said there were other considerations to valuing land for access. See 3.4 (other valuation criteria).

3.2 How should the land required for a linear public access route be measured for valuation?



**RESULT:** participants showed a clear preference for measuring a linear multi-use route by meter length and width for valuation purposes. Agreed standard widths would assist land managers in calculating the expected reward for say creating a corridor route at a maintainable width of (for example) 4 metres, creating a 3-metre-wide boundary route or



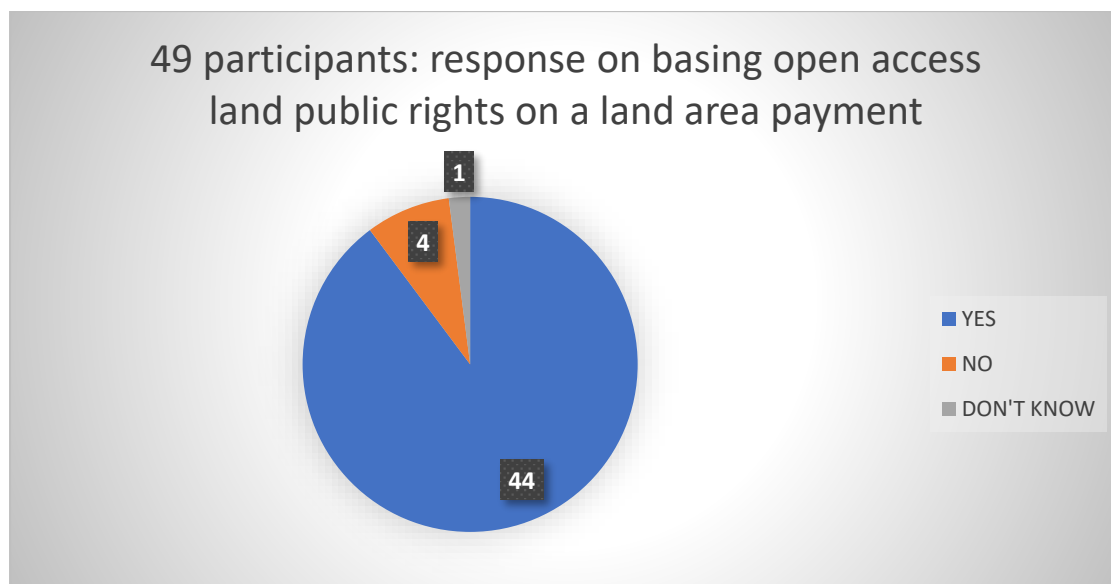
upgrading an existing footpath where additional width to accommodate multi-use would be needed.

13 'other' suggestions to do with impact and further ideas for valuation criteria are considered with question 3.4 (other valuation criteria).

Question 3.2 contained an option for valuation criteria 'type of user right granted' to be considered – this result has also been moved to be considered with question 3.4 results.

3.3 How should public spatial access on open land or in woodland be valued and rewarded?

The only option offered was valuation / reward based on land area, did participants agree?



**RESULT:** 44 (90%) agreed that area valuation was the only criteria that could be used and that open access land would be subject to the same base value as linear access in 3.1

1 participant didn't know

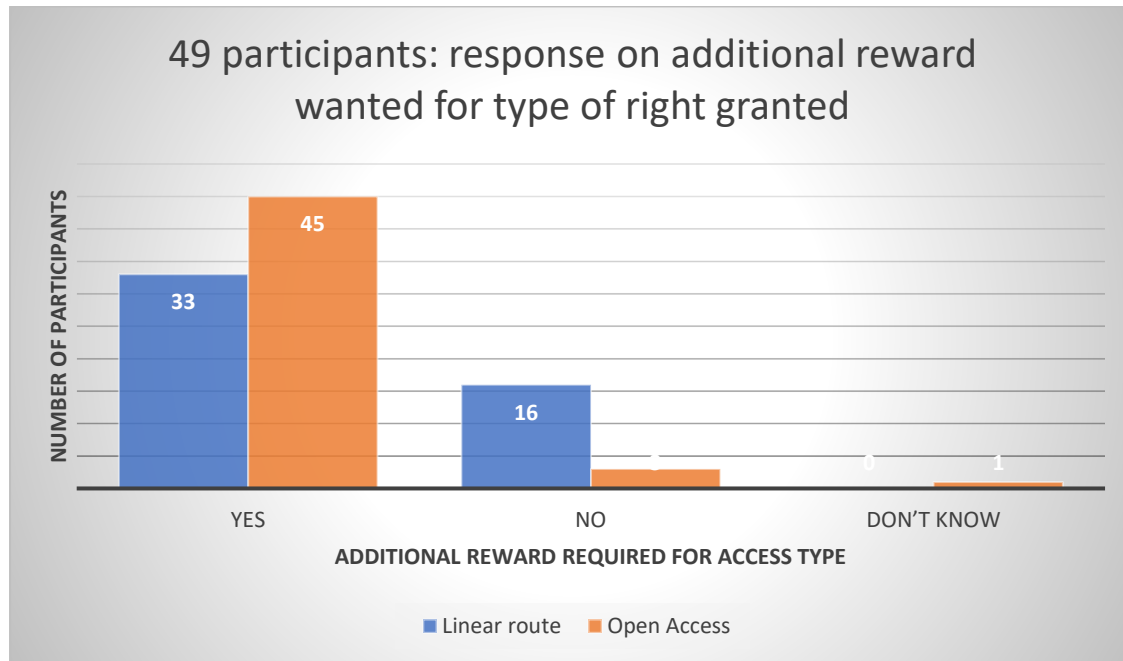
4 participants who said NO, suggested that the valuation should be based on other criteria regarding impact and other valuation criteria. These responses are considered with question 3.4 (other valuation criteria).

Question 3.3 contained an option for valuation criteria 'type of user right granted' to be considered (3.3b)– this result has also been moved to be considered with question 3.4 results.



### 3.4 Are there any other valuation criteria that should be considered?

Discussions through questions 3.1- 3.4 regarding valuations for public rights of way and open access creation teased out the need for a tiered approach to reward and payments based on impact, operational loss and recreational or enhanced value.



**RESULT:** 33 (68%) participants said YES, an additional reward payment should be made to compensate for dedicating multi-user rights when upgrading an existing footpath or creating a multi – user right of way.

This number rose to 45 (92%) participants when discussing the granting of multi-use public access rights on open access land.

Discussions throughout section 3 drew out the need for compensation for loss of agricultural / operational use, value / depreciation of land and profit due to multi- user access (especially where corridors created), impact on the right of way / open space or on nearby operations, additional liability burdens with regard to users, accidents and incidentals such as liabilities for diseased trees.

Throughout discussions only 3 (6%) participants seemed unconcerned with receiving an additional reward to compensate for the impact of multi-use.

In addition to compensating landowners and farmers for the consequences of the impact of multi -user routes, the discussions drew out the need to reward landowners for offering a substantially enhanced public good.

#### Participant responses regarding the valuation of land for access

##### Comments about valuation.

‘Each valuation and payment criteria have positives and negatives, each could be complicated and possibly disproportionately affect participants.’

'The scheme should be flexible, periodically reviewed and straight forward enough so everyone would know what to expect and could calculate the expected access reward for a scheme proposal themselves.'

'There should be an easy to understand set scheme valuation which can be periodically reviewed, with options for establishing linear routes - corridors at 4 meters (for maintenance) and 3 meters for boundaries and margins.'

'I can't conceive of making a 4-metre corridor route in my fields as there wouldn't be much field left on the other side.'

'Paying local land value is difficult – how local is local?'

'There needs to be fairness, flexibility and financial recognition of the impact on the business. Each location, scenario and anticipated footfall is different and farmers should be able to make a case for a higher tier access payment. Valuation payments could be paid over a number of years during which impact could be assessed and satisfaction that the route



impacts were dealt with and the route working well for everyone.'

'The valuation should consider many elements such as local land value, impact, expected user types and numbers and on the other hand the commercial advantages such a route might bring. This farm is ring fenced, we have had it to ourselves, the multi-user path will cut it in two, we would have to move the arena and re-think horse access, but there could be advantages, this farm has to work its socks off to remain profitable, it's not an easy decision, you have to drill down to a point where you are able to make a commercial decision that affects the future.'

There was a long discussion about valuing permanent access with the dairy farmer half of the partnership accepting that the aspirational route could be accommodated along the boundary probably in a corridor and the equestrian half of the partnership sensing the opportunities that a multi user network across Mendip could bring. 'We could lose this but gain that, it would be really good to be able to get to the wood.'

'There should be a scheme agreed value, a base line creation payment, perhaps based on local land value as a starting point.' They understood that they would retain ownership but create multi-user rights along the route. There should be enhancements 'recognising the recreational value of the route, the types of users and estimated numbers.'

'Whatever scheme comes forward, valuation elements should be simple to calculate at home on some sort of sliding scale.'

'The valuation is a reward for public goods not compensation, therefore you have to look at value to society, how much would someone be prepared to pay for the experience on this right of way, COVID has shown us that society places a high value on the ability to get out.'

#### Comments about location of place or access space.

'The location of my land holding is crucial to an access route to the Mendip plateau from nearby communities and should be valued appropriately, especially when you consider the amount of traffic likely to result from it (a route). I favour the devaluation of land calculation for the creation reward as every site is unique.'

'We are unique because of the offer of lakeside views and habitat.'

'Location is very important because you would probably just end up giving up that land.'

'If put in the wrong place a route could devalue a whole field.'

'Intensification and carbon foot printing principles could be applied to access with new access more easily accommodated and created in less intensely farmed areas.'

'If such a scheme existed we would probably put our inside hill ground into it, it is so well used and enjoyed, it would be more valuable to farm people on it, people have had weddings there.'

'The secondary payment should be higher in honeypot areas reflecting the giving of access in a protected landscape where the impact on farmers is bound to be higher.'

#### Comments about impact and loss of operational profit

'There are so many variables including the expected throughput and impact of people, what about the cost to this, we risk assess every tree, the more people the higher the risk from a tree.'

'Open access land cannot really be used for farming except perhaps for low level grazing but any cows and sheep on it are basically just tidying it up.'

'We own an eleven-acre field next to Midsomer Norton that is unlettable because it has three footpaths across it, it's just a playground, no-one wants it.'

'There should be an additional payment according to the rights granted as multi user is bound to have a greater impact.'

'The fairest way would be to offer a valuation payment per acre created and an additional payment for expected user groups (walkers, horse riders, cyclists etc) as the more user impact the less the landowner would be able to use the land for any profitable use.'

'Lockdown is a prime example of high user impact, the footpaths have no grass on them, just bare earth, so worn down, there's 'no thistles on a footpath!' Now, no grass either!'

#### Comments about land size

'The smaller the piece of land the bigger the impact on any operation and management costs.'

'The loss is greater pro rata than on a big acreage on a small farm you are looking to working every acre.'

#### Comments about realignment of existing public rights of way

'The ability to realign paths away from buildings, houses and yards should be part of the incentive package. if the scheme allows some realignment to say the boundary for upgrade of footpath to bridle path that realignment is of benefit to the landowner.'

'Valuation needs to account for a trade-off between accommodating the public on a good quality route and being able to manage a business. Routes need to be well designed and in the right place. Whilst agreeing the public need a known network of created rather than permissive infrastructure it should be possible to move a path more easily because things always change in the future.'

#### Comment about Government owned land.

The question was raised as to how Government owned land would fit into the ELMs scheme.

'Access schemes could affect all landowners – we would be unlikely to be able to claim a capital reward payment under ELMs due to the protocol in place between ministries not to claim against each other's budgets.'

#### Comment about short lengths of route.

'There could be the danger of a single landowner realising he has 'a ransom strip' preventing the completion of the routes and demanding a large payment.'

'An example of a short but very valuable route was route survey 4, a very short section which would assist users in crossing a very busy road (B3134).'

#### Comments about enhancements that should be valued.

'Access to wild and beautiful landscape rich in heritage, history, culture and ecology, cannot be compared to or valued in the same way as agricultural land. A basic creation payment for linear routes and spatial open access rights within natural landscape should be valued as a public good based on a capital asset valuation – user impact, which in a beautiful landscape could be significant (as now).'

'There needs to be short and long route options, some people just want to get out of the car and lie on the grass, it's important to recognise that people want and need access to green space, to recover and let nature feed their senses.'

'We are considering creating a small area of woodland and would be more than happy for people to use it and if there could be a contribution through ELMs that would be excellent'. Access routes and space 'should be enjoyable for users.'

#### Comments about the recreational value of access.

'An element of the capital valuation of multi-user access should be based on the number of public goods being delivered (i.e. the 11 priorities of the aspirational route are ALL public goods on a crucial route) and the higher the number of goods, the higher the capital payment should be – perhaps within tiers.'

'This route is a great benefit to users to get them off the busy road and will inevitably lead to a large increase in (access) users. It is worth an enhanced payment because of the recreational value.'

#### Comments about the potential for development.

'I'm the only farm on that side of town, a lot of development is planned, including a supermarket and I'm hoping to gain substantially from that. Therefore, the basic valuation for an upgrade to e.g. bridleway would be based on 'my own rate based on development land value foregone.'

#### Comments about the value of providing amenity and facilities.

##### Car parks

Consideration needs to be given to providing car parking –

'The entrance to the old quarry just off the road is often full of parked cars, you would never get the emergency services in there if you had to.'

'Consider the need for car parks to accommodate users who currently park poorly and dangerously on narrow rural roads.'

'Every weekend cars are parked all the way down the A38 obstructing the traffic and causing arguments so people can walk their dogs in the wood and up on Crook Peak.'

##### Mixed use and need for passing place provision.

'A safe access route could be well used (example the drove) and if it is a shared space with the farmer, passing places may need to be developed.'

'How does multi-use work and users mix with each bringing their own needs and speeds?'  
In discussion it was noted that users share a wide variety of bridleways and byways on Mendip and in busier places expect each other and are used to sharing routes. On narrow routes sight lines and passing places are important.

#### Comments about public education.

'Educational materials should be provided they are key in how the public understands farming.'

'Education of users is key, that's really important, at the moment we have horse riders they tend to be better educated.'

#### Experiences about reward payments.

The participant had dedicated a 2km long public bridleway for reward some 12 years ago (picture left). He was 'happy with the payment' (which was based on a local land value calculation). He thought there ought to be a degree of recompense too for impact based on the type of right granted 'perhaps a bit more for creating a route for horse riders and cyclists.'

'It is normal for the company to offer a notional value of (usually) local land value plus 50% depreciation so 150% of local land value. The reason for offering agricultural land value plus 50% is that although the landowner can continue to use the land as normal, he has effectively got a 'sterile strip' which he would not be permitted to develop over. The sterile strips vary from 5 metres over smaller pipes to 10 to 12 metres over large pipes. The strip is measured length by width.'

#### Experiences about the cost of temporary closures due to operational need that impact on willingness to create rights of way.

'There's such an issue with rights of way because of all the legal formalities that have to be gone through to effect the temporary closures and diversions needed for felling work. Even though we do all the paperwork the cost is horrendous. The LHA has just charged £1500 for a short time limited temporary diversion of one footpath needed for forestry works to take place. We sell standing timber, if there are a lot of rights of way in a wood, the added costs of closing them temporarily and the issues around increased public liability dramatically devalues the timber crop. DEFRA should be cognisant of the hidden cost of providing more rights of way in forests.'

Note that in the wood referred to all non-definitive paths and tracks used for access through the CROW Act 2000 can be temporarily closed and diverted by the land manager without the need for costly arrangements with the LHA.

Comments about access rights being permanent.

'I wouldn't do it for £1200 (as in the ELS) but there again if creating a corridor prevented cows getting access to dog poo and saved two calves a year there's your £1200 pay back.'

'Rewards should reflect the creation of rights (e.g. upgrading footpath to bridleway) not (the value of) time limited agreements.'

#### Conclusion

From discussions it appears that the valuation for incentivising the creation of access rights may depend on a combination of opposing factors.

On the minus side

- loss of operational value due to route and user impact and disturbance
- recognition of recreational amenity value and enhancements such as access to views, nature and landscape,
- mitigation of risk / risk assessment particularly with regard to trees

On the plus side

Opportunities to provide realign some existing routes, provision of facilities, sales and education on land use and farming to the public passing by.

The creation of different types of access – including routes contained within green corridors, that cross land or for recreational open access land which offers the freedom to wander.

Participants suggested that the reward for creating public access could be based on a points system, enhanced payments or the ‘most profitable’ method.

The three elements to incentivise creating or upgrading a public access right appear to be

- V - Payment for the capital value of land being given up for public use (length by width or area) – irrespective of whether that is a corridor route or crossing open land or space.

Local land value the most favoured method where method expressed

- L - Recompense for impact, operational loss, income foregone and any additional liability. Impact is more likely to be higher closer to larger conurbations or honey pot areas.
- R - Reward for providing infrastructure of community recreational value, enhancements and benefit, enabling opportunities for all

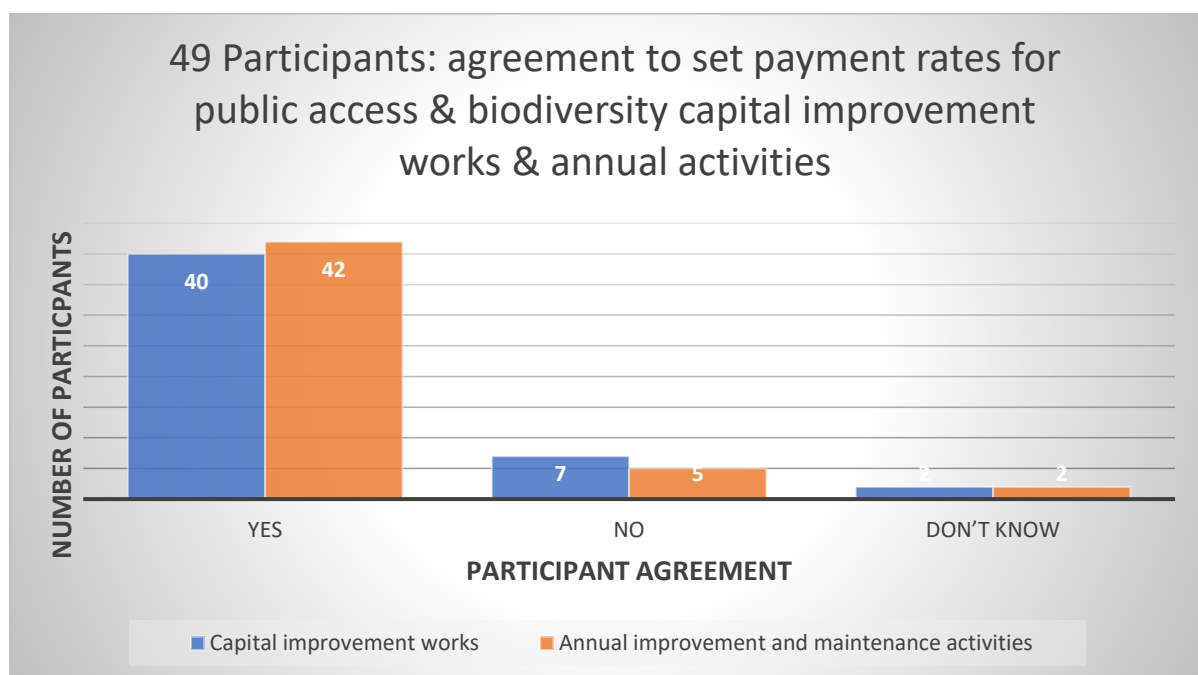
Discussion 6 B): valuing capital improvement works to new and existing access routes and open areas and

Discussion 6 C): valuing annual revenue payments for public access improvement and maintenance activities.

3.5 How could the valuation for capital works to install new routes on the ground and / or improve and upgrade existing routes for biodiversity and access for people be rewarded? Should the reward be based on a set payment rate capital-item agreement (for example as mid – tier subsidy in the current countryside stewardship scheme)?

3.6 How could the (revenue) valuation for annual / seasonal works to improve and maintain biodiversity and access be rewarded? Through set payment rates for annual activities?

The participant was asked to refer to list 4.7 (biodiversity works), list 4.8 (access capital works) for examples of capital works to be undertaken and list 4.9 (annual maintenance works) for example of activities to be undertaken.



**RESULT (B):** 40 (82%) participants agreed with a set payment rate for capital works on access routes or space

**RESULT (C):** 42 (86%) participants agreed with a set payment rate for annual activities on access routes or space.

However, although participants agreed with the set payment principle there was concern expressed over the payment amounts offered for works and activities.

There was widespread agreement that



- Smaller tasks and activities should be paid 100% set allowance for capital items, labour and profit
- Major schemes proposals project should be individually costed for development / capital works / labour / time for facilitation and collaboration

Snapshot of participant comments on payment rates for improvements and activities.

‘Our experience of countryside stewardship scheme type payments is at present they only cover a proportion of the full cost’.

‘The grant for the orchard didn’t cover all the costs, but it is difficult to see how the Government could manage to afford it – you really can’t expect it to pay for everything’.

‘The current type of scheme has the attraction of simplicity.’

‘Set payment didn’t recognise structure costs or construction and the actual costs of doing the job. Costs should be based on actual costs, prices and quotes such as in our contracting business.’

‘A set payment regime for capital items and maintenance activities is fine so long as the costs, including labour and an element of profit are covered’.

‘I’m happy with a set payment regime for small improvements and maintenance tasks such as replacing a stile with a gate, provided the costs are covered including an element of profit that recognises the ‘public goods’ provision’.

‘The scheme should be flexible and payments periodically reviewed to ensure they are fair. The participant should be able to recalculate and submit improvement and maintenance costs perhaps on an annual review basis since they might have miscalculated and there might have been more use and impact which would need rectifying – for instance repairing and upgrading damaged surfaces. Surface repairs would ‘depend on the number and type of users with mountain bikes generally causing more wear to surfaces than other users’.

Payment for capital improvements and annual maintenance should not be paid on a set payment rate since these activities are ‘very site specific’. The application should identify and cost what needs to be done (in the ELMs plan). How could you expect anyone to engage with a scheme that does not offer full repayment?’

‘I’m satisfied with the HLS payment method, that model is the right one to follow. Payments don’t always cover the full cost but I accept this as consequence of the ‘landowning privilege’.

‘Farms do not have spare labour as they did in the old days, labour is reducing all the time. Capital projects must be costed with an element of the labour contribution at the proper market rate’.

‘Access creation schemes, especially where collaborative, ought to be properly costed and the ELM scheme needs to allow for that.’

'Bigger collaborative schemes would need to be properly costed and a decision made about whether you would want to carry out works yourself or project manage with works undertaken by contractors. Obviously, you would not want to be out of pocket.'

'Capital items such as bridges and steps may need to be included'.

'DEFRA needs to think about 3 elements for access creation and improvement

1. A straight forward reward scheme of standard payments for e.g. installing a stile, repairing a surface payment per metre (as mid-tier example).
2. A development scheme e.g. providing a mile of doubled hedged green infrastructure (bridleway) including major surface works, costed, submitted, possibility of inspection.
3. Combination of those e.g. a scheme of simple installations plus a major item that would require one off cost and perhaps inspection (e.g. provision of a bridge)'

'We would be happy with a set payment regime for capital works and for maintenance you know what you are going to get. We are used to this regime through the capital and boundary payments received'.

'There needs to be flexibility for bigger projects. Large individual schemes need to be costed with quotes submitted for the intended works and labour.'

'Major schemes such as developing an access and biodiversity corridor, including surfacing, need to be individually valued and quoted for as each will be different depending on the environment – 'for instance surfacing a path using a Landrover and trailer for transport here is bound to be different to delivering stone, to upgrade a path, by helicopter on the side of Snowdonia'

'It must be possible to bring forward unique development public access schemes for consideration and grant funding under a new scheme. Example - designing / developing an access network which could include road crossings such as an underpass'.

'I prefer high quality materials and a good job because that lasts. I have done a quarter of a mile of fencing years ago that still stands when my neighbour's (fenced at the same time), has rotted in the ground'.

'It is more a question of who is going to do these works, the landowners or tenants? The Company has a scheme to try and engage employees in getting outside and carrying out works'.

'There are lots of minor improvements that could be undertaken in terms of wild flower planting that could be undertaken along the existing access routes.'

'Will rewards relate to a cross compliance principle as now?'

'With regard to works to create routes - bigger schemes coming forward such as the Strawberry Line project that must be properly costed and quoted for and the valuation of labour, materials and profit met. The line or any alternative offered needs to be capable of

carrying agricultural vehicles too. We like the idea of taking ownership of their section of the route and management of their own project instead of having it 'done' to us.'

'Valuation might depend on the competency of the land manager and his staff, the cost of training might need to be factored in, look at the shortage of qualified foresters now to deal with ash die back we are going to need many more competent people like that.'

'Models already exist like the John Nix Pocketbook for Farm Management and ABC Books from the Andersons Centre – both offering agricultural budgeting and costing, all the farm and rural business information needed.'

'There is current confusion over who is responsible for what with regard to access – land managers, local highway authority etc. It makes economic sense for land managers to be rewarded for certain tasks on rights of way, provided properly rewarded.'

### Conclusion

Incentivising creation of public access and biodiversity infrastructure (rights of way and open space) and entry into a proposed ten-year ELM scheme for individual holding.

1. The participants would like payment of a one-off capitalised reward based on 3 elements

V = local land valuation for land acreage included in route or space

L = impact / loss of operational use (income forgone)

R = enhanced recreational value (suggest could be based on ORVAL [www.leep.exeter.ac.uk](http://www.leep.exeter.ac.uk))

D = legal dedication costs for express dedication, dedication under 1980 Highways Act s25 creation agreement or under CROW Act 2000 s16 to be funded at a flat rate.

2. C= Capital works costs (structures + labour) for physical route creation of new or upgraded routes and existing public access capital improvement works.

3. A = Annual payments for public access maintenance and improvements (as capital).

At the end of ten years of continual monitoring and improving, an access route should be established with a robust surface and well grown biodiversity enhancements such as hedging.

**ELMs incentivising public right of way creation value = V + L + R + D + C + A**

## Questionnaire Section 4. Interview discussion 7 willingness to incorporate access and biodiversity into an ELM scheme.

Section 4 explored individual participant willingness to create or upgrade public multi-use access rights based on a community aspirational route or space, include suggested biodiversity enhancements and to undertake access creation works, improvements and maintenance within an ELM scheme for the holding.

A key policy question to be answered is: is there a variation in willingness to create, enhance or maintain access and to deliver environmental outcomes from owners and managers of land holdings of differing acreages land uses and proximity to large conurbations? In 6.3 we compare participants' age, holding size, mission, primary and secondary purposes, existing countryside stewardship scheme with final willingness score following discussions.

This section helps to answer the question. The high willingness to engage with an ELM scheme shows there is no variation in willingness between participants, since 88% of participants agree that any concerns about creating the aspirational route can be mitigated, 90% are willing to provide an alternative route and 94% are willing to undertake or oversee access and biodiversity capital works and undertake annual tasks.

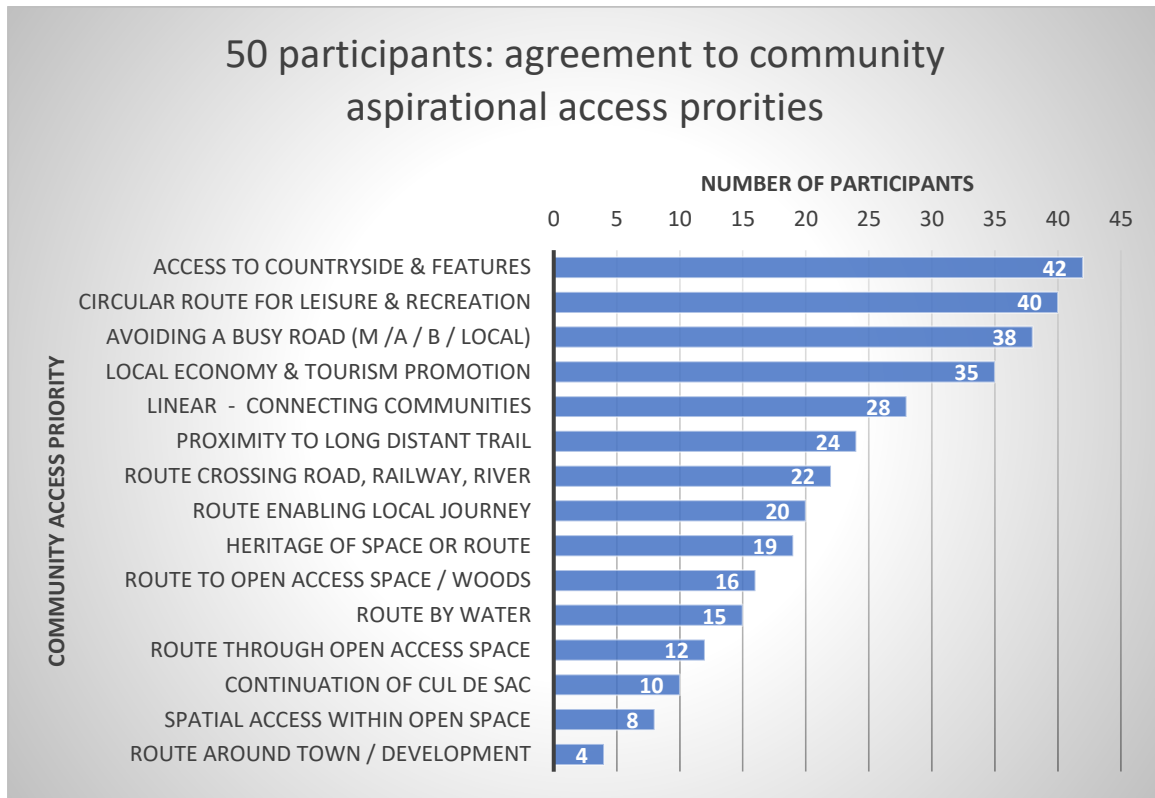
Question	Result in brief
4.1 (a) <b>Key finding</b>	Which community priorities identified in the aspirational access survey are agreed to be beneficial to deliver on the land holding? RESULT: Top 5 / 15 - 42 (84%) access to the countryside, 40 (80%) circular routes, (76%) avoiding busy roads, 35 (70%) local economy / tourism, 28 (56%) linear to connecting communities.
4.1 (b) <b>Key finding</b>	Which priorities are the most beneficial? – Rank. RESULT: Top 5 / 15 - access to the countryside, avoiding busy roads, local economy / tourism, circular routes, <b>heritage</b> .
4.2 (a) <b>Key finding</b>	Which wider benefits and opportunities, stemming from the access network if created are agreed with? RESULT: Top 4 - 47 (94%) public health and well-being, 39 (78%) opportunities to educate users. 34 (68%) opportunities for tourism accommodation, 30 (60%) wider rural economy benefit.
4.2 (b) <b>Key finding</b>	Which are most beneficial? Rank. RESULT: Top 5 - public health, public education and <b>facility development</b> e.g. car park provision, as equally important, wider rural economy, tourism accommodation.
4.3 score <b>Key finding</b>	4.3 How willing are participants to include the aspirational access route or open space into an ELMs plan for the holding? 31 (63%) willing or very willing (score 4 / 5), 12, undecided (score 2.5 / 3), 6 somewhat unwilling / unwilling. Average positivity result = 3.7(willing).
4.3 (a) <b>Key finding</b>	What factors determine participant willingness to create aspirational access in ELMs?

	RESULT: Top 5 / 10 - 43 (88%) reasonable reward, 32 (65%) community need and impact of routes (equal), 31 (62%) education opportunity, 30 (61%) enhancing biodiversity.
4.3 (b) <b>Key finding</b>	Which factors influence participants the most? Rank RESULT: reasonable reward, impact of route, community need, <b>impact of user</b> , enhancing biodiversity.
4.4 <b>Key finding</b>	Can concerns about the proposed access be mitigated using the suggested solutions (in 4.4)? <u>RESULT</u> : 43 (88%) said YES How? RESULT: Top 5: 38 (78%) clearer signage and waymarks, 37 (76%) user education, 32 (65%) user containment in a corridor, 32 (65%) installing improved structures and 31 (63%) improving surfaces.
4.5 <b>Key finding</b>	Would participants consider access to an alternative or relocated route or open space? RESULT: 45 (92%) participants said YES
4.6 <b>Key finding</b>	Would participants consider a time limited permissive trial? RESULT: 50% said YES, 50% said NO
4.7(a) <b>Key finding</b>	Willingness to include suggested biodiversity measures along with the proposed access within an ELMs. RESULT: 42 (84%) participants very willing or willing to include biodiversity works with access. 7 (14% undecided). Which biodiversity enhancements? RESULT: Top 5 / 17 - 41 (82%) bird boxes, 40 (80%) hedge planting, 37 (74%) hedgerow restoration, 36 (72%) ditch restoration, 36 (72%) wildflower margins.
4.7 (b) <b>Key finding</b>	Which are the most beneficial biodiversity measures? Rank RESULT: Top 5 / 17 - Hedge planting, drystone wall rebuild, hedgerow restoration, woodland copse creation, installation of bird boxes.
4.8 <b>Key finding</b>	Willingness to undertake or oversee a contractor to undertake capital access and biodiversity works? a) To create new or upgraded access routes or within open access space? b) To improve existing access routes and open space (including biodiversity enhancements)? RESULT: 94% are willing. Which works are most willing to be undertaken? RESULT: top 5 / 12 - 44.5 (89%) biodiversity measures, 44.5 (89%) replace old gates with new, 44 (88%) clearance, 43 (86%) install / replace waymarks, 43 (86%) install / replace signposts.
4.9 <b>Key finding</b>	Willingness to undertake or oversee a contractor to undertake annual access and biodiversity improvement and maintenance works and tasks along access routes or in access space – beyond cross compliance responsibilities? RESULT: 94% of participants are willing. Which works are most willing to be undertaken?

RESULT: top 5 / 12 - 47 (94%) participants said clearing, 45 (90%) equal biodiversity management, tree inspections / works, mowing, adjusting / repairing structures.

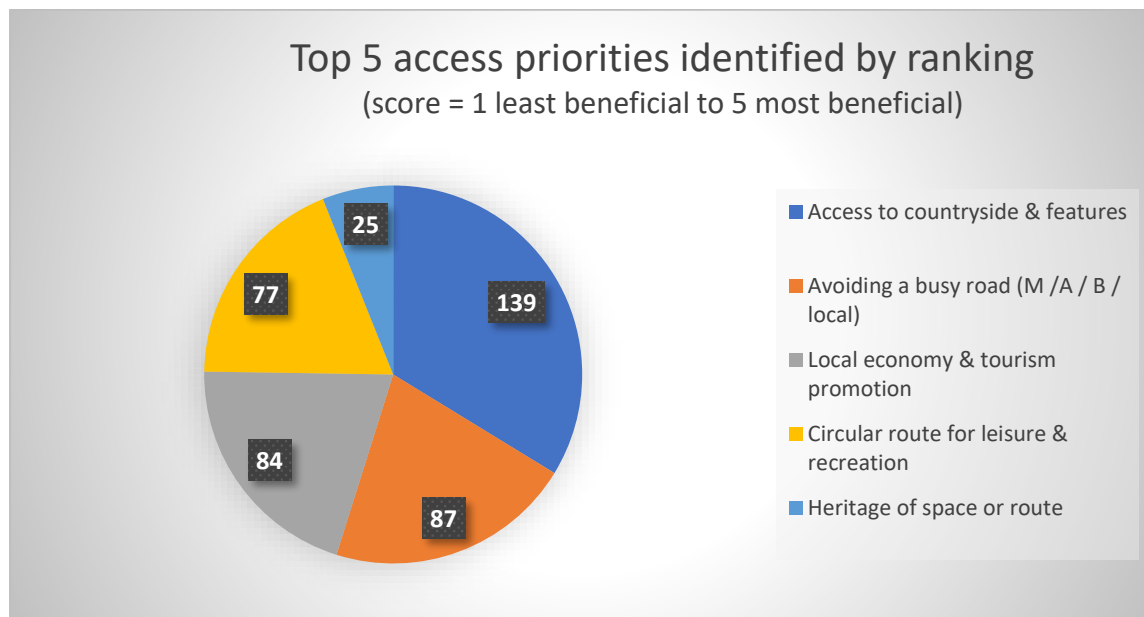
**DISCUSSION 7 A) Network benefits and willingness to create access**

4.1 (a) Which community priorities identified in the aspirational access route survey does the participant agree are beneficial for him to deliver on his land holding?



RESULT: Top 5 - 42 (84%) participants thought that delivering access to the countryside was the most important priority, 40 (80%) thought delivering circular routes, 38 (76%) helping access users avoid busy roads, 35 (70%) local economy / tourism, 28 (56%) linear routes connecting communities.

4.1 (b) Which priorities are most beneficial? Rank up to 5 benefits. Rank score 5 most beneficial, 3 neutral, 1 least beneficial



**RESULT:** access to the countryside, avoiding busy roads, local economy / tourism, circular routes, **heritage**

Snapshot of participants' comments on community access priorities.

'I have a privileged lifestyle living on the farm compared to so many people residing in town or living in flats in Bristol who ought to access to the countryside, it's essential.'

'Can you include 'M' (Motorway) to list 4.1 (3) because I have a fantastic vision that I am consulting about to link the eastern edge of Weston-Super-Mare under the M5 motorway, all those people are trapped by the M5 it's a massive barrier! I have plotted a route via an existing unsurfaced unclassified county road and multi-user rights of way (including the Test aspirational route) and quiet lanes all the way to the Strawberry Line cycling and walking path, we use that a lot it's great.'

'The aspirational route and the onward historic route are really important in safely linking Central and West Mendip (Blackdown Common to Crook Peak) and the communities that would be able to access a route that enabled avoiding the busy quarry lorry road route'.

'it's really good for people to have access to the countryside, all the identified community access priorities are important especially avoiding busy roads and creating circular routes for recreation and leisure. The existing cycle route around Chew Valley Lake has limited benefit because all it does is put people back on a dangerous road, there's just no purpose to that. The utility company could enter the scheme and create a proper circuit round the lake away from the roads.'

The participant identified with many of the access priorities. His reasons for dedicating a bridleway in the past were to help horse riders and mountain bikers access the countryside, cross a busy road and avoid some 4 miles of dangerous rural road. He also thought that an

additional key benefit was that the route was intended to be a link in a long distant east west trail over the Mendip Hills. The route is well used by local horse riders ('it's wonderful for children on ponies who live nearby') and by mountain bikers from East Mendip and from Wells - some of them delighted with a trail that takes them directly to the isolated and much celebrated Hunter's Lodge Inn, Priddy.

'I agree with many of the community access priorities and consider that promoting the local economy and tourism is the most important.'

The participant chose the option 'circular routes' only. 'I think these are important for communities but I consider that in a small village only around 30 to 40 people will be likely to use one.'

'It is obvious that the access scheme needs to include a) space for people to have a wander, b) short circuits for the dog walkers and c) longer circuits for horse riders and cyclists. Not many people actually walk that far'.

'There is an area that the company could provide for a car park that would enable a nice circular route. It has already been noticed that the path provided by the company to link two communities is being used more to enable local journeys.'

The participants identified with most of the community access priorities ranking highly access to countryside and features and access to heritage – 'all of these accord with the charity's mission.'

'Permitting additional users on a multi-user route could aid security through more 'eyes' on the ground especially from the local community.'

'Connections to long distance paths are good, because you often get a more serious type of walker.'



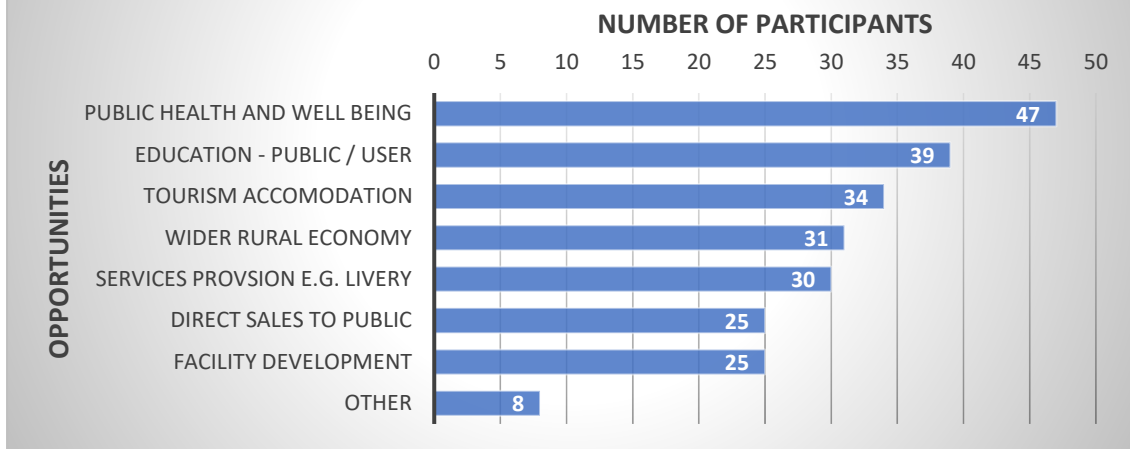
The participants identified with several access priorities relating these more in terms of how a route would enhance their livery business, ranking avoiding a busy road highly ('the C road beyond the farm gate is very straight with fast traffic'), being able to create circular routes off a long linear route, enabling access to woods and open space.

The wood belongs to Forest England and has a huge 'no horse-riding' sign. 'I tell the riders to go in there anyway, it's a public wood, why are horse riders banned?'

4.2 (a) Which wider benefits and opportunities, stemming from the access if created, does the participant agree with?



## 50 participants: response about access network opportunities

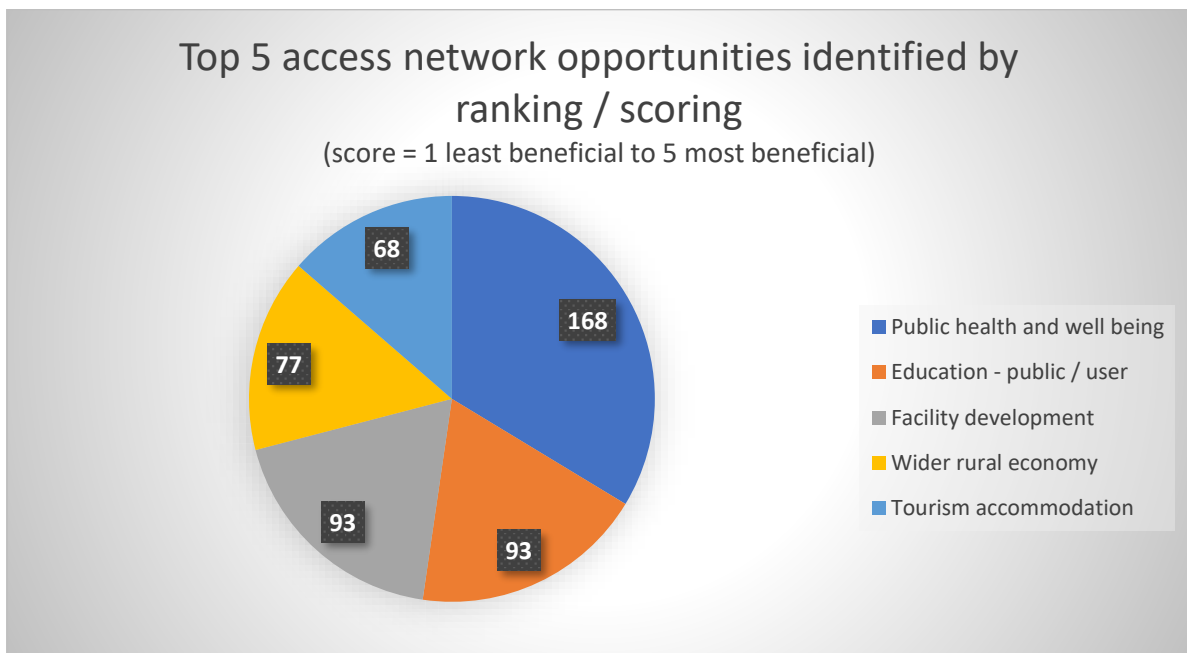


Other identified as 'experiencing biodiversity / wildlife (2), marketing, input from / benefits to local community, public safety, curing mental health issues.

**RESULT:** TOP 5 / 8 - 47 (94%) participants agreed that public health and well-being would stem from the delivery of a community access and biodiversity network. 39 (78%) agreed that delivery of a network would bring opportunities to educate users. 34 (68%) agreed there would be opportunities for tourism accommodation, 30 (60%) wider rural economy benefit, 30 (60%) services provision.

4.2 (b) Which opportunities are most beneficial? Rank up to 5 opportunities.

Rank score 5 most beneficial, 3 neutral, 1 least beneficial



**RESULT:** public health, public education and facility development as equally important next, wider rural economy, tourism accommodation.

Snapshot of participants' comments on the wider benefits and opportunities that accrue from a community access network.

'Public health and well-being is important, the current climate has taught us that.'

The participant identified with only one of the access community priorities – access to the countryside – 'yes that's good'. Identifying with the wider benefits and opportunities that could accrue from an improved access network was easier after discussion. He said 'I spent three years at agricultural collage learning how to squeeze in that extra cow or two that would make me a profit, now you're asking me to think in an entirely different way!'

'Thinking about the benefit of spatial access within open space why have we got Forestry Commission Woods up the road with a large 'No Horses' sign at the entrance and an abundance of gravel tracks through it, what difference does it make to anyone if a horse walks along those gravel tracks?'

'We haven't got a great tourist industry here, it could certainly be better. It might not be Wales but there's some lovely pastoral countryside.'

Of the wider benefits and opportunities that could arise from a good network, they said that 'public health and well-being are most important especially in the current climate followed by the wider rural economy and tourism accommodation – which is something we might contemplate further down the line'.

'I agree with all the wider benefits and opportunities that could arise from a permanent linking network, public health and well-being rank highest followed by the opportunity to educate the public. Good lakeside routes could offer opportunities like bike hire'.

'There are a number of benefits associated with the development of a linking route network for instance the facilities associated with the nearby cycle path were, plus that local toilet block is very profitable.'

'This test has made me think about the potential for opportunities on the holding, perhaps the creation of my own farm access and wildlife scheme if the other landowners along the aspirational route are not on board with it. The access points could be altered and a carpark created and before you know it the ice cream van would turn up and all sorts of spin offs might happen'.

'People who come here to camp and in caravans come here to walk and cycle, from here they can get up to Crook's Peak (in the AONB) and they are gone all day. This year the campsite has been crazy, manic.'

'Public health and well-being are really important and tourism accommodation too. We are adding another benefit 'the effect of green space and nature on mental health and recovery for illness and addiction' that's really important.'

'Public health and well-being are most important especially in the current climate followed by the wider rural economy and tourism accommodation – which is something we might

contemplate further down the line. We want to add ‘the opportunity for people to experience the bird life, we get coach loads of people now stopping to look.’

‘I think the agricultural ‘tie’ needs examining. On the one hand farmers are asked to farm less intensively and to diversify but when they do they are criticised and even investigated to ensure that they are not running ‘another’ business from a tied house. The tie forces me into keeping cattle when actually I might prefer to look at other avenues, including delivering public goods.’

‘Development of community networks benefits us. Many of the squaddies and reservists go on expeditions along long distance paths, over Dartmoor and so on, many of them engage in Duke of Edinburgh scheme too.’

‘I’m passionate about what I do (farming) and my initial view on multi-use access provision was that people have enough places to go and you don’t want too many people about. However, on discussing potential benefits such as being able to convert a footpath to a multi-use / farm track or being able to diversify into horse livery (say) my position is changing.’

‘Enabling facility development like the provision of car parking though ELMs could be beneficial.’

‘It is obvious that facilities such as car parks need to be provided even temporary ones in fields. I don’t understand why when we go to town we are expected to pay for parking but out here in the countryside it is expected to be free’.

‘Opportunities for our business might arise from the route and from a network enabling wider travel and local journeys around the AONB particularly on horse-back’. Reference was made to the boost that equestrian tourism gives to the nearby Exmoor National Park because of the number of connecting bridleway routes. ‘These opportunities plus the enhanced riding experience for our liveries would balance any inconvenience and impact of having a route across the holding’.

‘We are strongly motivated to participate by the need to engage with the public and the need for good press for farmers. This is a serious strand of our marketing strategy - to demonstrate that farming can be and is a valuable public good particularly through carbon capture and that the need to convert from intensive farming to less intensive over a wider acreage is recognised and within this access can be encouraged and developed in a sustainable way.’



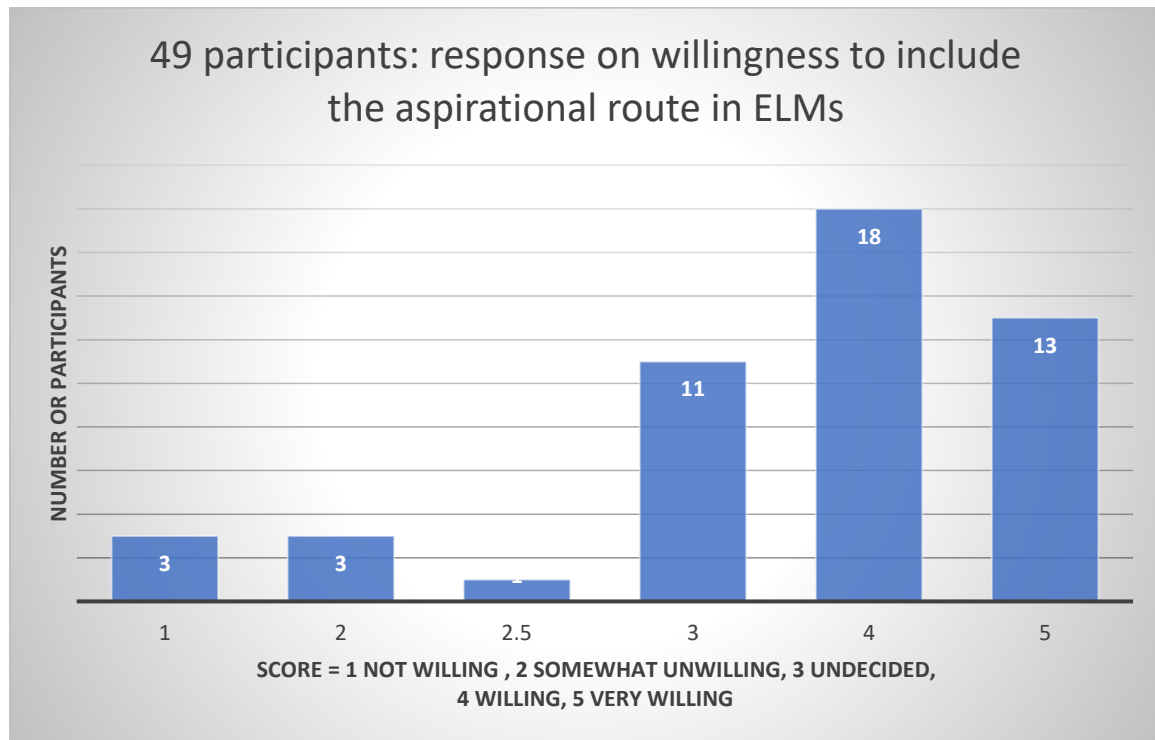
‘Obviously some of this would be up to the tenants but in general the estate is definitely looking at opportunities in the future’.

'We think that a scheme benefit establishing multi-use green infrastructure and biodiversity network is in itself a public facility along with the provision of bike hire and horse livery.'

'I'm adding as a wider benefit the opportunity to keep access users safe through preferred routes realigned away from yards and buildings - this would solve 70% of our problems.'

4.3 How willing is the participant to include the aspirational access route or open space into an ELMs plan for the holding?

1 participant did not engage with 4.3 – 4.6.



**RESULT:** 31 (63%) participants are somewhat willing or very willing (score 4 / 5) to include the aspirational route in ELMs, 12 (25%) are undecided (score 2.5 / 3), 6 (12%) are somewhat unwilling / unwilling.

**ASPIRATIONAL ACCESS POSITIVE RESULT AVERAGE = 3.7 (WILLING)**

Snapshot of participants' comments on willingness to include the aspirational route in their Elms plan.

Scoring 5: very willing

The tenants are very engaged with the aspirational routes, which 'made complete sense.' A discussion ensued regarding the existing bridleway and the reasons why they saw no horse riders using it - because it terminated on the main A road. The aspirational route proposal would see the upgrading of a connecting existing footpath to bridleway permitting multi-use across a field to a green lane and then into the hamlet. The participants didn't seem to mind that the route in this instance would be across an open field. They were interested in where riders would go then and made suggestions about old routes that people used to use.

'I'm very willing but the aspirational route is already in the process of being upgraded to bridleway (multi-use) as are several other droves in the local area'. He thought that this is a really positive step explaining that the droves dated from Napoleonic times and were 'historically very interesting for the public to experience.'

'We are very positive about the aspirational route that's a really good route and yes it's already a footpath we would be happy to upgrade that.'

'We would of course support all the aspirational routes, we would be pushed into supporting the creation of rights of way that link with Rights of Way Improvement Plan priorities. I am very willing to create both the multi-user aspirational routes suggested as they are already open access on foot. The route, which has been used as a bridleway in the past, it might be preferable to locate that along the boundary. It's good that the test is looking at the right place to put a route instead of just where it went in the past, it's better to assess what is the best route across there not necessarily where it is.'

The participant is 'very willing to look at' creating and enhancing the aspirational routes and spaces (many of which are already used by horse riders by permission).



'The company would be very willing to create the aspirational route. It runs quite close to the old quarry which could still be worked under current permissions. However, I don't think a formal dedication would be prejudicial to future operations, so it could be dedicated under the ELM scheme and any safety aspect can be mitigated there.'

#### Scoring 4: willing

The participant is willing to engage with the aspirational route asking if the gate onto the road would be changed for a Bristol gate? We said it would need to be a York gate or a similar arrangement for multi-use.

'I am willing to include the creation of the aspirational route perhaps not exactly on the pink line drawn but yes, a route in the right place, it crosses the old railway line why isn't more use made of that?'

His willingness is conditional on collaborating and discussing with and gaining the approval of his tenants and assessing the impact of the route on their operations. 'The former dedicated bridleway is fine as it runs along the boundary, not impacting on the shoot or farming operations. The aspirational routes are similarly well located.'

'We are willing to create the aspirational route, providing it runs along the outer boundary properly signed, in the right place. Our neighbour has started creating a series of new access routes so the principle mitigating factor would be the need to collaborate with him and his aspirations.'

'Access and recreation are considered as part of the social contract between the company and its customers, a payback for so many years of consumption. I think the company would be willing to create it as a permanent route under the scheme. There will always be the possibility of needing to expand but we could commit to replacing one permanent perimeter route with another further out but diversions are such a faff, it should be easier to do this too.'

Scoring 3: undecided

The participant is undecided about the aspirational route. The test invitation and the pack sent in advance have 'opened his eyes to what could be achieved' however 'the lay out of the footpaths makes it difficult to make an instant decision and the impact on stock would need to be considered.'

The participant has a definite idea of where any route should go and would want it enclosed / contained along a boundary to reduce any liabilities that might arise especially from the disturbance of livestock. Motor vehicle use must be excluded.

The participant is 'willingness neutral' on the provision of the access route, due to the core mission of nature restoration, meaning that the creation of an access route would need to be evaluated and balanced against sensitive location / habitat / biodiversity needs and this would take some time.

Scoring 2.5: somewhat unwilling to undecided

The organisation would be reluctant to provide the aspirational route as 'it was already providing benefits' which accorded with its mission of public engagement (on foot). The participant could not envisage any additional public benefit arising from providing the route. However, if neighbouring landowners were keen to provide the route and 'we were the last link, for the benefit of the community we would consider it'. The route would need to run along the boundary and be contained to prevent users wandering into the reserve.

Scoring 2: somewhat unwilling



He was 'disappointed' in the aspirational route, he would have liked to have seen more about how it fitted into the wider network, it was not very ambitious, not a new path but a proposed upgrading of a footpath that anyway was in a wet location. Adding more use would 'churn it up for walkers.'

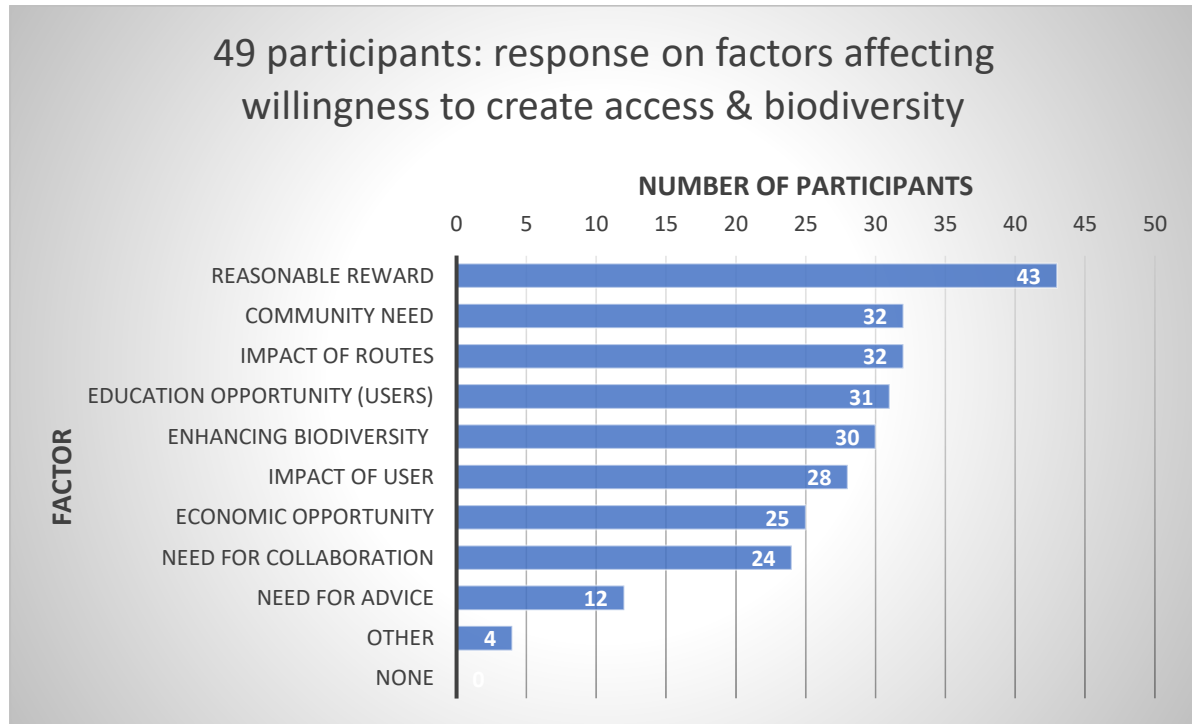
After a discussion about the test aims he agreed 'you have to start somewhere, it's important to see the bigger picture, not look at things in isolation but to

consider the aspirational importance of short stretches.' He was keen on the idea of a cross Mendip aspirational route and was shown the test triangulation map showing exactly that.

Scoring 1: unwilling

The participants are not willing to create the multi-user aspirational route. The factors affecting their willingness are the impact of users and routes and they are adamant they do not want to accommodate user groups other than walkers. However, their creation 'willingness' score would be much higher for the creation of footpaths only.

4.3 a) What factors determine participant willingness to create aspirational access in ELMs?



'Other' identified as protecting biodiversity, public need, routes needed for horse riders, impact on livestock.

**RESULT:** Top 5 / 10 - 43 (88%) participants said reasonable reward, 32 (65%) community need and impact of routes (equal), 31 (62%) education opportunity, 30 (61%) enhancing biodiversity.

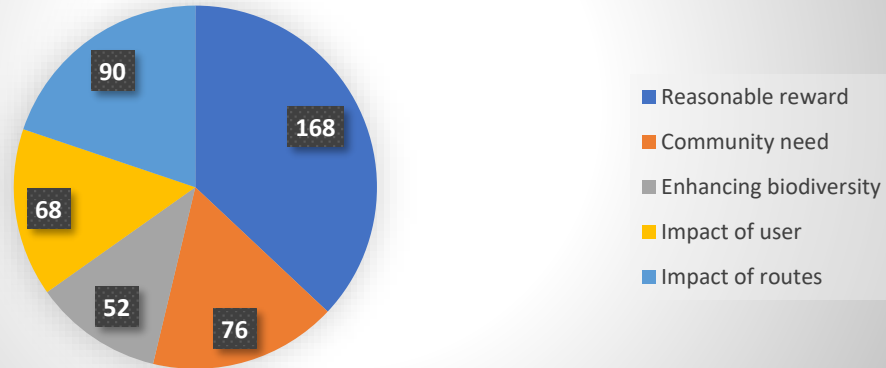
4.3 b) Which factors influence participants the most – rank up to 5 factors

(Score 1 least influencing, 3 neutral, 5 most influencing)



## Top 5 factors affecting willingness identified by ranking / scoring

(Score = 1 least influencing 5 most positive influencing factor)



**RESULT:** Ranking- reasonable reward, impact of route, community need, impact of user, enhancing biodiversity.

### Snapshot of participants' comments regarding factors affecting their willingness to include the aspirational route in their Elms plan.

A number of participants all agreed 'the factors most affecting our willingness are community need, reasonable reward and economic opportunity'.

'I consider that for me the ability to enhance biodiversity in the access space is of equal importance to a reasonable reward.'

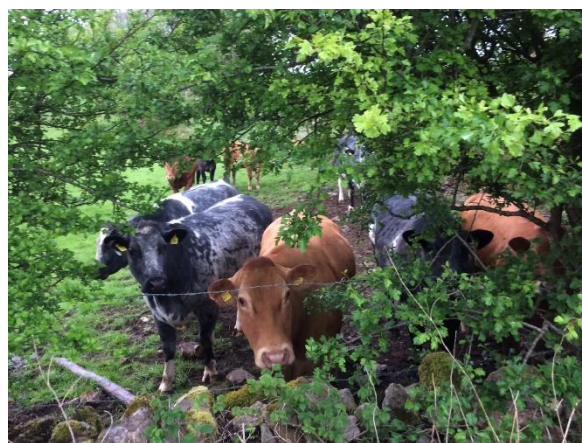
'I think that the reward is not a payment for a public good but an opportunity for re-investment into a very special landscape.'

Thinking about their willingness to provide this aspirational route, community need ranked the highest 'we do understand that people need different means of access on bike and horse'.

'We think that that all the factors affecting willingness to create a multi-user route have a bearing. A reasonable reward is clearly the greatest factor and with our aspirational route in mind we would need to collaborate with neighbours and consider the impact of the route and users especially on livestock.'

'There is a need for riding routes I am not keen on the inclusion of mountain bikers though.'

'Besides reasonable reward and the obvious community need, the main factor affecting my willingness to provide the aspirational route





are ensuring it doesn't impact on our business especially the weddings they are really special days, the last thing you want is people stopping and gawping at the bride and groom.'

'The factors affecting my willingness are the need for collaboration and the obvious community need. In creating rights along the route there needs to be collaboration with the tenant. User containment would need to be looked at along with clear signage as the path is a steep descent in places and would be adjacent to future operations.'

'We are unwilling because any upgrading of existing footpaths would potentially encourage more of the public to the farm, which we see as dangerous for the public, we want to divert the footpath rights off the lane as it is the main traffic path for the business.'

'One of our aims is biodiversity benefitting people through access so protecting biodiversity which would be the first consideration when considering willingness to provide an access route.'



Several participants said that improvements to structures, better and more up to date structures and improved surfaces would help manage the impact of the route.

'The creation of a bridleway through the wood involving drainage and surfacing works would be beneficial for everyone.'

'Surface erosion is an on-going issue. However, one should be careful not to 'urbanise' surfaces when maintaining.'

'We really want to help and obviously agree with the need for more bridleways but we can't see a way of providing this without the route having a negative impact on our business. Re-aligning the section of path from out in the field to the boundary would help but still a lot of ground would need to be fenced. There are the issues of horse keeping, including mares and foals and a stallion in that field.'

'We are worried about the need to have bridle gates, these could be left open or stolen and stock get out on the main road'. The interviewer and facilitator thought this might be the case so discussed the nearby example of the Pen Hill bridleway gate (picture left), a really good example of improved infrastructure now available being a Centrewire metal gate hung on an 'H' frame concreted into the ground. 'This gate unlike the wooden gates has required no maintenance in 14 years and is almost impossible to leave open because of the



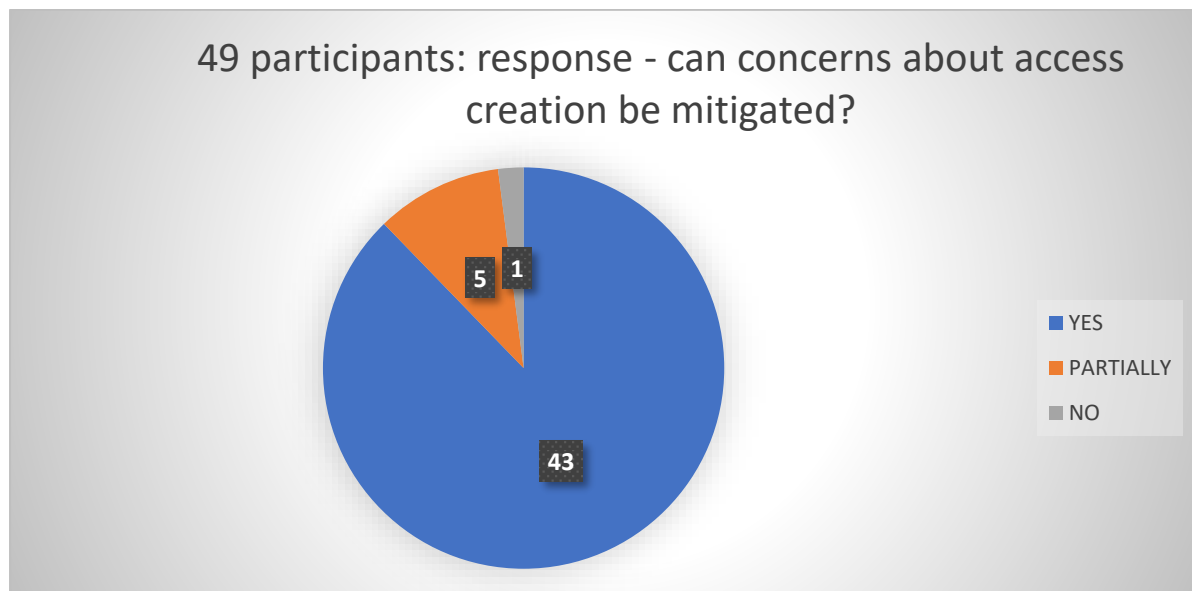
shutting device or to steal'. The participants thought that a scheme could really help with replacing old gates (that are a worry) with new gates which are a much-improved design.

'The second aspirational route section runs adjacent to a field boundary along a grass track. The grass track gets very wet and muddy with deep tractor ruts. On both routes, improvements would need to be made – drainage works and surfacing – particularly a hard track constructed. Could this be done as part of the scheme I don't want to receive a big bill?'

'I consider the principle of farm security to be equally important to any monetary reward.'

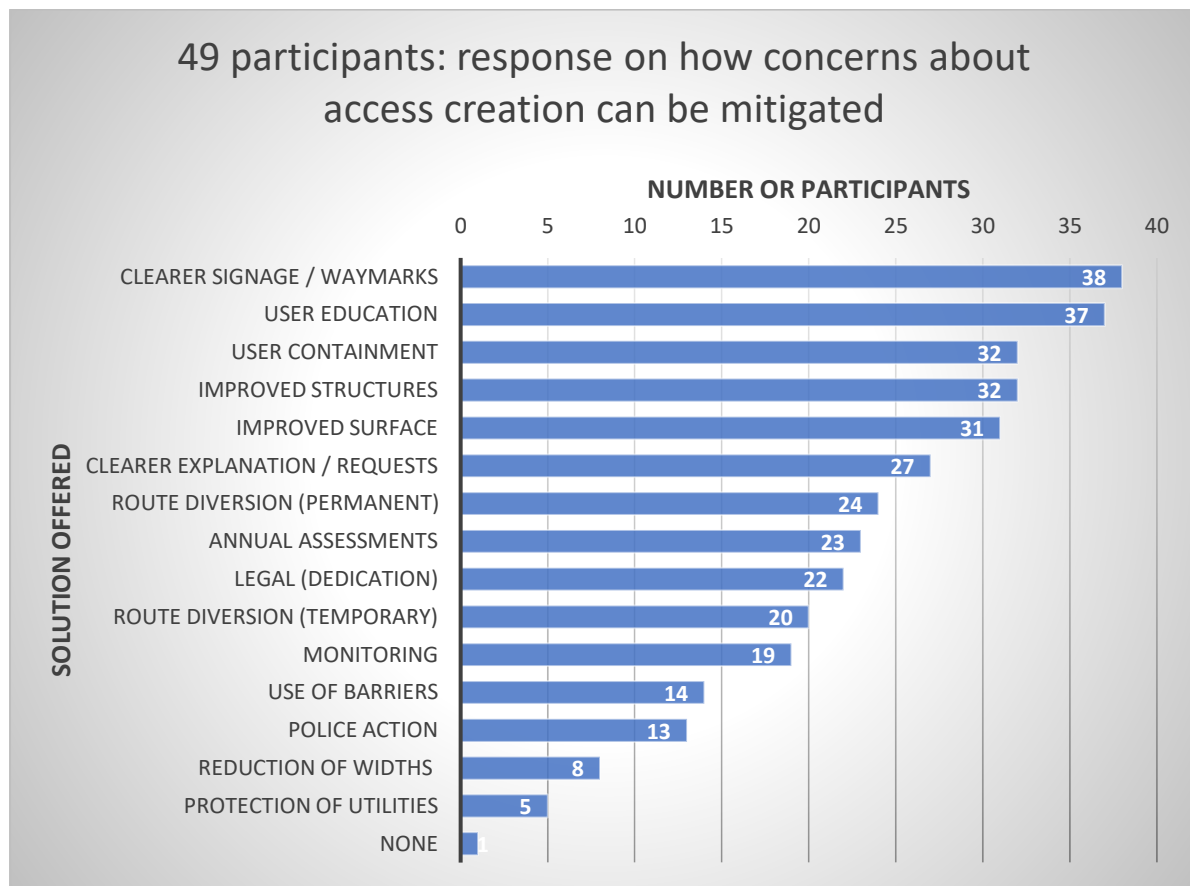
'Factors that would most affect the company's willingness to create a permanent route, would be the opportunity to enhance biodiversity followed by the recognition of community need and the economic opportunities the network would bring to local people.'

#### 4.4 Can participant concerns about access be mitigated through suggested solutions?



**RESULT:** 43 (88%) Participants said yes, concerns could be mitigated through the right solution.

## How can concerns be mitigated?



**RESULT:** Top 5: 38 (78%) participants thought their concerns could be mitigated through clearer signage and waymarks, 37 (76%) through user education, 32 (65%) through user containment in a corridor, 32 (65%) by installing improved structures and 31 (63%) by improving surfaces.

### Snapshot of participants' thoughts about suggested solutions to enable access creation.

'The mitigation for any concerns about this impact are user education and clear signage ensuring that people stick to the route, and installation of improved structures and surface.'

'These (suggested) mitigating solutions are all good especially surface improvements as the proposed route is sometimes under water.'

'We agree with most of the mitigating solutions particularly user education, clear messaging and signage, the ability to contain users at certain times of the year with temporary fencing and the use of barriers to slow people down at certain locations if needed.'

'The only mitigating factors, with regard to the potential aspirational route, of importance are clear signage and containment. Once the work to create the route is done it should work well and then it's just a case of maintenance.'

'A concern to be mitigated is the issue of surface damage and repair, arising from both greater footfall and from weather extremes. I think that lessons on managing surfaces could

be learnt from popular areas such as the Lake District and Brecon Beacons and such case studies could feature in the ELMs scheme advice.'

### Participant's ideas about user education

The opportunity to educate users with ELM scheme provision of clear signage (legally agreed so landowners are not held liable through signage wording), requests, monitoring, assessments and education in the countryside code was agreed by many participants to potentially lessen the impact of a route on the holding.

'Perhaps use of a QR code that could be scanned and would give the public information and instruction'.

'There is a danger that if signs were too wordy they would be ignored'.

'If the we were able to join a scheme the provision of clear and well written signage would



be a real help, there are so many budget issues that all we can do is write up a sign, laminate it and stick it up. Annual assessments would be helpful especially if the cost of visitor counters were to be included. This would help the us plan particularly for the future development of facilities. Police action being more easily available would be really helpful in situations currently being experienced where landowners such as the us have difficulty in controlling the impact of the numbers of people accessing a forest site.'

'The Mendip Hills AONB unit members are good at monitoring and advising people about appropriate behaviour. I have retained the former senior warden to work in a user education / advisory / eyes on the ground capacity.'

'User education has never been so important as it is now, the majority of people could benefit from education into rural life, it's absolutely key, how are people supposed to know anything if we don't tell them? We are rebranding all the paths on the holding, making them easier to understand and follow with simple clear signage so people know where they are going. In conjunction with that an App is being developed to be used when people are exploring the estate, which will provide information on heritage, nature and education about farming and how to behave. We need to educate kids at a young age about the countryside and farming and follow it though into early adulthood, they need to know that we have some of the most amazing forests and amazing farms and some of the most unique biodiversity in the world, it's all about guiding not controlling, if this happened it would be amazing how quickly these issues we are seeing would stop happening.'

'There ought to be a way of asking users to give instant feedback if there are issues such as problems with gates.' There was discussion around the ROAM report system used by one of the LHA's where issues are reported on paths by users and photos can be uploaded. 'The



trouble with that though is that it takes too long for the Authority to resolve issues whereas farmers are on site and some would want to deal with it instantly.'

'Surely user education and clear signage and explanations could be electronic, delivered to people's phones before they used the route or during, with landowners able to upload new information such as the presence of stock. I hope that user education is something that ELMs could address with signage and electronic means, as good user behaviour is key to landowners and farmers creating and delivering additional public access.'

'Information about the place, farm, stock, livery availability and anything users needed to know could be fed electronically to people's phones, with the farmers able to update information through a central hub a two-way street' with users being able to report anything amiss with the route directly to the landowner. Each route could be marked with numbered identification marks (part of the way marker), which in addition to being the means of conveying information to the user could also allow users to report issues.'

### Education about dogs



'Dogs are a worry. Visitors are not allowed to bring dogs to the farm when they come to stay. We heard that in Ireland enough people had signed a petition that dogs should be kept on leads on farmland that it is likely to become mandatory. Again, this is down to education of the public and farmers could do more to help with this. We asked one lady to put her dog on a lead near the sheep and she didn't even have a lead with her.'

### Route realignments

'Some realigning of the existing footpath to be upgraded (the aspirational route) perhaps on to an existing stone track would be needed with a link or spur to the existing farm shop.'

The participant's slight unwillingness in attitude noticeably softened as the interview proceeded to considering topics such as sensible route diversions and help with ash die back.

'We need to be able to carry out simple temporary or even a permanent diversion of the created route without involving such huge costs.'

'We understand and identify with the need to create a permanent infrastructure of routes as being beneficial to everyone, but there should be some easy mechanism for realignment in the future or for temporary diversion provided it was well signed. We are prepared to

provide a linking multi-user route in perpetuity but it should be easier to divert or realign from time to time to accommodate operational activity if needed.'

'The factor affecting willingness to dedicate a route is the potential for slight realignment when (for example upgrading a footpath to a multi-user route). This would be a great solution for landowners contemplating collaborative schemes such as circuits and linear links where a slight realignment to field boundaries on upgrading would not jeopardise public enjoyment, add or take away mileage but would help to keep people and dogs safe away from stock etc and allow the farmer to get on with his work.'

#### Containment and barriers.



An existing bridleway with a beautiful view where users are contained between a wall and fencing.

'Given the issues I have with existing rights of way, mostly with regard to dogs / dog mess, the mitigation that would help address my concerns is user and dog containment.'

'The route would need to run along the boundary and be contained to prevent users wandering into the reserve. There are concerns about the loss of land needed for a corridor and the impact of users.'

'Height barriers are used to prevent overnight camping.' Another example he gave that

highlighted the total inflexibility of rights of way processes was of a bridleway that ran along the vehicular entrance track into the site and through the carpark. To mitigate issues 'we erected a height barrier but were told to remove it by the LHA as technically it obstructed the right of way and leaving a gap by the side wouldn't work either because the gap was not on the official line.' This prompted a long discussion about how gaps to the side are frequently required to allow users on foot, horse and bicycle to access a site, next to a barrier. 'The process should be flexible enough to allow these small pragmatic realignments as they can have such a positive impact on everyone's experience.'

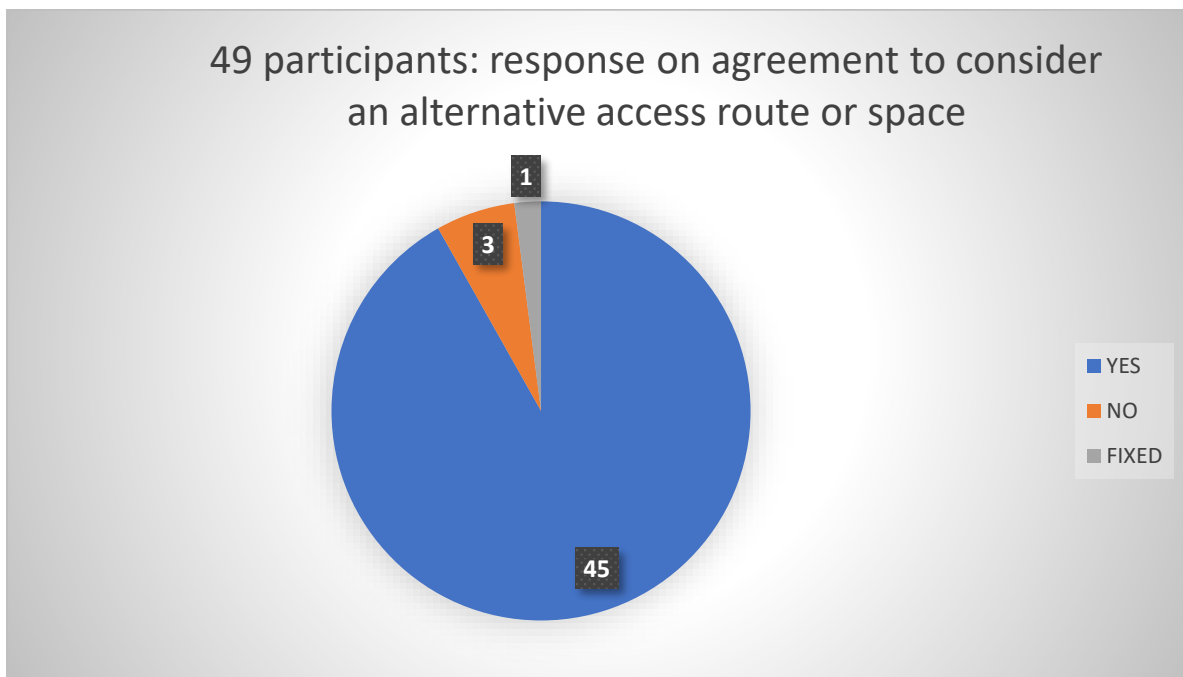
'Monitoring should include user / user type counters and fixed-point photographs – could these be available through the scheme? Temporary route diversions would definitely help along with payments for improved surfacing where this got damaged through use and for barriers that would help keep e.g. scrambling bikers out.'

## Help with liabilities



Many participants asked about the potential for assistance through the scheme with ash dieback disease, which is of some considerable concern to many landowners due to liabilities with regard to public access and felling costs.

4.5 Would the participant consider access to an alternative or relocated route or open space if the aspirational access was not viable?



**RESULT:** 45 (92%) participants said YES they would consider access to alternative route or space. 1 participant considered the creation route fixed as the aspiration concerned an existing permissive path crossing a military firing range.

Many participants agreed they would be happy to consider an alternative route if an aspirational route proved 'unworkable', 'difficult' 'unviable' or problematical' for some reason. Some participants who had considered the aspirational route sent to them in the pack were already plotting an alternative.

Snapshot of participants' comments regarding the offer of an alternative route or space.

'We would consider an alternative or realigned route and have already thought about it with regard to the road crossing which is poor with shocking visibility. If the path was upgraded through ELM we have worked out a better safer route for it here on the map.'

'Not exactly on the pink line drawn but in the right place, in fact I do have a route in mind too along the river.'

'We are happy to consider an alternative route and in fact are already plotting one on the map, albeit on a slightly different route to the pink aspirational route line drawn on the map. This also with the caveat of the route being good quality, suitable and ultimately (slightly) moveable.'

'I wonder if it's possible to exclude some user groups from an upgraded path, I would like to see bicycles restricted.'

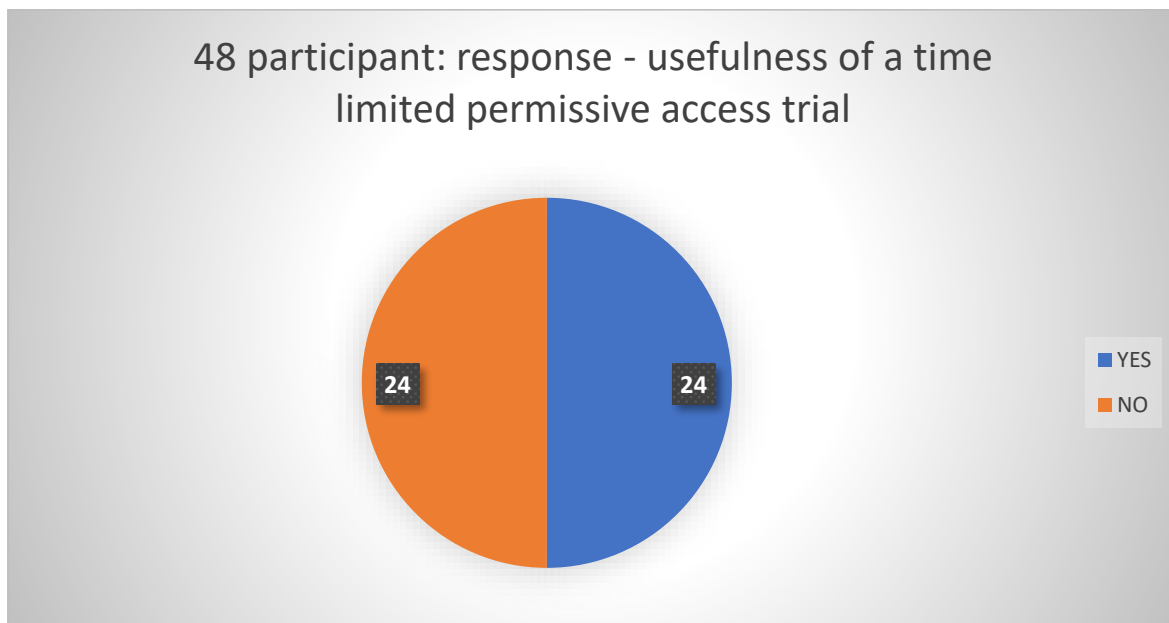
'The aspirational route goes straight through the farm so I'm not that keen however I will consider provision favourably if located on an alternative route.'

'Since the aspirational route over the holding is not seeking the upgrading of an existing public footpath and therefore is not a fixed location the consideration of an alternative route does not really apply although I would consider alternatives to the pink line drawn.'

'My willingness might depend on the envisaged status of the route (public or permissive).' There was a discussion about the merits of rewarding dedications focusing primarily on upgrading existing access so there is increased public value as existing routes are open to more user types (e.g. upgrading single use footpaths to multi use bridleways). Creating a network of linking preferred routes similar to the core network concept that exists in Scotland. Networks depend on all connecting links staying in place (like the road network) to be of lasting public benefit and value. He said that 'a mitigation to this is potentially 4.6 – allowing undecided landowners to carry out a time limited trial. Landowners who might be unwilling to dedicate straight away for the capital reward could say run a permissive route for (e.g. up to 5 years) in a (for example) a 10-year scheme and when happy with the location and use could dedicate and then receive the reward for creating the route in perpetuity.'



#### 4.6 Would participants consider a time limited permissive access trial to be useful?



RESULT: 50% said YES, 50% said NO

#### Participants' comments about the usefulness of a time limited permissive access trial.

##### Not in favour of a permissive access trial.

Participants who thought that a time limited permissive access trial was not useful agreed that setting out a permissive route then withdrawing is difficult it saying 'that would be a challenge' or 'we are not keen on that', or 'difficult to take away' or 'hard to close once everyone had got used to using it,' or 'it would be difficult to tell the public that the route was no longer available' or 'closing it would just upset people', or 'no you can't take it away people might think they can just carry on using it' or 'it's too confusing to the public to take it away again' or 'those people have always used that field, I locked the gate and they just climb over!'

'No not a permissive trial that would be difficult with the number of landowners involved along there – what if one wanted to pull out?'

'No, it's good just to do it!' 'Either do it or don't!'

'As I favour a contained route a trial would involve temporary fencing and structures – this could turn out to be a 'menace if I needed to take it all down.'

'I am not keen on a permissive route or trial. Permissive access schemes have been entered into on our farms under the provisions of the former Higher Countryside Stewardship scheme, these were difficult. Once the access was no longer funded by the scheme the permissive access was discontinued, but people still tried to use it. I think a similar danger would exist with this scheme if access was short term permissive provision.'

##### In favour of a permissive access trial.

Participants who thought that a time limited permissive access trial was useful agreed

‘A time limited permissive trial would be useful’, ‘that is a sensible idea’, ‘a good idea before permanently signing up.’

‘A time limited trial to assess the route before legal creation is a brilliant idea.’

‘I really appreciate the idea of a time limited permissive trial to ensure I get the route right before dedicating’.

‘I would be happy to consider an alternative route and in other locations where there is not already a permissive path, the opportunity to have a time limited permissive trial would be really useful to monitor how it went before creating a permanent route.’

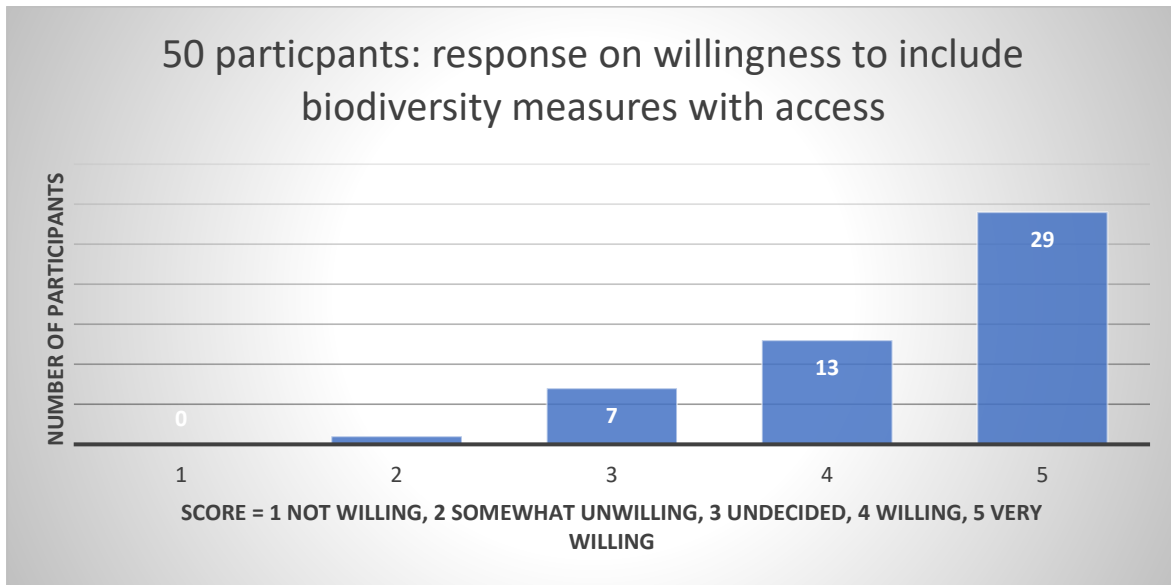
#### Other comments about permissive paths

Besides considering the possibility of giving the aspirational route and open access amenity land, the participants had also discussed granting a path along a roadside field edge to give safe access to a nearby walled garden café. This was an example of a permissive path rather than a permanent creation that they might want to discontinue if the café closed in future years, could the scheme facilitate this?

The difference between creation and permissive paths was discussed with many participants with regard to liability and permanent route infrastructure. Participants understood the concept of developing a network of routes that gave everyone opportunities to benefit, landowners and community alike and many agreed that ‘obviously this infrastructure needs to be permanent because if someone withdraws you could lose the whole thing.’ There was acknowledgement too that users of a legally created route ‘are users of the highway and not visitors invited onto the land’ and that landowners have no control over highway users, therefore liability is much reduced, this was a positive to dedication.

DISCUSSION 7 B) willingness to include biodiversity enhancement with access space in ELMs

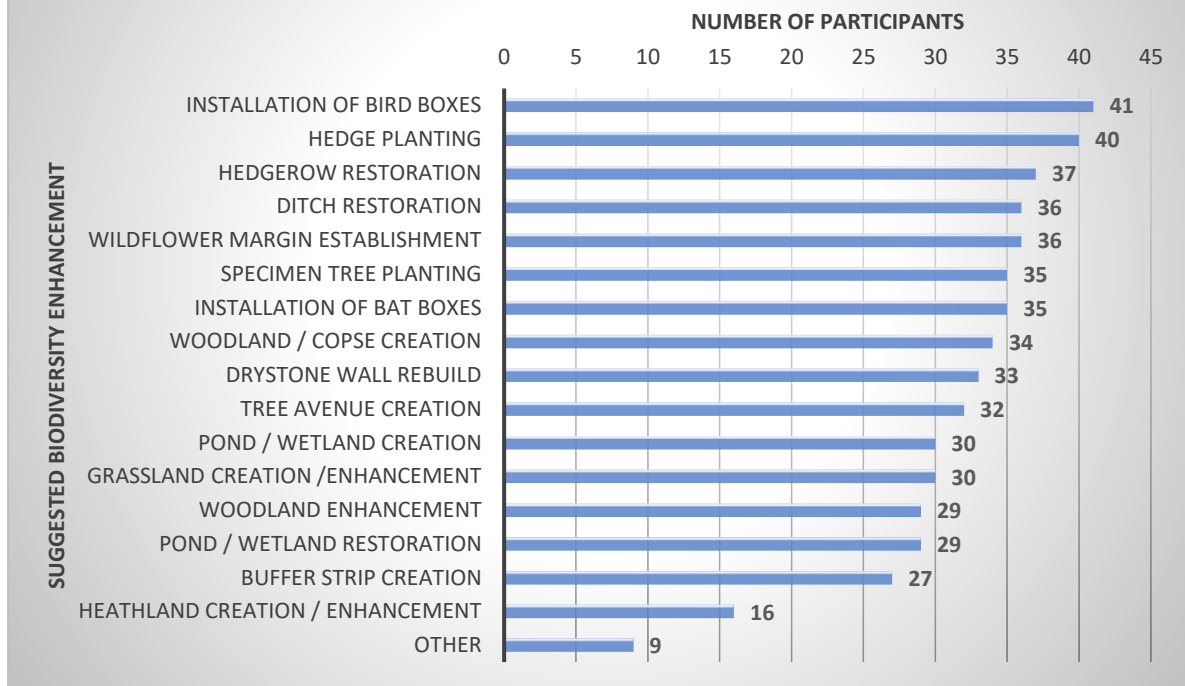
4.7(a) How willing are participants to include the suggested biodiversity measures along with the proposed access within an ELMs for the holding? Which biodiversity enhancements?



RESULT: 42 (84%) participants very willing or willing to include biodiversity works with access. 7 (14% undecided).

**BIODIVERSITY WITH ACCESS POSITIVITY RESULT AVERAGE = 4.4 (WILLING)**

## 50 participants: responses on biodiversity inclusions with access

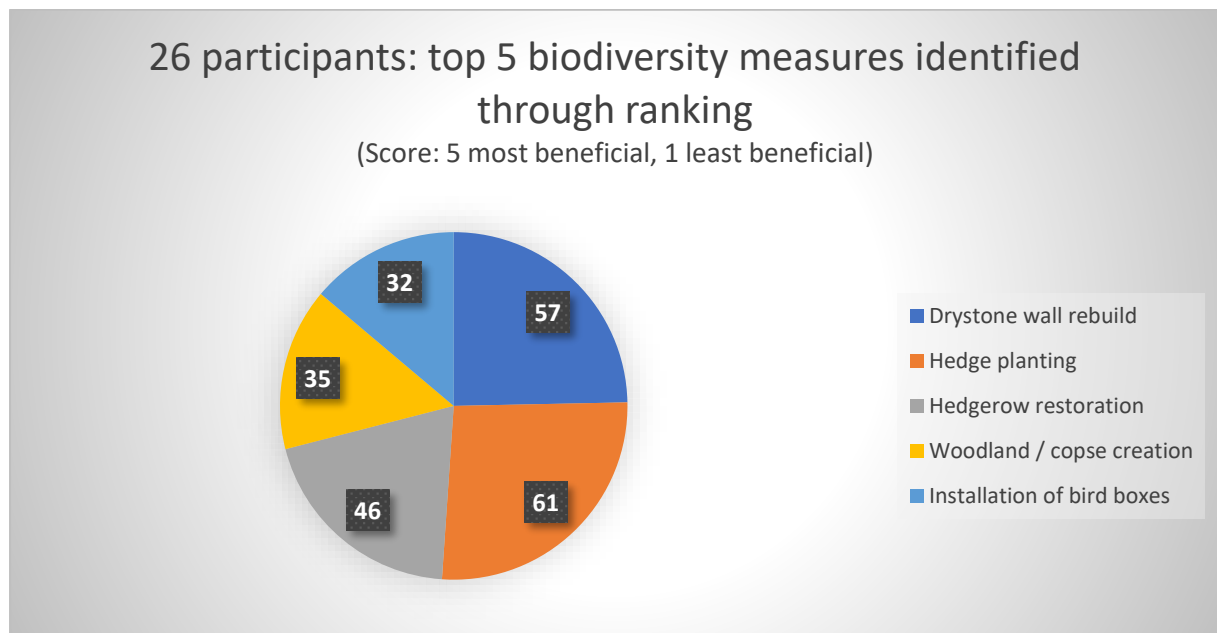


**RESULT:** Top 5 / 17 - 41 (82%) bird boxes, 40 (80%) hedge planting, 37 (74%) hedgerow restoration, 36 (72%) ditch restoration, 36 (72%) wildflower margins.

A very high degree of participant willingness to engage with biodiversity enhancements with access. The type of biodiversity works may depend on location, terrain, land type and operation. For example, hill top participants engaged highly with drystone wall rebuilding whereas this was not a concern for Somerset Level and Chew Valley participants who are keen to restore ditches and hedges. Few participants had areas of heathland on their holding hence the low score.

'Other' included 'there's bound to be other!', need for the protection of (specific) rare plants, dormice boxes, the need to consider the biodiversity of access route surfaces and the need for tree inspections (particular reference again to ash dieback).

4.7(b) Which of the suggested biodiversity enhancements do participants consider to be most beneficial for them to deliver on the holding?



26 participants (52%) chose to rank biodiversity measures, the other participants considered the measures they had chosen to be 'equally important' and one said that the measures 'might not be appropriate.'

**RESULT:** Top 5 - Hedge planting, drystone wall rebuild, hedgerow restoration, woodland copse creation, installation of bird boxes.

Snapshot of participants' comments about the inclusion of biodiversity enhancements within the access route and within an ELMs plan for the holding.

Several participants queried how access and biodiversity can coexist in the same place particularly with regard to the effect of off the lead dogs on habitat and wildlife.

'How can access with biodiversity enhancements possibly work when 99 people out of a 100 have a dog (or more than one dog). The sheer numbers of people and dogs means that it is a desert for nature yet farmers are criticised for mono culture causing the decline of farmland birds and other wildlife. People move to the countryside, buy a dog and the consequence is the adverse impact on ground nesting birds and other wildlife.'

'I'm not sure that access and biodiversity 'go together'. User disturbance makes this rather 'incompatible.'

'We are a public access charitable organisation, we couldn't do what we do without public support and membership but there are so many wants, we can't close the land off, it is increasingly difficult to balance our obligations towards nature, the environment, SSSIs and the needs of tenants and graziers, people are disconnected from the landscape. People just don't understand the impact they have on the places they are visiting, they need to be much more educated about the effect dogs off leads have on wildlife and nesting birds and dog mess not picked up, we feel progressively negative as time goes on.'

'There is a complete and utter disregard by the public for where the permissive paths are, they just keep making new ones. There are some amazing trees, some of the most unusual and rare in the world on a par with the Blue Whale but these are being damaged by a complete lack of understanding of the countryside and how to behave in it. Two generations have grown up with absolutely no idea, much of it is not intentional, just ignorance. The other huge issue is dogs, people just let them off the lead and you have dogs haring around farm animals and conservation areas, we have had more sheep attacks and more attacks on the deer, that is incredibly upsetting seeing a deer with their hind legs hanging off or mauled from a dog attack. Education of the public is absolutely key and must be improved.'



An Elm tree planted along an access route in Winscombe

'We are very willing to include any biodiversity measures and more besides whilst not entirely agreeing that these are compatible with public access.'

'I query how well human access and wild life / biodiversity can co-exist given the large numbers of people currently accessing the countryside (particularly in honey pot sites) and many visitors coming considerable miles to walk and mountain bike in the AONB, I do ask people where they come from.'

'Public access is having a very detrimental effect on habitat and wildlife. This is almost entirely due to dogs off lead once they get in the hedge and disturb or chase ground nesting birds with chicks, those chicks will not survive. The failure to pick up dog poo, leaving dog poo bags hanging or chucked around are

serious issues too. The current situation is noticeably worse with so many more people out walking especially with dogs. Whilst we want to welcome people to the countryside these issues need urgently addressing.'

Other participants queried how much conservationists really understand local biodiversity

'I am very willing to engage with any biodiversity measures in a general sense. A lot of work had been done on the holding with the Bristol and Avon Rivers Trust establishing a pond and restoring ditches. An avenue of lime trees has been planted alongside the road. I am concerned that conservationists are in danger of destroying the interesting thing that drew them to a certain hedge or habitat in the first place, only looking for what they knew about and missing what was really there. Sometimes poor decisions are made regarding biodiversity, habitat and hedge management, when the landowner is in a better position to make those decisions. Not enough ditch restoration is being done. Nature 'settles in its own place, our house is only twenty years old but there is a strong colony of bats in the porch.'

'I am very clear that the primary purpose is conservation for the protection and preservation of butterflies, generally the organisation would always be interested and keen to carry out biodiversity measures where appropriate. None of the measures suggested in the survey were appropriate to the management of a butterfly reserve except for grassland enhancement.'

'As an organisation dedicated to nature recovery the land holdings are already well managed for biodiversity. Any suggested additional measures would need to be carefully evaluated on a reserve by reserve basis. However, it is recognised that biodiversity enhancements across the entire test area landscape are a very important route to nature recovery. It is important that this is reflected in the future scheme. We also think that there could be funded advisory roles within an access / biodiversity (wildlife corridors) scheme for experts in local nature recovery to advise other local scheme participants.'



'All the adjacent landowners have been approached to ask if the Strawberry Line (long distant path) could go down the drove - there was talk of concreting over the rhyne – that is a really poor approach.'

'I am so concerned about liability with so many people accessing the land that I cut down all the trees because of this concern.'

Many participants stressed their willingness to engage with the suggested biodiversity measures and wanted to stress the huge amount of biodiversity work already being done.

'I'm willing to undertake some of the suggested biodiversity measures, being particularly keen on tree and hedge planting and improvement, I'm restoring dew ponds and ditches anyway.'

'I have repaired miles of dry-stone walls along the highways.'

'We are passionate about growing trees and caring for local wildlife and habitat. As we neared retirement we bought 125 acres with the sole intention of planting trees and enhancing the wildlife, biodiversity and habitat. Protected / interesting species on the land includes newts, bats, badgers and orchids growing.'

'The holding includes a small orchard, which is being replanted and tidied up, and improved and unimproved grassland. It would be good if this type of work could be funded under the scheme. I am enthusiastic about biodiversity measures that could be carried out along the existing access routes particularly woodland and copse creation, hedge planting and creating wildflower margins.'

'All the biodiversity measures are equally important. Rebuilding walls doesn't apply but I would be happy to do that if I had any. With regard to biodiversity measures taken already I have created a large pond / sheet of water and I am planning woodland planting.'

'The need to convert from intensive farming to less intensive over a wider acreage is recognised and within this access can be encouraged.'

'We were rather undecided about including biodiversity measures along the route but after discussion we concluded that a route could be enhanced by rebuilding drystone walls,



hedge planting and restoration, specimen trees and buffer strip creation – all of these we would be willing to include in our ELMs plan.’

‘Obviously biodiversity inclusion would depend on the site and which species are present. I am particularly keen on rebuilding dry stone walls and obviously all the woodland enhancements. I think that ditch restoration and pond creation would be really helpful along the aspirational route plus we should definitely put up more bird and bat boxes.’

Conservation in partnership with others

‘Beyond the camp area the land is managed for conservation. We have an historic farm settlement and an SSSI sub-let to and managed by the local Wildlife Trust. We are pleased to have the Wildlife Trust as our tenants and we take a collaborative approach to managing the land with conservation in mind, with them’.

### Comments and concerns about specific species or measures

Hedges

‘I have the hedges properly laid, but I disagree with the rule of leaving hedges for three years, two is long enough or they look scruffy.’



Trees and woodland.

‘I have absolutely tonnes of woodland. Ash dieback is a very big issue with road closures and tonnes having to be felled over many weeks. The ash trees along the roads are being dealt with first, then those along the rights of way. Someone phoned me concerned about loss of bat habitat from the felling. It’s tough to keep going.’

‘Ash dieback has just cost the estate £100,000!’

‘I have dealt with the ash trees along the roads. 80 tonnes have been felled, it took a month for me, my farm hand and the tree surgeon. I haven’t considered the need to deal with the ash trees bordering the public footpaths.’

‘Liabilities arising from the severe outbreak of Ash die-back disease is now a major concern on the land holding. I would be keen to see annual tree assessments in a new scheme, the inclusion of a professional doing annual assessments to protect landowners is a welcome idea.’

‘Hedge planting might be appropriate along with wildflower margins and copse creation – we have planted several small copses on the range anyway.’

‘Please can the scheme include payments for managing existing woodland (often in a poor state) and for tree planting on small areas of land that are not useful for agriculture or could be easily set aside.’



'On your list woodland / copse creation should be woodland / copse establishment because it is all very well bringing out school children to plant tree slips but there has to be work undertaken to ensure the trees thrive and don't all die afterwards.'

'We need to leave old fallen trees to rot, these are invaluable in providing for biodiversity particularly insect life. This doesn't happen enough.'

'We are considering creating a small area of woodland and would be more than happy for people to use it and if there could be a contribution through ELMs that would be excellent.'

'Access routes and space should be enjoyable for users.'



#### Ditches

'Funding for regular works on ditches and rhyhes should be included in the scheme. Many are poorly maintained. There could be an agreement for ditches and rhyhes to hold much more water in winter flood times for short period of times to alleviate issues. Payments could be made through the scheme for regular maintenance works and for sacrificing land for storage.'

#### Rivers

'We have taken advantage of capital grants in the past for the protection of water quality / water catchment sensitive farming (particularly in the weir areas) along the banks of the rivers Axe and Yeo – both rivers cross our holding.'

#### Ponds

'I have a pond near the old quarry where my cattle graze that has great crested newts in it (protected species). I have now fenced this off as I have been asked to do but the cows have always gone in there and not done any harm.'

#### Countryside stewardship.

Several participants referred to biodiversity works undertaken and some had concerns about the scheme.



'We have already done a lot of conservation through that.'

'The holding was formerly in Higher Level Stewardship (around 2007). I found very helpful in enabling me to restore hedgerows, ditches and water courses for wildlife.'

'The holding has been greatly enriched by being in Countryside Stewardship Schemes which has enabled us to plant buffer strips and miles of hedgerow. We have recently entered a mid-tier scheme, with a number of capital items in mind. We are keen to lay the hedges that have been planted and are now maturing, carry out a drainage / water retention scheme and re build dry stone walls. However, the set payment rate does not account for local deviations from the norm. For instance, we are rebuilding a dry-stone wall. The stone is crap and although we have a really good quote from the best stone waller around here, the set payment will only cover 25% of the cost. Payment for activities need to reflect all the elements of labour, materials and generate some income. It is not enough to expect landowners to be content with out of pocket expenses or breaking even. Incentive must include profit. We would love to do more in terms of landscape enhancements but we have no money in the pot to do it.'

'We are very willing to include biodiversity works with an access route specifically hedge planting – which had been included in our Countryside Stewardship Scheme - but we didn't get around to it' - ditch restoration and providing bird and bat boxes.'

'We don't consider the schemes on offer to be flexible or diverse enough in offering a 'pick and mix approach. We wanted to do hedge laying but it wasn't part of that scheme.'

'We are very keen on biodiversity measures, most of the suggested measures have already been taken up by in various places across the land holding, however ten years of Countryside Stewardship has had a negative effect on biodiversity and habitat in our opinion. It's someone else's perception about what is right, it has to be local knowledge, people from away don't always realise what is there and can wreck habitat by insisting on inappropriate measures.'

'There were elements of the scheme to which I disagreed. I don't agree with cutting hedges every other year, it's far worse for them and very messy. I consider the 'A' shape cut to be



better for biodiversity and habitat and there should be support for that option in any scheme.'

'I wanted to plant some small woodland areas / copses within my existing CS scheme but I was not allowed to as the area that was suitable was not large enough to qualify. I am asking that in the new scheme the minimum acreage for tree planting should be abandoned as I certainly have areas suitable for a small copse.'

#### Protected species on the holding.

Many participants referred enthusiastically to the protected species on their land.

'That wood is renowned for its nightjar, raven and long eared owl population.'

'There are large special protection areas to protect 270 species of bird, including various protected species.' (Such as northern shoveler, gadwell, great crested grebes and sand martins).'

'We are aware of two protected species on our holding – greater horseshoe bats and autumn crocus (meadow saffron). The location where the autumn crocus grows is fenced off as it is deadly to livestock.'

'We do a lot of work to look after the many protected species on site. I agree with all the measures listed with the proviso that these would of course be site specific. We are carrying out this work all the time, last week improving grassland for biodiversity, this week brush clearing to enhance access.'

'We have an ARK site for crayfish, which are a threatened species, a conservation site and a county wildlife site.'

'The company is very willing to engage in any biodiversity measures. Extensive tree planting has already been carried out at the site plus work to restore bat habitats – one bat cost us £50'000!' There is a designated person within the company who works with the Wildlife Trust and others to ensure biodiversity works are carried out especially when operations cease and the estate is restored.'

'I already have owl boxes which were regularly occupied.'

And finally

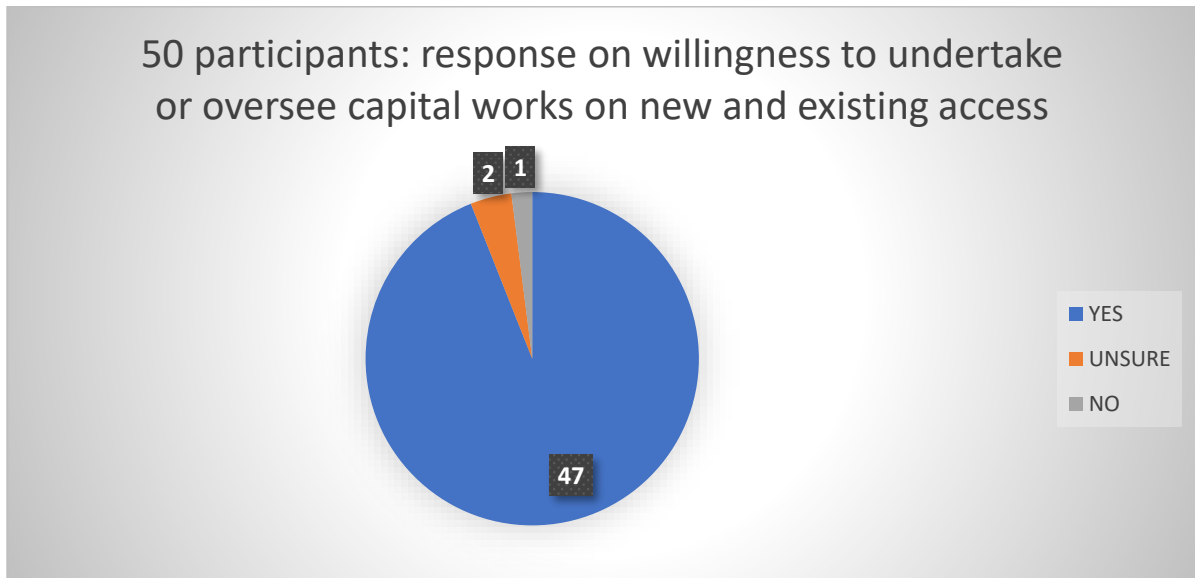
The participant and the local community had together created a village space with a seat and trees 'on a squeak of land that was no use to me, so it shows that local landowners can be public spirited, great idea to create a copse with a bit of a view through this (Government) scheme – bring it on!'

DISCUSSION 7 C) willingness to include access & biodiversity capital works, improvements and annual maintenance or tasks in ELMs.

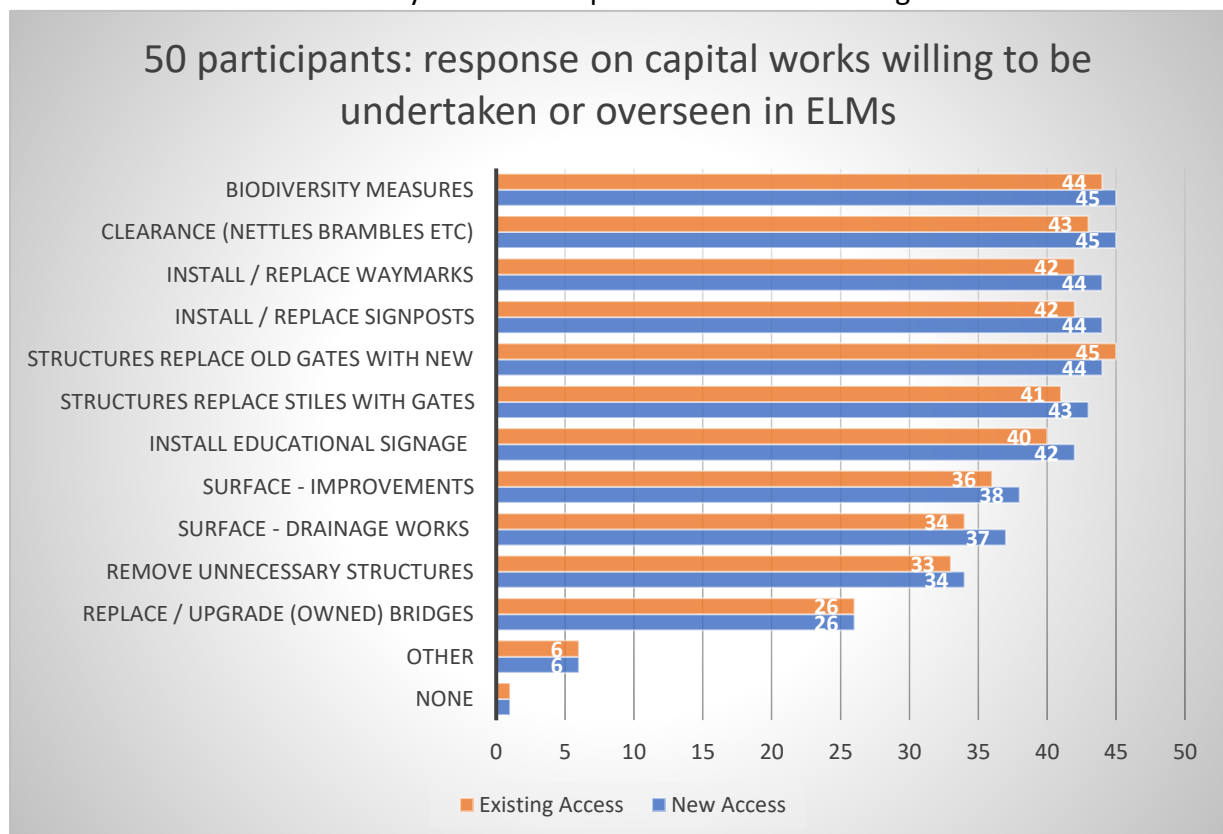
4.8 How willing are participants to undertake or oversee a contractor to undertake capital access and biodiversity works?

a) To create new or upgraded access routes or within open access space?

b) To improve existing access routes and open space (including biodiversity enhancements)?

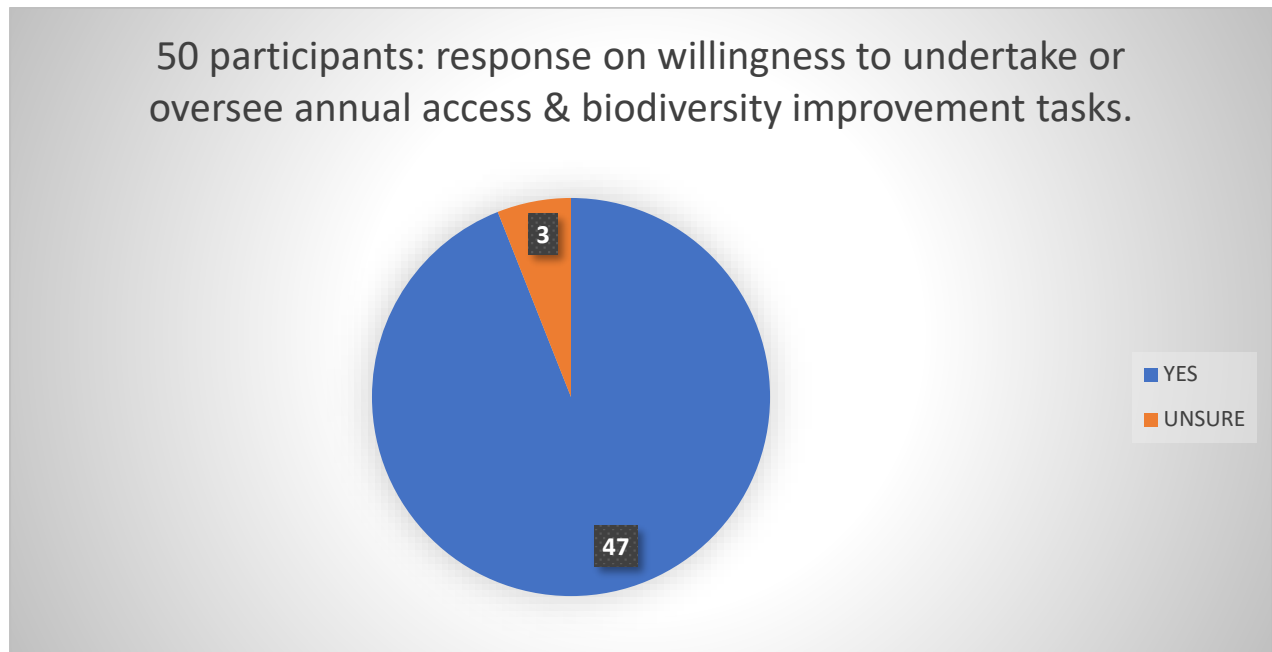


RESULT: 94% of participants are willing to undertake or oversee creation and improvement work on access and biodiversity routes and space on the land holding.



**RESULT** (aggregated score existing & new access) – top 5 – 44.5 participants (89%) said biodiversity measures, 44.5 (89%) replace old gates with new, 44 (88%) clearance, 43 (86%) install / replace waymarks, 43 (86%) install / replace signposts.

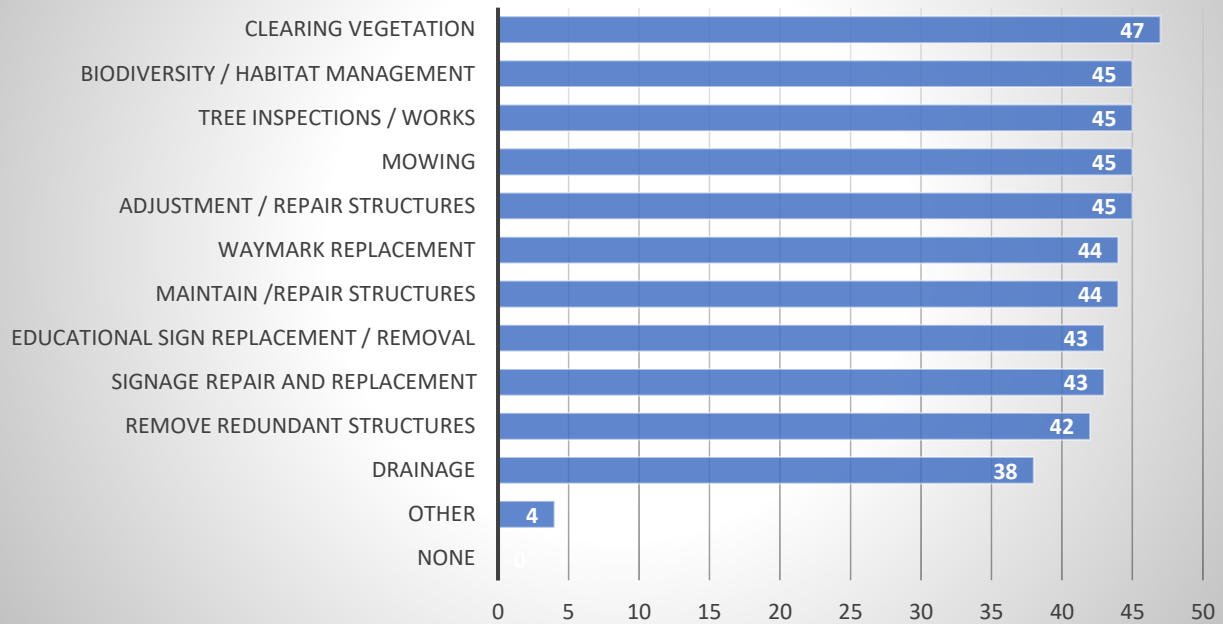
4.9 How willing are participants to undertake or oversee a contractor to undertake annual access and biodiversity improvement and maintenance works and tasks along access routes or in access space – beyond cross compliance responsibilities?



**RESULT:** 94% of participants are willing to undertake or oversee contractors to carry out annual improvement and maintenance tasks within an access and biodiversity route or space on the land holding.



## 50 participants: responses on annual improvement tasks willing to be undertaken or overseen in ELMs



**RESULT:** top 5 / 12 - 47 (94%) participants said clearing, 45 (90%) equal biodiversity management, tree inspections / works, mowing, adjusting / repairing structures

### Snapshot of participants' comments on willingness to undertake access and biodiversity creation and improvement works and annual improvement tasks.

There is a high level of participant willingness to undertake capital works and annual improvements based on the recognition that landowners and land managers are very well placed to undertake or oversee these tasks, many are contractors themselves and many tasks are routine.

However, it was agreed by the majority of participants that:-

'the willingness to include the suggested biodiversity measures in the access space and to undertake or oversee capital improvements and seasonal tasks is subject to the rewards being higher than they are now and being realistic in providing an income for time and labour and that includes a reward or compensation covering materials, labour and an element of profit.' and

'Costs should be based on actual costs, prices and quotes such as in our contracting business.'

The minority said:-

'The estate carries out these tasks anyway, it is recognised that payments would not necessarily cover all the costs of works.' and

'The organisation employs its own contractors so we already do most of the works ourselves.'

'I am unsure whether I would want to undertake any capital, improvement maintenance access and biodiversity works myself but I am happy enough for someone else to.'

'Undertaking any of the access route creation, improvements and maintenance listed, in my case would mean 'getting contractors in.'

'I am very clear that I am willing to create the route, undertake any biodiversity measures, works, improvements and maintenance, providing the route is in a corridor, that someone else facilitates and undertakes the necessary works and that I am properly rewarded'.

'We think that the capital works and maintenance tasks listed are appropriate. Any works would be carried out by contractors or volunteers, obviously we would work with our tenants, we agree formal annual management plans with them.'



'For the estate this would mean us organising contractors instead of the farmers having to, but we would do that if the reward is right. These works would be beneficial for the estate's tenants. We have carried out many of these type of activities in the past with the British Trust for Nature Conservation Volunteers.'

Besides deciding who should carry out the works there were more specific comments about the nature of the works suggested.

'There should be an ability to choose which tasks the scheme participant undertakes, whether access or biodiversity.'

'I am happy to undertake all suggested access improvements and maintenance except for bridge improvements– the bridge ownership is currently disputed.'

'We are very willing to engage in capital works to create new access and biodiversity infrastructure / structures, improve and maintain existing including other in list 4.8 capital works which might be creating / providing tunnels and bridges etc.'

'I particular like the idea of replacing stiles with gates as there are plenty of people that cannot climb a stile.'

'I agree with all the works listed including dealing with the access structures such as stiles and gates if that would fall under our remit in a new scheme.'

'I would be happy to undertake access works if paid to do so I've been putting in gates all my life.'

'Some of the access furniture being currently installed is not very well made, kissing gates are not very substantial.'

'There are capital or maintenance works listed that I wouldn't be happy to tackle or to engage with contractors on.'

'I am keen on high quality works because that lasts.'



'I am keen to ensure that gate furniture is appropriate for use by horse riders (the inclusion of long handles) which isn't always the case.'

'There's a real need for the scheme to provide educational signage that could be easily 'unpinned' and rotated 'around 'as people soon stop seeing the same message in the same place.'

'I'm not keen on a lot of educational notices

everywhere.'

'It's an interesting concept that ash die back should be included in the scheme, certainly very expensive to deal with.'

'The estate is very aware of its heritage and we have a heritage management plan, you always need to weigh up the changes you are going to make, little structure changes such as fencing and individual biodiversity enhancements quickly multiply into big changes and become big actions impacting on the landscape and heritage.'

'The estate would be willing to engage with all the suggested works and tasks, either doing them themselves or overseeing contractors, with the exception of tree inspections and works which are a concern due to liabilities, perhaps the scheme can help with that?'

'I am happy to carry out or oversee access creation and biodiversity enhancement, improvement works and annual maintenance works. However, payments for these works needs to be prompt otherwise people won't bother if they have to wait twelve months to be paid.'

'Can the provision / repair of parking venues on or adjacent to heavily visited sites feature in an ELMs scheme? This would help to prevent, mitigate, manage or repair damage to limited road or verge side parking. Also, visitors could be encouraged to arrive at a site by bicycle (active travel) then go walking or exploring on foot – the provision of bike racks through the scheme could encourage this.'



'Can repairs to fencing along an access route be included along with funding for the provision of temporary fencing to temporarily divert users away from e.g. nest sites or to segregate them from cattle?'



'I don't agree with the normal reward format within the current scheme, which depends on a) set pricing (per metre / per activity) and b) the presumption that people in my position can pay up front for such works or schemes and then reclaim the cost. People in my position do not have the cash flow to support these sort of capital / revenue arrangements. These schemes favour landowners who are already wealthy – there needs to be a sea change and a level playing field to bring everyone in. What is needed is a grant scheme that delivers up front capital to enable a scheme to start, with periodic revenue payments to pay for contractors and on-going expenses.'

'I am very keen on annual inspections by qualified tree surgeons if this were to be part of the scheme.'

As company director I don't see any direct major benefit to the Company as creating a route is unlikely to reap any on-going economic benefit' but I am keen to contribute to biodiversity. The company has to take a very commercial attitude to everything.'

## Questionnaire Section 5: Discussion 8 advice and collaborative working.

### Advice and guidance.

Policy questions to be answered -

- What expert support will participants require to help them plan?
- What data and information will participants require?
- What is the type and nature of guidance and advice required to ensure access is included as part of an ELMs plan?

Question	Result in brief
5.1 <b>Key finding</b>	Is specialist advice and guidance needed to help participant's plan? RESULT: 43 (86%) agreed specialist advice would need to be provided to them through the scheme, 7 (14%) would source advice themselves or have it delivered in house. What is the type of the advice (topics) is required? RESULT: Top 10 / 20 - 44 (88 %) advice on legal rights of way creation, 39 (78%) on cross compliance 37 (74%) on types of public access structures, 36 (72%) habitat enhancements, 35 (70%) on route location planning, user rights, surfaces, user education, 34 (68%) type of route, permissions (SSSI / heritage).
5.2 <b>Key finding</b>	How should specialist advice be portrayed and delivered? RESULT: 41 (82%) prefer advice from an advisor / agent backed up either by a manual to refer to (64%) or information available on the internet (44%)
5.3 <b>Key finding</b>	Would participants expect to source their own guidance on some subjects? RESULT: 47 (94%) participants agreed. What own guidance should be sought? RESULT: 42 (84%) occupier's liability, 40 (80%) health and safety, 38 (76%) on liabilities for trees.

5.1 Is there a need to provide specialist advice and guidance to help participants plan?



RESULT: 43 (86%) said YES, they would need specialist advice through the scheme.

14% (7) said NO they wouldn't want advice via the scheme. Of the 7 who declined, 5 would source their own advice and 2 would have advice provided in house.

Snapshot of participants' comments on the need for specialist advice.

'If you don't know what you are looking at or don't have any ideas, discussing ideas and getting the information from a knowledgeable person is really good, also you need to know what you are signing up to. I had excellent help and support from the local FWAG and wildlife trust when entering HLS – 'they were great they planned it all for me.'

'It is a concern that the schemes are so complex and there is a lot to consider.'

'We would always prefer in person advice whether considering entering a scheme (which to date they had never done) or obtaining our own advice.'

'It is more than likely that we would get all the advice we needed independently.'

'I am not keen on commercial agents but would welcome advice from trusted independent specialists and advisors - especially on wildlife schemes. Any scheme would need to be straight forward, understandable and manageable on the computer and technology used at home.'

'Advice delivered in person is crucial – especially for a new scheme.'

'It would be up to my tenants to say what advice they required, I think that cross compliance is an important issue for them.'

'Government needs to recognise that farmers often don't grasp details as they don't have the time to do proper research, simplicity is key, help them present a plan and the easy way to do it and bingo it will all happen.'

'We both agree that with a new scheme coming forward, specialist guidance and advice will be required even though scheme entry would normally be done in house currently. On delivery of advice, we both consider that 'in person' is preferred.'

'I agree that specialist advice and guidance would be needed, the company prefers to seek out in person specialist advisors where necessary.'

'Advice and guidance will definitely be needed to help with planning. There is a real need for an advertising campaign teaching the countryside code to users and farmers, farmers need to understand their own responsibilities and also to be empowered as to what to say to users and how to educate them.'

'With regard to advice, the Ministry has its own operational procedures and safety reviews with regard to anything that happened on operational sites.'

'DEFRA should provide a panel of approved ELMs experts under the scheme to give initial free guidance and advice to take the hard work out, using those who know what they are doing, that advice list is too much for one person. You need to get somebody to show you

how it can be done, a panel maybe like FWAG should then produce a plan for X cost. Those who want to participate in ELMs should be able to apply for help to the panel with their proposed environmental land management plan ideas and get preliminary good and not conflicting advice. Landowners and farmers are hardworking and busy, they don't get up and think 'what shall we do today?' They need encouraging to enter the scheme and help to produce an 'initial plan.' There's a danger of conflicting advice and the costs of paying a consultant which would be off putting. An expert panel could produce a brief report with an idea of expected costs and reward payments so that farmers would know what to expect out of it, what the bottom line is.'



Other advice topics requested were advice on car park provision, dealing with badgers digging up path surfaces, countryside code promotion, liability and insurance issues connected with permanent access creation, and (in interview) help with a maintenance plan.

**RESULT:** A very positive response to the need for specialist advice and advice topics offered.

Top 10 / 20 - 44 participants (88 %) wanted advice on legal rights of way creation, 39 (78%) on cross compliance 37 (74%) on types of public access structures, 36 (72%) habitat enhancements, 35 (70%) on route location planning, user rights, surfaces, user education, 34 (68%) type of route, permissions (SSSI / heritage).

Snapshot on participants' comments on the advice topics offered.

The topics listed were widely agreed to be 'all needed', 'all good things to offer through ELMs', 'all useful depending on what you were doing', 'all good if supplying a public good.'

'Legal advice from a solicitor would be needed especially when planning a time limited route.'

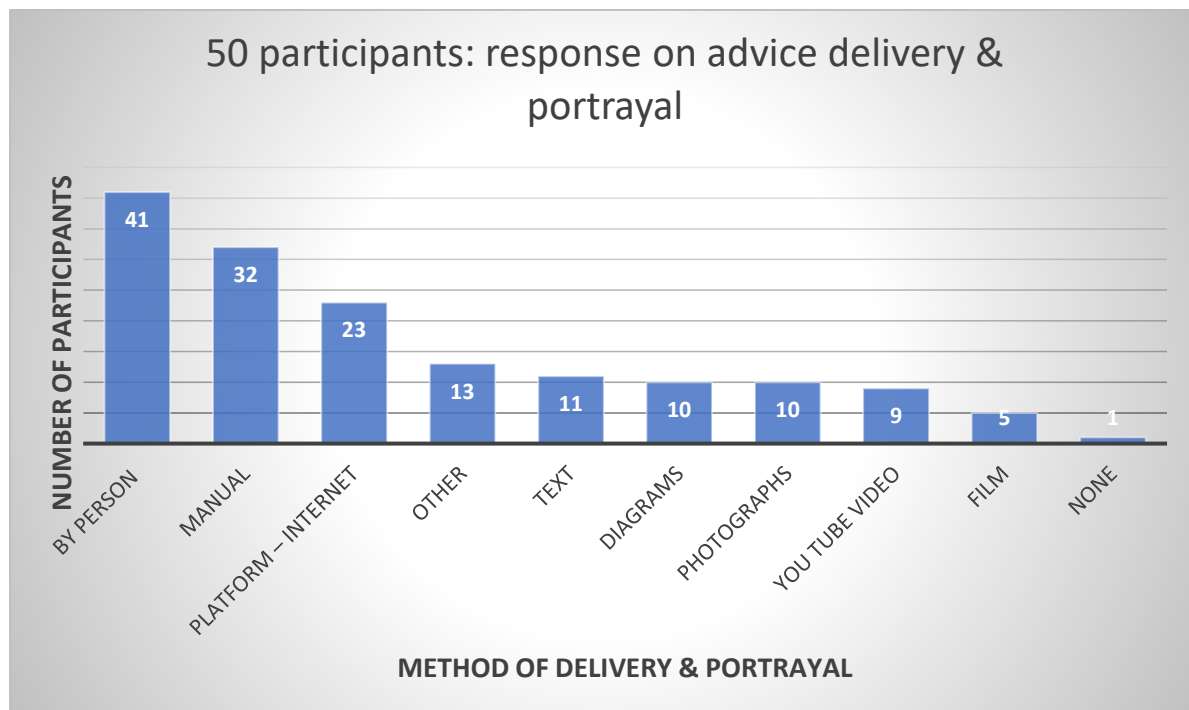
'Advice on rights of way creation is particularly important'

'For rights of way creation, or even for providing a permissive path it would be crucial to ensure legal costs were covered in the scheme.'

'Are there liability issues / concerns around horse / horse riding use of rights of way?' (This signposts a need to include education about creation processes / reduced liability on (created) rights of way and open access land.)

'Can the scheme provide some funding for landowner / land manager education and research into their own obligations towards SSSIs, NNRs, scheduled monuments etc and to any protected species or habitat that exists on their land holdings?'

5.2 Participants' preference for advice delivery and portrayal.



RESULT: 41 (82%) prefer receiving advice from an advisor or agent backed up either by a manual to refer to (64%) or information available on the internet (44%).

3 participants thought that diagrams, photographs, text should be provided in the manual.

1 participant agreed that all the advice was useful but he would get his own as in 'the trade.'

Other methods of delivering and portraying favoured were provision of

- a telephone / video helpline so that a knowledgeable person could be contacted (6 participants)
- written agreements with holding maps, plans and calendar of works to be done (8)
- downloadable 'easily identifiable' PDF on specific subjects (2)

Snapshot on participants' comments about the method of delivery and portrayal of advice.

Many participants preferred advice delivered by a person in the first instance, by a trusted, helpful and competent local source 'like the FWAG advisor', 'a local agent or advisor', 'a farm consultant who knows everything about the scheme and can instantly help.'

'The Estate has its own in-house advisors of course but you can't underestimate the importance of a good, known local, professional adviser, look at Natural England advisers, excellent, helpful and know their stuff, that personal touch is a real winner, by contrast to the RPA (Rural Payments Agency) – not a good experience at all.'

'We don't necessarily want advice from a person. Sometimes the landowner knows what is best for his land and what exists there, there's a certain sort of 'shiny shoe brigade' who don't have a clue and have fixed ideas.'

Manuals are great 'something to go dusty on the shelf.'

'DEFRA used to produce some really good booklets on different topics.'

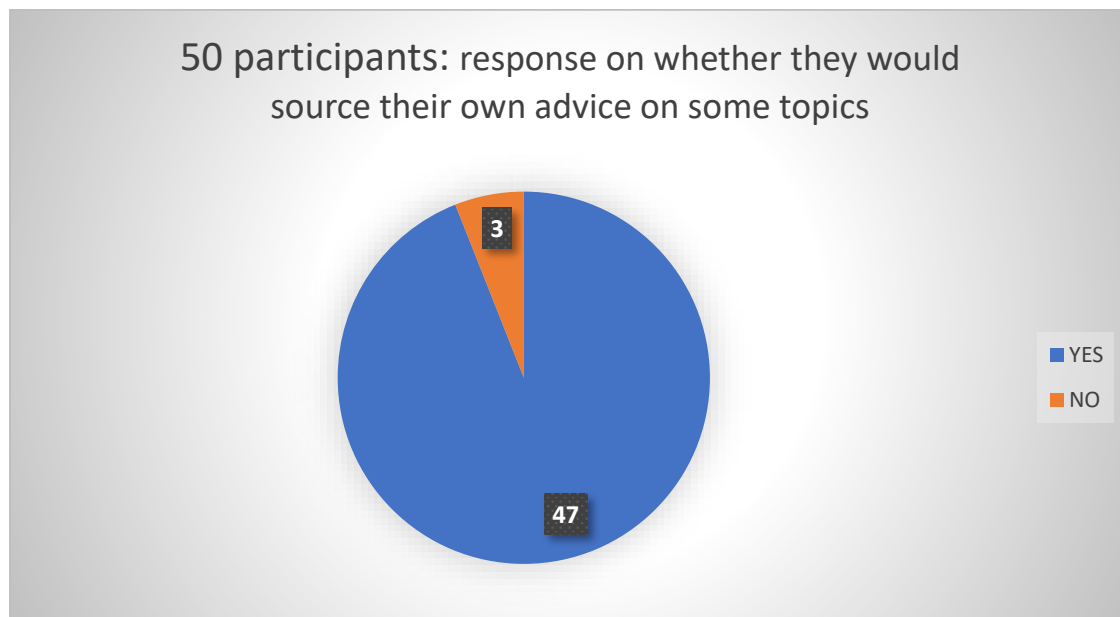
'We are not on the internet.'

'A bespoke agreement for the holding is crucial.'

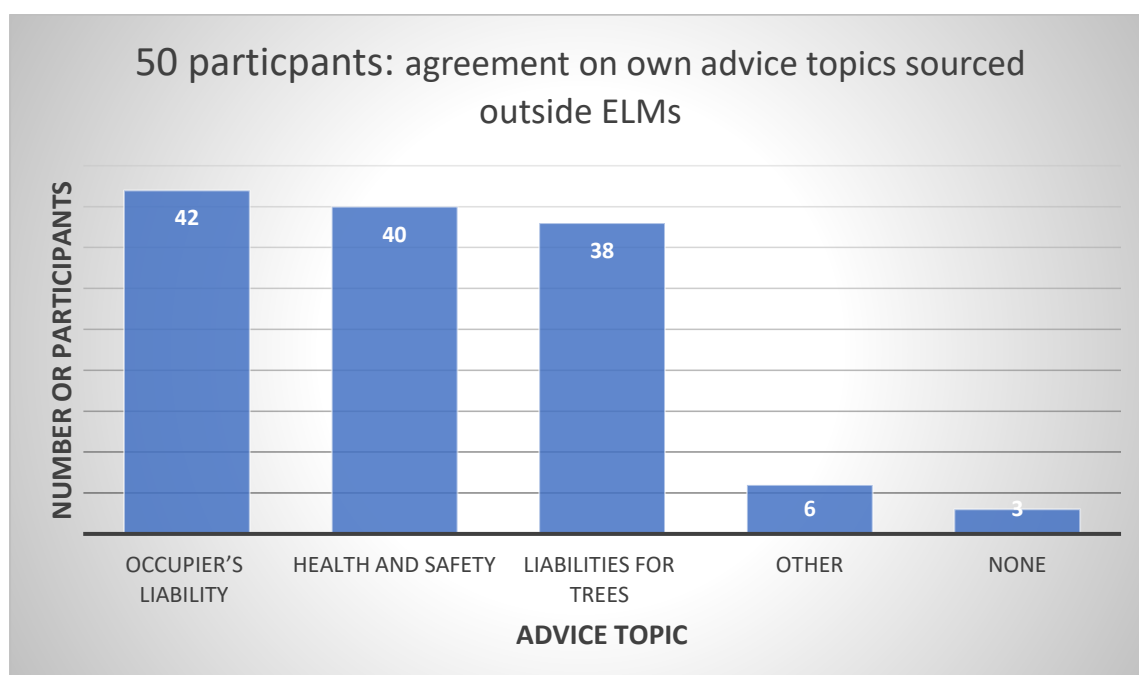
'Can we have a helpline like the National Farmers Union helpline, that's excellent.'

'There should be an ELMs website where you can download a management scheme with all the elements needed so that you can plan in a simple way.'

5.3 Would participants expect to source their own guidance on some topics, rather than expecting all advice to be delivered through ELMs?



**RESULT:** 47 (94%) participants agreed with the need to seek advice on some topics.



Other advice topics suggested were obtaining independent legal advice and advice on management of protected species.

**RESULT:** 42 (84%) participants agreed advice should be sought on occupier's liability, 40 (80%) on health and safety, 38 (76%) on liabilities for trees.

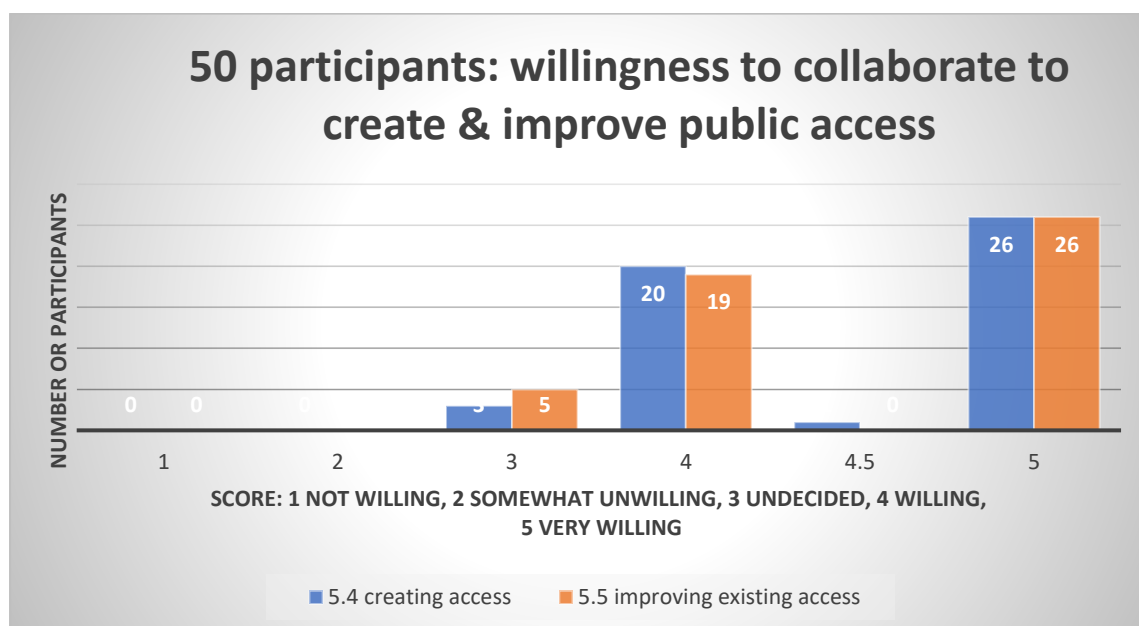
3 participants said they didn't need to source their own advice. 2 of these said all advice would be delivered 'in house' or via written procedures, 1 thought that the ELM scheme should deliver all necessary advice.

Collaboration: how willing are the participants to work collaboratively?

Policy questions to be answered -

- What are the perceived barriers to working collaboratively?
- What are the collaborative mechanisms required to engage neighbouring landowners and land managers to engage in the creation of joined up routes planned to cross multiple holdings?
- Would additional funding be required to facilitate collaboration?

Question	Result
5.4 <b>Key finding</b>	How willing are participants to work collaboratively with other land managers to create access and biodiversity? Score 1 unwilling, 3 undecided, 5 very willing. RESULT: 47 (94%) participants are willing /very willing.
5.5 <b>Key findings</b>	How willing are participants to work collaboratively with other land managers to improve and maintain access and biodiversity? Score 1 unwilling, 3 undecided, 5 very willing. RESULT: 45 (90%) are willing /very willing. Which collaborative scenarios? RESULT: Top 6 / 13 - 42 (84%) participants grants for biodiversity measures, creating wildlife corridor, 41 (82%) single route crossing two holdings, single route crossing several holdings, improvement and maintenance, obtaining advice and planning.
5.6 <b>Key finding</b>	Should additional funding be available to facilitate collaboration within the ELM scheme? RESULT: 47 (94%) said that it was essential to fund resources and a facilitator or project co-ordinator through the ELM scheme.



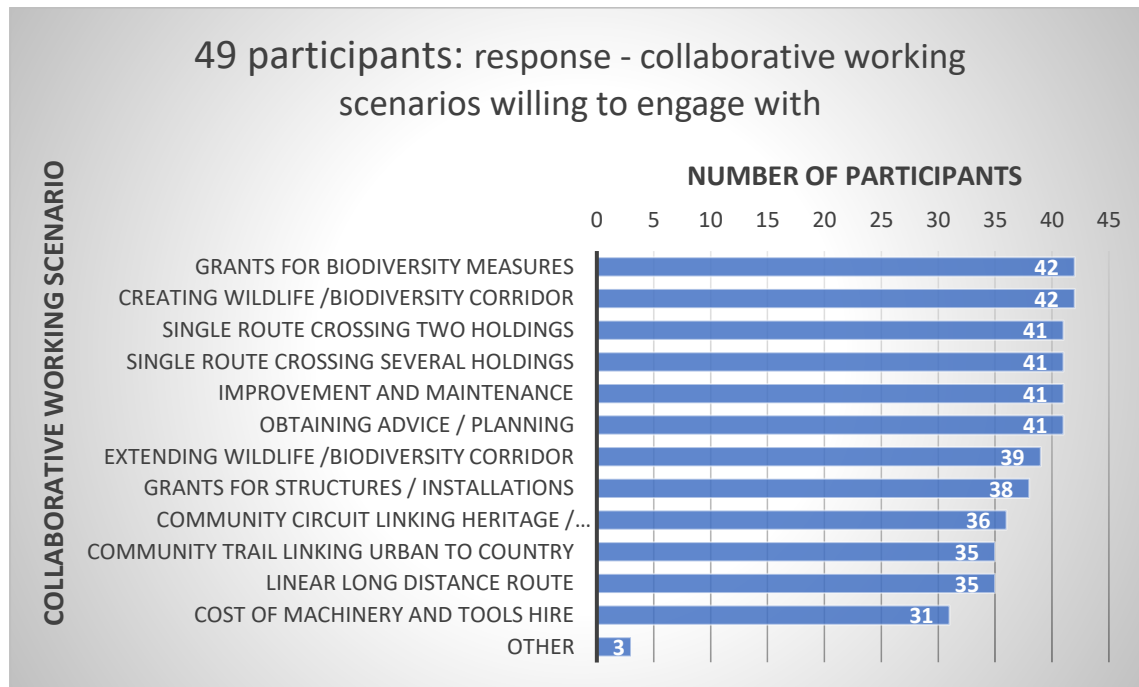
**RESULT:** 47 (94%) participants are willing /very willing to collaborate to create access and biodiversity. **Positivity result average = 4.5 (willing to very willing)**



45 (90%) are willing /very willing to collaborate to improve access and biodiversity.

**Positivity result average = 4.4 (willing to very willing)**

Which collaborative working scenarios would participants engage in?



‘Other’ included 1 participant willing to engage ‘in any scenario’, 1 participant (scoring 3 ‘undecided’) would engage on the aspirational route, 1 participant said ‘educational advice should be included.’

**RESULT:** high engagement by all participants in collaborative working.

Top 6 / 13 - 42 (84%) participants grants for biodiversity measures, creating wildlife corridor, 41 (82%) single route crossing two holdings, single route crossing several holdings, improvement and maintenance, obtaining advice and planning.

1 participant (very willing to collaborate) did not want to explore scenarios.

**Snapshot of participants’ comments on collaborative working.**

‘I am happy to collaborate with my neighbours on a number of scenarios, I think it’s important for people to listen to ideas. I can’t envisage sharing hired machinery or collaborating on improvement and maintenance – I would like to be in control of elements like those.’

‘Collaboration is vital for nature recovery in the creation of green corridors across holdings and in assessing and agreeing between local providers what works best.’

‘Collaboration is important, we would always want to do that.’

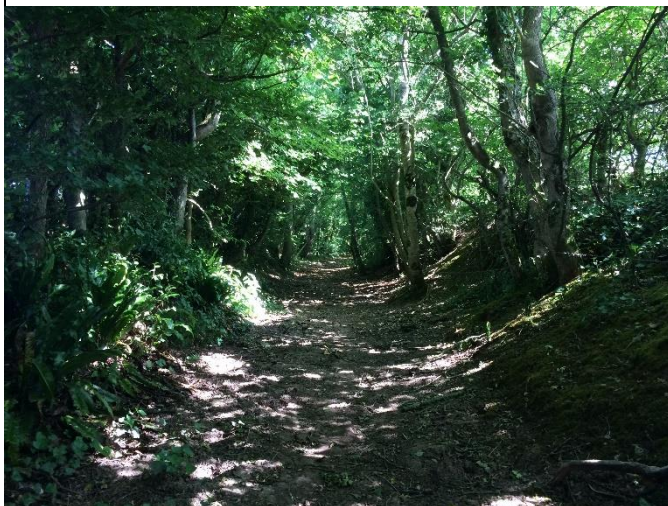
‘We work with our neighbours all the time on Gorge matters. There is nothing listed that I would be unhappy to collaborate on but again the devil is in the detail.’

'Collaboration definitely is very valuable especially on a landscape scale when it comes to protecting and enhancing woodland.'

'We are happy to collaborate in any of the scenarios listed. We think that it would be really important to collaborate with our neighbours over the proposed route, getting that right.'

'I would expect to collaborate with my tenants as land managers and with my neighbours on the northern route if it is something they would like to do.'

We are happy to collaborate in all scenarios even sharing tools and machinery as contractors we are used to doing that.'



Old roads are wildlife corridors in the countryside that can be preserved and enhanced for wildlife and people through collaboration.

'I am very willing to collaborate with others on a scheme particularly liking the idea of community circuits that link business and heritage and creating wildlife and biodiversity corridors.'

'The company is very willing to collaborate with others to create, improve and maintain access and biodiversity.'

'Collaborative working is to everyone's benefit and is and will be essential.'

'We think collaboration is a good thing and consider it more in the light of younger family members who are more likely to be involved and will take matters forward.'

'I am willing to collaborate on some of the scenarios offered especially those involving making improvements and enhancements for biodiversity and wildlife.'

5.6 Should additional funding be available to facilitate collaboration?

## 50 participants: response on the need to fund collaborative working



**RESULT:** 47 (94%) said that it was essential to fund resources and a facilitator or project coordinator through the ELM scheme. A facilitator is needed to organise collaboration within any project cluster and guide landowners and land managers through preliminary assessment, project planning, development, ELMs agreement, delivery and maintenance plan stages.

Two participants didn't know / didn't want to discuss collaborative working evaluation.

### Participant comments on the need to fund collaboration

One participant thought 'it impossible to rationally fund development or time.'

'Collaboration for rights of way, open space and biodiversity development projects would need the investment of a number of interested parties, including land owners and land managers, organisations specialising in biodiversity and nature recovery and user groups and others in the local community.'

### How should collaboration be funded?

During discussions it emerged that participants thought that facilitation should be valued on a number of attributes such as a percentage of the project proposed based on complexity, route mileage, open space acreage, scheme value, estimated time and costs. Facilitation funds mentioned as examples were the countryside stewardship scheme facilitation fund and facilitation funding available through Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group.

### Participants comments about funding collaboration.

'You need someone who can see the larger perspective and incentivize others, especially delivering bigger schemes. The value of facilitation could be linked to the value of the scheme a sort of 'Bruce Bonus' as payback for delivering public goods, spending money on this (facilitating collaboration) has to be right.'

'This scheme would be a great thing to bring the community together after COVID, we need to remember that farmers lead an isolated life, they have mental health issues too and

might find strangers scary, therefore bringing them into the conversation about public access is a good thing. Collaboration could be valued on the size of the scheme perhaps?’

‘I think that facilitation is definitely required. Meetings over an extended lunch period would be ideal low key, not too arduous - then you are only asking for an extra hour. It’s important to have good local facilitators and advisors, known and respected by the local farming community, to encourage a team effort and provide ‘a this is our chance moment’ Facilitators will play a key role in making the scheme happen.’

‘There definitely needs to be payment for collaborative working, to fund a facilitator otherwise there is scope for limitless argument not to mention the time taken to produce a successful scheme. Facilitation could be valued per running metre of the route or perhaps based on the scheme value say 10%.’

‘Ideally you need an agent to pull people together, get people organised, the farming life is very busy, you can’t push admin at busy individuals. An agent and his advice should be available as part of the scheme maybe capped to a reasonable amount, this would make people feel comfortable with what is happening. Perhaps an agent or facilitator’s time could be valued on the size of the scheme undertaken?’

‘Collaboration definitely needs to be facilitated and facilitation funded. This could be valued on a simple mathematical basis based on a percentage scheme value plus the number of people involved. A straightforward example would be that a scheme is costed at 100%, the materials = 50%, there are two collaborators party A and party B who get 50% for getting the work done.’

‘The facilitation fund should be open to anyone, either intended scheme participants or from outside the farming community, perhaps people from the community or local user groups who might be keen to facilitate and drive a scheme forward.’

‘Collaboration does need to be facilitated. This needs to be valued as part of the scheme, as a percentage or an additional cost attributed to the scheme so that the collaborators could hire someone knowledgeable to help them deliver an access route scheme.’

‘It’s clear that collaboration needs to be managed and supported through a facilitation fund. This is difficult to value due to the complexity of the scheme envisaged, the number of landowners involved and the length and type of route. Perhaps it could be linked to the value of the scheme with some known variables built in?’

‘Facilitation is needed and some money in the scheme for this purpose would be needed for someone to be proactive and drive things forward. On my own bridleway dedication scheme which took a lot of planning, it was driven forward by the local user group and the rights of way officer (who was funded to help).’

‘Could the value of collaboration and facilitation be specific to the scheme and be paid as a percentage of the scheme? Obviously larger schemes would need more facilitation than smaller ones.’

'The ideal would be a start-up fund that anyone could apply to, in order to fund a preliminary pre-contract evaluation of a collaborative scheme, its estimated value and numbers of people involved and other variables. This then followed by access to a facilitation fund for when people had worked out what they wanted to do in more detail.'

'Individual farmers might need more help to encourage them to participate through something like a facilitation fund. I think that an advisory panel of some kind would be helpful in providing the national perspective, so that experiences could be shared and to encourage people to be happy to engage.'

'Development projects need to be owned and facilitated by someone – this could equally be landowners, community or user groups or a parish council. A collaboration / facilitation / development fund needs to exist within the ELM scheme that is open to the wider community in partnership with landowners.'

'Usually there is one that does all the hard work whilst everyone reaps the benefit, that's human nature. I think that rewards for facilitation and collaboration should be included in a scheme development grant, to be used to support a local / scheme member facilitator.'

Questionnaire Section 6: Discussion 9 - ELM scheme options and final willingness to participate.

Policy questions to be answered -

- How can access be incorporated into the ELM scheme?
- How willing are landowners and land managers to provide and maintain provision of permanent sustainable access – a mechanism that has not been used previously within former agri-environment schemes?

Question	Results in brief
6.1(a)	Incorporated inside a tier system? RESULT: 9 (18%) yes (5 said an external scheme is also required)
6.1(b)	Incorporated in tier 1 only? RESULT: 9 (18%) yes (7 said an external scheme is also required)
6.1(c)	Stand alone scheme outside the tier system? RESULT: 30 (60%) access & biodiversity to be an external scheme NOT in the tier system.
Scheme Result <b>Key finding</b>	30 + 12 (from a) and b) = 42 participants (84%) said an external scheme is needed. 2 participants didn't know (4%), only 6 (12%) thought that access & biodiversity could be contained solely within a tier system
6.2 <b>Key finding</b>	Willingness to provide mechanism? 45 (90%) willing / very willing to provide and maintain access and biodiversity in ELM, 10% undecided, 0% unwilling. Positivity result average = 4.3 / 5 (WILLING)
6.3 (Not on questionnaire)	<b><u>6.3 KEY QUESTION for the Test to answer</u></b> Is there a <u>variation</u> in overall willingness to create, enhance or maintain access, and membership of countryside stewardship schemes between owners and managers of land holdings of differing acreages, land uses and proximity to large conurbations? Does the approach need to be tailored accordingly? RESULT: NO

## 6.1 How can access be incorporated into ELM?

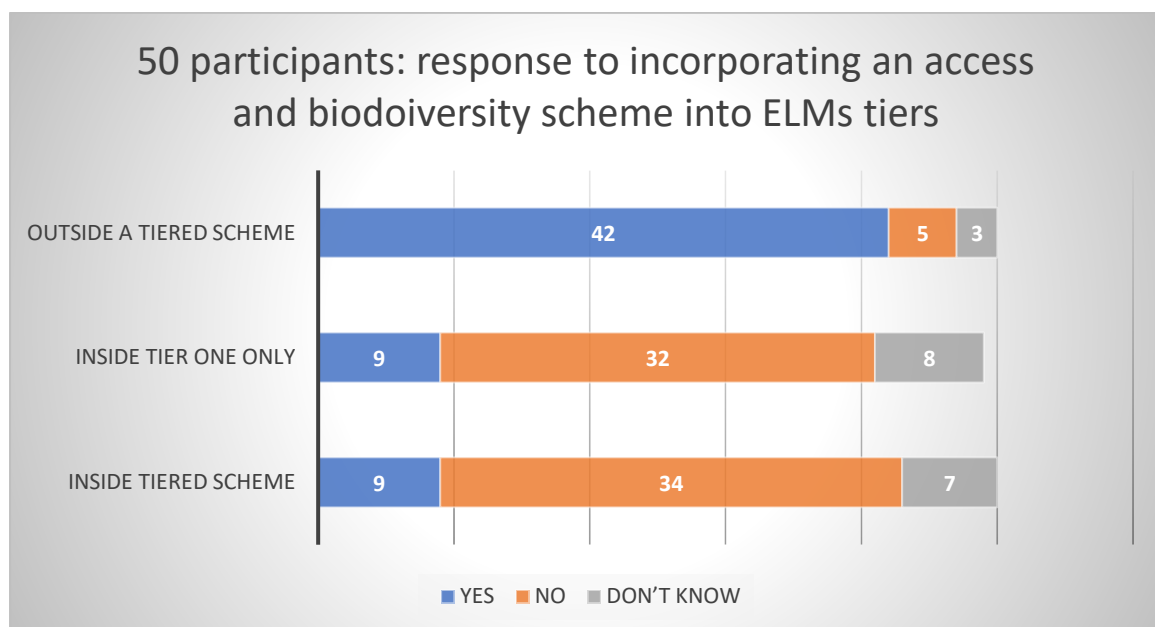
The participants were asked to consider three options for incorporating an access and biodiversity scheme within ELMs and answer yes, no or don't know to each.

In future, an access scheme (which may include creating access rights and developing, improving, maintaining routes (green infrastructure) with enhanced biodiversity should be:

a) incorporated inside a proposed tier system following the countryside stewardship model of basic, mid-tier and higher level?

b) incorporated inside tier 1 ONLY and therefore be available to all ELMs participants who may need to collaborate?

c) available to all scheme participants outside of any tier system?



**RESULT:** 2 (4%) participants said they didn't know to all 3 questions, 9 (18%) said inside tier one but 7 of these also thought there needed to be an additional external scheme, 9 (18%) said inside the tier system but 5 of these also thought there needed to be an additional outside scheme.

30 (60%) thought that an access & biodiversity scheme should be a stand-alone ELM scheme outside the tier system that anyone could apply to.

A total of 42 (84%) thought there should be an external access & biodiversity scheme.

Only 6 participants (12%) thought access with biodiversity could be managed within the tier

As a group the ELMs 159 participants concluded that there needs to be a flexible scheme, enabling all landowners and land managers to participate, irrespective of land holding size and involvement in ELM schemes.

**All 50 participants'** comments on the how an access and biodiversity scheme fits in the proposed tier system

'This absolutely has to be in a standalone scheme otherwise there will be a poor impact on access take up because some people will have the features that encourage them to provide access in that tier, but others won't which will make it difficult and disincentivise buy in, access as a separate element would level up things up for everyone.'

'I don't know much about the proposed tier system but my instinct tells me that a collaborative access and biodiversity scheme, especially on a community network scale, would not fit into a rigid tier system and ought to be a straight forward standalone scheme like any normal capital grant scheme, similar to our Catchment Management Scheme, it needs to be funded 100% to make this happen.'

'I think that an access and biodiversity scheme would have so many elements and would potentially involve a number of people that it could only really work outside a tiered system although I am not even sure how the tier system is going to work.'

'I am not keen on tier systems - from a business point of view we prefer stand-alone schemes that we can select. An access and biodiversity scheme which will inevitably involve multiple landowners has to be outside the tier system.'

'Existing access affects all types of landowners and managers and crosses every size of holding. A person with a one-acre paddock might have the last few meters of an existing route or be the key to a critical new route. Although access could be incorporated within a new tier system it is obvious that it also needs to be a stand-alone package available to all landowners and land managers.'

'Access and biodiversity creation, improvements and maintenance should all be included in tier one – available to everyone in the scheme. Just thinking about the (aspirational) route – that crosses four holdings, all of them would need to create, improve, work together. The current acreage scheme limit should still apply but there will always be a need to cross land that isn't in the scheme' (non-farmers / small acreages). There would need to be external funding 'to draw them in and compensate them.'

'I am not a fan of the proposed tier system, perhaps 'tiers' would be a better way of spelling it. I can't see how an access scheme can fit into the proposed tiers since there will be people who wanted to participate inside the scheme in different tiers and outside the scheme altogether.'

'The company is willing to engage in an access and biodiversity scheme. This ELMs Test (including the questionnaire) has been a really useful exercise, offering a very useful perspective making me think how we could do things differently. I am very appreciative of the reward as I got up early two mornings in a row early to complete the questionnaire' having no available work time.'

'Referring to our experience of countryside stewardship, we don't think that a tiered scheme will be flexible enough to accommodate public access needs. Access should be in a



stand-alone scheme that anyone and everyone could engage with. We are willing to participate.'

'I have no knowledge of any tier system not having been involved in countryside stewardship'. After it was explained he said he could not see how it could possibly work for access and biodiversity creation, improvements and collaboration since this would involve all landowners so the access scheme should sit outside the tier system and be available to everyone.'

'I think that a collaborative access and biodiversity creation and improvement scheme cannot be positioned within a tier system, the tier system is far too rigid, we need flexibility and to enthuse people so they say 'I want to do this and create a model farm', selecting the components that fit. If it's too complicated, it will not work, people are too busy. Rewards and compensation for access creation is key, as is the ability to realign paths – this will help uptake of the scheme. People have little time, free assessments to help with ideas and again to enthuse people, is really important.'

'I have no experience of tier systems and thought that countryside stewardship was particularly complex. I would like any scheme to be as simple as possible the simpler the better otherwise the company will have to rely heavily on its agent.'

'It's difficult to see how this can work within the proposed tier system, there is no easy answer, a scheme needs to be simple and rewarding to attract those who are likely to be attracted, there will always be some who won't be interested.'

'I consider that access and biodiversity creation, improvement and maintenance would need to be included in ELM tier one and thereby offered to all ELMs participants. However, in order to deal with landowners of small acreages, which might be fundamental to an access scheme, there needs to be a way of bringing them in and rewarding them through an additional external scheme. The simple aims and ease of entry of the ESA scheme is an example to follow. We agree that we are very willing to participate in an access and biodiversity scheme.'

'It seems obvious as someone at the bottom of the heap that I am not going to be joining any tier system which is more applicable for landowners with a lot of land. Therefore, a simple stand-alone access scheme outside any tier system would work for me.'

'I think that in general the tier system is a good idea however I can't envisage how access can work as in most cases there will usually need to be collaboration (whether on improvements or creation) and this will be difficult if people were spread through the tiers. On the question of overall willingness to enter a scheme I am 'willing'. This is qualified by reflecting on the suggested access and biodiversity route which is a good route because it runs along a boundary (option to fence a corridor), through land that is not prime land and then down a green lane where users are well contained. If I was the landowner I would be happy to create it and I hope he will get a proper reward.'

'We think that access and biodiversity does need to be incorporated in a countryside stewardship scheme. It is easier to deal with the tenants being in a recognised scheme. We

are undecided because we would need to be satisfied on health and safety criteria, the ability to divert to a new perimeter if the Range needed to be expanded, temporary closures and users sufficiently educated on the need to stay on the route and not to trespass on the Range. We do recognise community need and want to be receptive and supportive and provide what benefits we can.'

'I am happy with the existing tier system and think that access elements can be arranged within the new system.'

'Since I'm not in a countryside stewardship scheme and have no knowledge of the new schemes being proposed, I don't know how access creation and improvement will fit into any future scheme. With regard to the aspirational route it is clear that all the landowners would need to collaborate whether they are in a scheme or not so it seems obvious that such a scheme needs to be flexible enough to allow this. This points to access being outside a tier system and available to all. On these terms I am willing to participate.'

'I think that the current countryside stewardship schemes are so confusing, we need simple schemes, the simpler the better. Access and associated diversity would be best in a standalone scheme. I think that the Agency will be very willing to participate'.

'I think that an access scheme would need to be available to all ELMs participants so therefore will need to be in tier one. However, when developing or improving access there will often be a need to involve landowners who are not in the scheme or may not be eligible (owners of small plots). Therefore, there needs to be an additional pot of money outside the ELMs scheme (a grant scheme) to include / support them (particularly for creation).'

'We think that access should be available in the basic level tier. The five-hectare rule should stand otherwise finance will go to people who don't need it. However, there will be a need to provide for landowners outside the scheme who might be impacted by a route or who need to provide part of a route, so there will need to be a mechanism outside the tier system to deal with that. We are all willing to participate in an access and biodiversity scheme subject to all the caveats already expressed with regard to proper rewards and resolution of any issues.'

Undecided - the participant appreciated the aims of a local scheme to provide a usable network of preferred connecting community access routes and enhanced biodiversity. He appreciated the opportunities to diversify and is keen to move forward from some of the difficulties they have experienced in the past. However, this is tempered by having to agree between all the partners and subject to provisos such as agreeing routes and collaborating with neighbours and so forth. The green lane (the test aspirational route) is particularly sensitive as it is owned by the partnership and has no definitive status at all currently, not even footpath. Given the issues experienced and the historical disputes the interviewer was heartened for this participant to score a 3.

'We are not currently in a countryside stewardship or basic payment scheme so we have no experience of a tiered system. It is difficult to see how access creation can work given the estate circumstances of not being in the system but having the landowner ability to create

new access rights, therefore access needs to be a 'stand-alone' scheme that all landowners could participate in.'

'Tier one needs to be high in terms of a big (inclusive) offer to attract the most participants into it. In which case access creation and improvements could all be in tier one. However, clearly there will be landowners outside any scheme who will be needed to collaborate in a scheme so they would need to be catered for outside the scheme with a separate pot of money.'

'I am undecided on whether I want to participate following the discussion and I don't know or want to consider how an access scheme could work inside a tier system that I have no understanding of, I think a stand-alone scheme that people can go into if they want to.'

'I am prepared to provide an access and wildlife bridleway corridor on my land for a fair capital payment and annual revenue payment for maintaining it.'

'I think that an access with enhanced biodiversity scheme needs to be available to everyone who has access on their land or who would need to be involved in a collaborative scheme. It is difficult to decide this without knowing more about how a scheme could work. My overall willingness is qualified by the need to educate users, especially mountain bikers on how to behave on land and when passing livestock.'

'We think that access and associated biodiversity should be in a separate scheme outside the tier system. We are very willing to participate in such a scheme.'

'We think that an access with biodiversity scheme can be arranged within a tiered system but there will be a need to bring in landowners who are scheme participants. Therefore 'stand-alone' funding outside the scheme would be required. We might be willing to participate in the access scheme provided it is for routes on foot only and any new route does not impact on existing impact or biodiversity.'

'Having never been in a countryside stewardship scheme I cannot visualise what is meant by a 'tiered system' or how access and associated biodiversity would fit into that. Access affects so many different holding sizes and types it would be better to offer a stand-alone scheme.'

'I think that access and biodiversity creation, improvements and maintenance can be incorporated within the tier system - provided the scheme is properly managed and funded. Landowners with small parcels of land over which connecting access runs will need to be drawn in and similarly funded without the disadvantage of diluting the funding pool and creating an over burden of regulation.'

'We are willing but our willingness depends on if our neighbouring landowner is prepared to join forces and allow the footpath (the aspirational multi user route) to be diverted into his / her field part way so that the public by-pass our busy farm units.'

'I think that the access package will have to sit outside the tier system. I have done all I wanted to in the former scheme and I can't really envisage formally joining the new tier

scheme. There will be lots of people like me with small acreages of land very willing to give access and biodiversity a go.'

'We are very willing to participate but in permissive access creation not permanent creation, willingness therefore qualified that the scheme should allow for permissive path creation plus the inclusion of access improvements, suggested biodiversity measures and annual maintenance (including existing rights of way). Schemes do need regular review – perhaps ten-year plans.'

'We have never been involved with countryside stewardship so we don't know anything about schemes tiered or otherwise and have no view on it.' Comment - their engagement with the aspirational routes and willingness in suggesting other routes that could be upgraded for multi-use indicated a willingness to enter a simple stand-alone scheme that could deal with the project and from which they could derive some benefit (i.e. improvements to surfaces, drainage and improved gate furniture).

'I think that the access and biodiversity scheme should be a stand-alone option outside the tier system so that a landowner or a group of landowners could go into it if they wanted to or were asked to by the community. Pushing everyone into the same mould (scheme) doesn't work, there are parts that you are driven to do (by being in scheme) that you don't want to' (such as being forced into set aside and the type / frequency of hedge cutting). I am willing, ultimately, to enter an access and biodiversity scheme.'

'We are very keen to see a simple 'go to' scheme. Such a scheme would encourage busy farmers to get involved. Access is usually a very local issue requiring a lot of collaboration by holding owners. This would not sit well in a tiered system and be over complicated. Access should be a 'bolt on' scheme that any landowner can engage with. We are very willing to participate people are very important to the livery business but not to the farm so the reward to the dairy farm for the route and its impact would need to be the incentive.'

'It seems obvious to us that an access and biodiversity scheme should stand alone as a 'go to' scheme which all landowners and land managers whatever their holding size can access. Delivery only through a proposed tier system or named scheme is a barrier in itself because landowners with smaller plots might not want to enter the scheme or be eligible. As a public facing access Charity ourselves, we think it is vital that everyone can join in if they want to and there is a danger of really good schemes failing through not drawing in that last person. Perhaps landowners of larger holdings could act as a conduit for smaller holding owners, making sure that they are not alone or isolated and that last link they can offer is vital and appreciated.

'I don't think that an access and biodiversity scheme will fit inside the proposed tier system. Some people will be very happy to fall in with (for example) the creation of a long-distance path but if it is in a certain tier they might be put off if they did not want to engage with the other requirements in that tier, they need to be able to say 'I can do this or that'. There needs to be some negotiation to help everyone move forward, a recognition that people need options.'

‘As I am not in a countryside stewardship scheme (I am not a farmer) I have no understanding of a ‘tier’ system. I can’t comprehend how access can possibly work inside a 3-tiered approach given the need for facilitation and collaboration. Access needs to be in tier one available to all participants (if in a tier at all) and also grant money must be available outside the tier scheme as there would be other non-farming landowners like me that will not be in the scheme but would want and need to engage with access creation and improvements.’

‘I think that an access scheme containing all the elements of creating access rights, improvements and biodiversity enhancements should be available outside a rigid tier system because every scheme will be different and have its own merits. I am willing to participate subject to the scheme being carefully thought through as ‘the more you think about it, the bigger the pothole.’

‘We agree that an access and biodiversity scheme of the type proposed and the wide range of people and holdings that will need to participate and collaborate do not fit into a tiered system, whatever the tiers are going to be called. You can’t lump all these individual schemes together especially where (as now) one scheme competes with another, you are allowed to do this or that in one scheme but not in another. Suppose you got part of the way on and then the whole thing was completely bugged up by a participant being in the wrong tier? In fact, an access and biodiversity scheme could probably have a tiered structure all of its own given the number of collaborative schemes and variables that you could have. Clearly delivering a route over two holdings is completely different to delivering a cross-country long-distance trail. We are willing to participate in an access and biodiversity scheme.’

‘I don’t think that ‘pigeon holing’ all these elements into a rigid tier system will work and that will have an adverse effect, actually preventing wider collaboration. Access and biodiversity affect everyone and should be available for everyone to get involved with, the company is very willing to participate and that includes participating in a pilot scheme.’

‘The access and biodiversity creation and improvement package obviously need to be available to everyone inside ELMs in every tier available to all and also available externally to anyone who is not in ELMs but wanted to provide access or to collaborate in a scheme. We are willing to participate.’

‘Considering my own experience of HLS countryside stewardship schemes, I don’t think that a tier system will be flexible enough to cope with all the variables of collaboration, access route types and potential participants, it needs to be easy to get everyone involved. I am willing to participate.’

‘I think that an ELMs access & biodiversity scheme should be open to all landowners. Our organisation is interested and very willing to participate in such a scheme with regard to access and biodiversity improvements and maintenance but with concerns and reservations regarding the proposed aspirational route - but we would consider collaborating on a route if other landowners proposed such a scheme.’

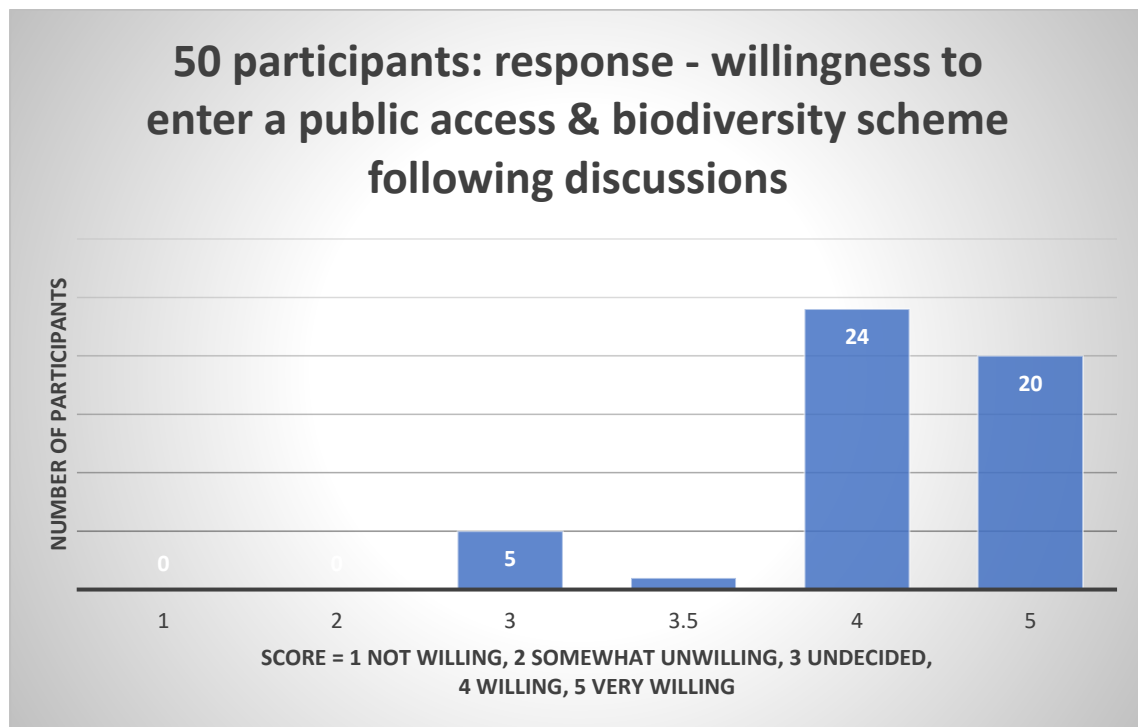
'We are very familiar with countryside stewardship schemes, but cannot see how an access and biodiversity scheme, under which creation and improvements would be undertaken, and in many instances would require collaborative working across holdings, could function inside the tiered system. Therefore, the scheme should be a stand-alone scheme that all landowners and land managers can enter as they wish.'

'Everyone should be required to do at least the minimum amount. The public will obviously want a set of minimum standards to be complied with whether that's food or access and that should all feature in tier one of the ELM scheme. The rest of the tier system is far too rigid for an access and biodiversity scheme that will need to involve many different types of landowners and holding sizes and therefore should be outside the tier system as a stand-alone package. I am very willing to participate.'

'We think that access and associated biodiversity can work both within and outside the tier system. Access and biodiversity development, capital works and maintenance should be available to all in tier one – thereby covering provision of access by single holdings or organisations. Collaborative network projects could be in tier 2. However, clearly participants outside ELM and exclusive of any tier arrangement will need an avenue in since access routes cross all types of land and size of holdings. Therefore – there also needs to be an external scheme element available to any landholder who might not be in the tier system.'

'I think that the scheme should be easy to administer, accessible to all and simple to understand, with each tier having a decent reward - no making tier one a poor reward tier. In theory access and biodiversity, along with collaboration, could be split between tiers, in practice it wouldn't work - due to the need for collaboration across land holdings and with land owners of small parcels of land, who would be outside the scheme (reference to the five-hectare bar to the Basic Payment Scheme). I agree with the tier system approach and consider that the access scheme should be in tier one accessible to all and that there should be a grant system outside the tier system to cover rewards for landowners outside the scheme where routes crossed small parcels of land.'

6.2 How willing are the 50 test area landowners and land managers to participate in an access and biodiversity ELM scheme following discussions?



**RESULT:** 45 (90%) participants are willing or very willing to enter an access and biodiversity scheme in ELM, 10% undecided, 0% unwilling.

**WILLINGNESS POSITIVITY RESULT AVERAGE = 4.3 / 5 (WILLING)**

Final participants' comments

'The estate is very willing to participate in an access and biodiversity scheme. Across the whole estate public access and protection of the environment is at the forefront of our minds, this ELMs proposal sits very favourably with that strategy.'

'The company is willing to get involved following this discussion. These proposals for access and biodiversity really sit with our social contract core values of providing for access, recreation and biodiversity on our land. It has been really useful to think about and discuss trail creation and really nice to get out too.'

'I am willing to participate in an access scheme. My only reservation about access being that it really does need tidying up, there are fields with multiple footpaths that no-one uses.'

'I hope that future schemes will be better than current schemes - 'lighter touch' and not disadvantage farmers doing their best to balance the needs of the public and stock welfare as well as trying to earn a living. I am willing to enter an access and biodiversity scheme but participation has to be worthwhile not just based on income foregone.'

'It would be good if access schemes involving long linear routes and circuits could look at upgrading and diverting routes from the centre of fields to boundaries through a simple

application process that assesses the advantages for everyone and would ensure success. I think that the questionnaire and the interview was very straightforward and the concept of an access and biodiversity scheme is a very good idea.'

'I am very willing to participate in an access and biodiversity scheme subject to the rewards being sufficient. But I am concerned about the future of farming. Food production is not even mentioned in ELMs. I regard this as a very serious omission. The majority of farms will make a loss if there is no basic farm payment to support the production of low-cost food to the consumer. Profit and loss impact on organisations differently depending on whether registered as a limited company or a sole trader or partnership. Limited company profit, including salaries, is calculated after all drawings. Self-employed farmers suffer disproportionately in this regime as their profit and loss is calculated before any monies are accrued to them. This is unfair and should be recognised by DEFRA and something done about it to level up.'

'We must not forget the need to produce food, the scheme needs to ensure the sustainability of economical food production that is not damaging. It's no good having an amazing biodiverse environment if we are importing food and causing damage elsewhere.'

'Will there be an educational element to ELMs which will feature farm and educational visits?'

'I am happy to consider anything, I will make my own individual decision with my livestock being top priority.'

'We bought the land with the purpose of improving wildlife and habitat, any increase in access is counter-productive to this aim. We are bruised by and do not trust the current legislation around rights of way there are better aspirational routes on the Mendips to be focusing on.'

'Recognition of and rewarding small works, undertaken by individuals, that all add up to help the bigger picture is important. I planted a small wood but just because it didn't fit exactly with the scheme, I was unable to claim any compensation.'

'I accept access is beneficial but strongly feel that routes should be suitable for modern day use and the large increase managed. It should be much easier to divert routes to aid our tenants who lamb and calve animals on their land. An upgraded route will substantially increase the number of users. I am concerned with increased liability, containment and correct route location.'

'ELM needs to be like a jigsaw where you can pick which public goods you buy into and where on your holding. To make it worthwhile actual payments have to be enough along with a guarantee of getting in and not being told the money has run out.'

'I have four areas of high concern. Parking – increasing numbers of visitors arriving by car needing parking facilities, dangers of and coping with ash die back disease – especially along the road side, dangers of rock fall, increasing danger posed to walkers (who are the largest user group) by mountain bikers cycling on footpaths. How will these be addressed?'



‘We just want to be helpful!’ (Participants with the maximum positive / willingness score).

‘Thanks for your time in doing this survey. So, let’s hope it does some good especially for the horse-riders.’

‘It’s so nice to have two people land on our doorstep enthusing about access in ELMs, this might help us agree to let people across our land!’

‘The partnership is willing to participate and we are sorry again that we couldn’t think of a way to make the aspirational route work, because kids especially need to be got off the roads.’

Throughout the discussion worries about the future were aired and questions asked about why there was such limited focus on the need to produce food and the need to make a profit from the production of food. The situation here was compared to New Zealand where there had been farm subsidy and cheap food and now no subsidies and food was very expensive. ‘We have real worries about the future of farming in Britain and how our grandchildren will cope.’

‘Solar – can there be an inducement for solar farm development – on farm building rooves in particular through ELM?’

The interviewer said ‘this was a great test case where the farming husband was all about the business, recapturing the loss of Basic Farm Payment and what reward he could obtain, balanced by the fact that they currently have no access across their land and any disruption to the cows. On the other hand, the wife with her livery stables business could see the benefits but had very strong opinions on the route location, benefits and opportunities. Even though they enjoy the benefits of NO access at the moment and the proposed route went straight through a new building not shown on the map they were still happy to work with us.’

‘We both agree that participation in the test has been really interesting and informative. We would be keen to take part in a national pilot if there was an opportunity to do that.’

‘The scheme should allow for realignments and some trade-offs, if landowners created multi user ‘preferred paths’ then some of the multiple footpaths criss-crossing some fields could be closed. The estate’s experience in Dorchester is that a number of really good footpaths had been created but it was almost impossible to close some of the little used existing footpaths due to professional objectors and it’s all taking years, we have ended up with double the number of paths. We are very aware of the loss of the basic single payment to the tenants. A full- time natural capital advisor has been appointed who is visiting the estate farms carrying out a natural capital audit of the current situation, creating a picture, assessing potential conditions to try and position the estate for the future. The management wants to get to net zero carbon quickly, ELMs could chime with that.’

‘I was keen to take part in the test because it’s important to be in the vanguard, not left in the Guards Van – knowledge is king!’

‘There is a real need to be flexible, as a scheme progresses things change, you might want to add options like allowing people to paddle in a stream or provide a picnic table in a shady corner. This all needs to be thought about and allowed for.’

‘We really welcome people to the farm and onto the land but there needs to be a much higher standard of education, behaviour and understanding of the farmers’ and animals’ needs.’

‘We think that ELMs presents a great opportunity to enhance biodiversity, fund the critical ecological recovery and to enhance public health and well - being and to educate users. The organisation that we represent is very willing to engage. The primary aim is wildlife conservation but ELMs is seen as a critical avenue to nature recovery and public education, health and engagement through access.’

‘Farmers farm for profit - care should be taken not to turn them into a dying breed. I thought this test was manageable and understandable and obviously not written by DEFRA!’

### **6.3 KEY QUESTION for the ELMs 159 Test to answer**

Is there a variation in overall willingness to create, enhance or maintain access, to deliver environmental outcomes and participation of countryside stewardship schemes between owners and managers of land holdings of differing acreages, land uses and proximity to large conurbations? Does the approach need to be tailored accordingly?

### **RESULT: NO – no obvious variations in overall willingness**

Aggregated end of interview score compared - experiences of current access, willingness to create aspirational route, enhance biodiversity, collaborate to create, collaborate to improve, final enter scheme.

All scores - **5 is very positive / willing**, 3 is neutral / undecided. 1 is very negative / very unwilling.

In addition, holdings close to the larger conurbations of Weston-Super-Mare, Axbridge, Cheddar, Wells, Wrington and Winscombe were evenly spread through the results.

TABLE: Final results comparison of holding size, mission, primary and secondary purpose and current Countryside Stewardship Scheme participation.

<b>Age</b>	<b>Holdin g Size</b>	<b>Mission</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>In CSS</b>	<b>Final willingness score / 30</b>
34	1000+	Multi - faceted	Mixed Farm	Sub-letting, Employment, Field sport	YES	30
60	1000+	Agriculture	Dairy	Beef/sheep	NO	29
60	50-250	Wildlife / biodiversity	Lowland grazing livestock	None	NO	29
Not given	1000+	Mineral Extraction	Industrial / commercial	Agriculture let, woodland	YES	29

55	250-500	Agriculture	Lowland grazing livestock	Slaughterhouse	YES	29
82 / 81	1000+	Agriculture	Dairy	Sheep	NO	29
55	50-250	Agriculture	Lowland grazing livestock	Tourism, Employment, equestrian,	YES	28
47	0-50	Letting	Small holding	Equestrian	NO	28
43	1000+	Agriculture	Dairy	Multi-faceted	YES	28
38 / 47	1000+	Landscape	Conservation	Sub-letting, Land let, events	YES	28
75 / 55	50-250	Agriculture	General Cropping	Equestrian	YES	28
38	50-250	Agriculture	Lowland grazing livestock	Plant hire / contracting	NO	27
48	50-250	Agriculture	Lowland grazing livestock	Equestrian	YES	27
Not given	1000+	Food Production	Dairy	Cheese / contracting	YES	27
Not given	0-50	Government	Conservation	None	YES	27
59 / 43	250-500	Other	People / livestock	Tourism, sales	NO	27
31	1000+	Government Agency	Commercial forestry	Conservation, public access and recreation	NO	27
46	1000+	Wildlife / biodiversity	Nature restoration	Connecting people with nature	YES	26
65	0-50	Other	Small holding	Tourism, equestrian	NO	26
70	50-250	Agriculture	Mixed Farm	Councillor, surveyor	YES	26
63 / 59	50-250	Agriculture	Dairy	Licensing	YES	26
31	250-500	Wildlife / biodiversity	Tourism / Commercial	Environmental	YES	26
65/70	1000+	Agriculture	Lowland grazing livestock	Field Sport / Woodland Conservation	YES	25
40	250-500	Agriculture	Lowland grazing livestock	Solar	YES	25
65	1000+	Landscape	Lowland grazing livestock	Field Sport	YES	24.5
55	250-500	Agriculture	Dairy	None	YES	24

51	0-50	Wildlife / biodiversity	Conservation	Connecting people with nature	YES	24
47	250-500	Agriculture	Mixed Farm	Business & residential lets, equine feeds	NO	24
72	50-250	Agriculture	Dairy	Lowland grazing livestock	NO	24
53	250-500	Agriculture	Mixed Farm	Equestrian, wine, tourism	NO	24
Not given	1000+	Utility	Water delivery	Recreation	NO	24
67	50-250	Agriculture	Lowland grazing livestock	Property let	NO	23
45	500-1000	Agriculture	Lowland grazing livestock	Tourism	YES	23
50	50-250	Agriculture	Lowland grazing livestock	Orchards, Solar Fm, letting, contracting, relief milking	NO	23
65	250-500	Food Production	Lowland grazing livestock	Equestrian, Councillor	YES	22.5
56	250-500	Other	Multi-faceted	Multi-faceted	NO	22
83	250-500	Agriculture	Lowland grazing livestock	Sub-letting, Contracting, shoot, industrial units,	NO	22
57/56	500-1000	Agriculture	Dairy	Sheep, Tourism	YES	22
47 / 48	250-500	Agriculture	Dairy	Equestrian	YES	22
42	500-1000	Agriculture	Lowland grazing livestock	Sub letting	YES	21.5
58	50-250	Agriculture	Poultry	Mixed farming	NO	21
30	250-500	Agriculture	Mixed Farm	Sub-letting, Development, Contracting	NO	21
51	0-50	Other	Equestrian	Tack shop / livery	NO	21
61	1000+	Other	Investment	Investment / initiatives	YES	20
57	1000+	Other	Industrial / commercial	Mixed farming, tenants	NO	19
56	50-250	Agriculture	Lowland grazing livestock	Sub letting	NO	19

52	50-250	Agriculture	Lowland grazing livestock	Builder	NO	18.5
66/67	50-250	Other	Lowland grazing livestock	Conservation	YES	18
Not given	500-1000	Ministry	Military operations	Sublet /Conservation	YES	18
46	250-500	Agriculture	Mixed Farm	Sub-letting	NO	17

