

The Rural Access Committee of
Kinross-shire & Glenfarg
Visitor Survey 2023

"Opening doors to the countryside today for our children's future tomorrow"

Introduction

Opened in 2008, The Loch Leven Heritage Trail initially provided a 13km path running clockwise around the eastern shore of Loch Leven from Kinross to RSPB Loch Leven. In April 2014, following years of work and development by the Rural Access Committee for Kinross-shire (TRACKS) and its various partners, the final section of the trail was opened. The result is a trail which completes a full circuit of the Loch, approximately 21km in length, joining Kinross and RSPB Loch Leven along the eastern and western shores of the Loch.

In 2023, the Rural Access Committee for Kinross-shire (TRACKS) and its various partners completed phase 1 of the plan to upgrade and repair the trail, returning it to its 'access for all' standard.

The trail is used by walkers, runners, dog walkers, horse riders, cyclists and wheelchair users from the local area and further afield. A series of heritage art works were installed around the trail and the [TRACKS website](#) gives trail visitors the opportunity to plan their visit and learn more about the sites and heritage.

TRACKS has completed this survey in collaboration with: Perth and Kinross Council, RSPB Loch Leven and Nature Scot.

This report has been compiled by Alex Reily, Voluntary Marketing Manager for TRACKS.

Survey of Visitors

A total of 510 submissions were recorded as part of this survey. The last survey in 2015 recorded 232 responses.

Responses were collected via the TRACKS website and TRACKS facebook page, with additional promotion being carried out in the Kinross Newsletter.

Objectives

TRACKS and its partners have previously worked with Scotinform (2009, 2011 and 2015) to conduct visitor surveys that highlighted the number, profile and impact of trail visitors to Loch Leven and the local community.

Specific objectives associated with this visitor survey were to:

- provide a profile of the visitors to the trail and an overall estimate of visitor numbers
- establish how visitors use the trail
- establish satisfaction levels with the visitor experience
- establish visitor expenditure whilst on the trail

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Count of Visitors

The TRACKS Project Officer, Nick Mainprize, has carried out spot checks of visitor use of the trail in line with this survey.

Based on this data estimates have been calculated on the total number of people visiting the trail during 2023.

In order to calculate these figures assumptions have been made on the average number of daylight hours during the research period. It should be highlighted that these figures are indicative and that in order to obtain 100% accuracy a large-scale visitor count would need to be undertaken. The figures in the table below are based on the following calculations:

- average number of visitors per hour x average number of daylight hours = average number of visitors per day.
- These parameters match those set in the 2014 -2015 survey.

Based on visitor counts it is estimated that the trail may have received in the region of 314,860 visitors in 2023. In 2014/15 a survey using the same method calculated a visitor number of 208,572.

Visitor Calculations

Research year	Avg. visitors per hour	Avg. daylight hours	Est. visitors per day	Est. visitors per year
2023	74	11.7	865	314,860
2014/15	49	11.7	573	208,572
2011	41	12.6	517	188,188
2009	24	12.0	310	112,840

Visitor count figures/by visitor survey

	2009	2011	2014/15	2023
	Figures shown as percentages (%)			
Pedestrians*	79	90	63	76
(Walkers)	(62)	(82)	(46)	(46)
(Dogs/Dog walkers)	(15)	(8)	(14)	(26)
(Runners)	(2)	(0)	(3)	(4)
Cyclists	21	10	34	22
Disabled	0.4	0.2	0.3	2
Horse riders	0	0	0.3	0

*Pedestrians includes walkers, dog walkers, runners.

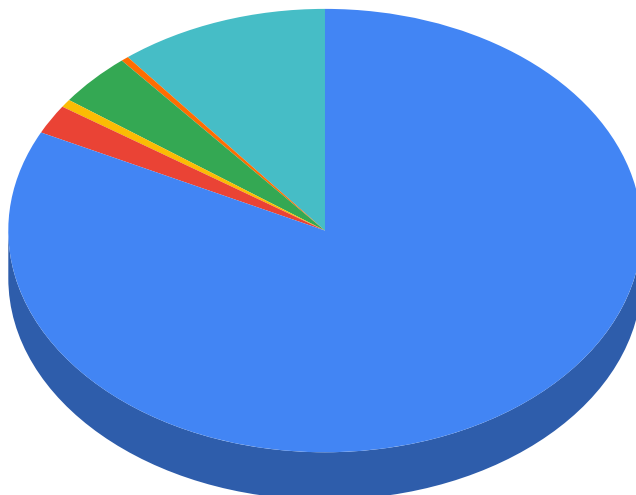
Next Steps

The results of the survey will be used by TRACKS to help support future funding applications for repairing and upgrading the Trail and the paths linking it to the communities around the Loch. Our partners will also use the results of the survey to help plan any changes to the infrastructure around the Loch.

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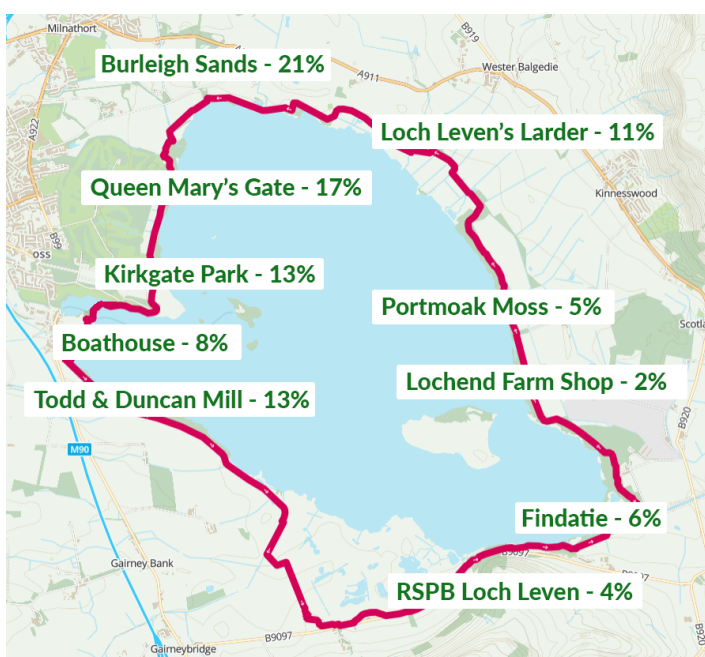
Which of the following best describes you?



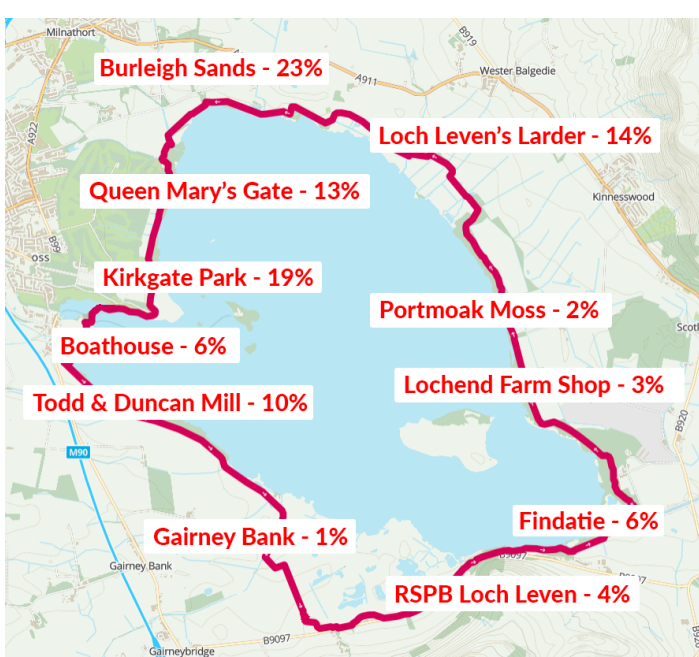
- **Local resident** ● **Day Tripper** ● **Tourist** ● **Visiting family or friends**
- **Working locally** ● **Visitor from the surrounding area**

Which access point did you use to enter and exit the trail?

Enter

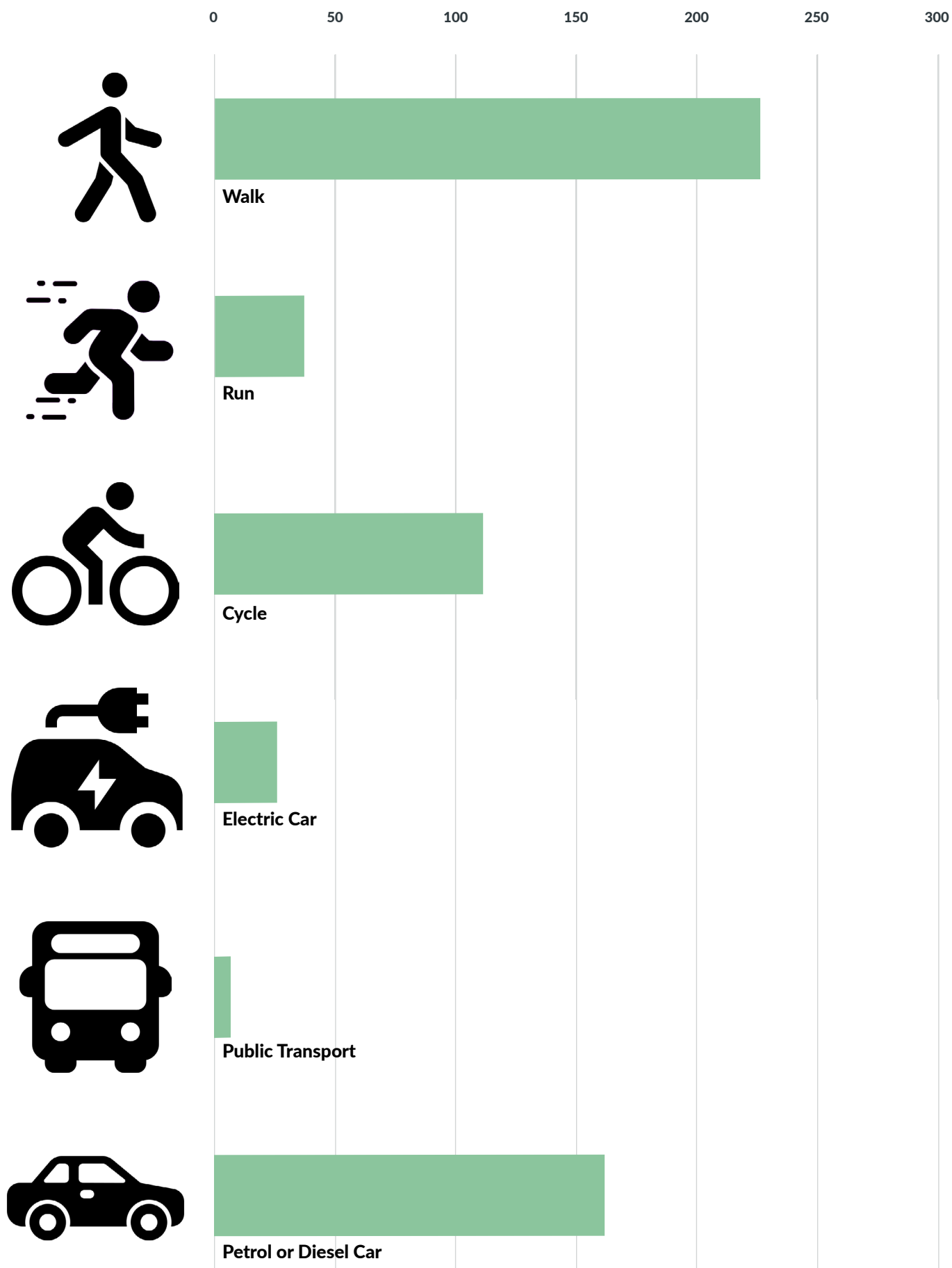


Exit



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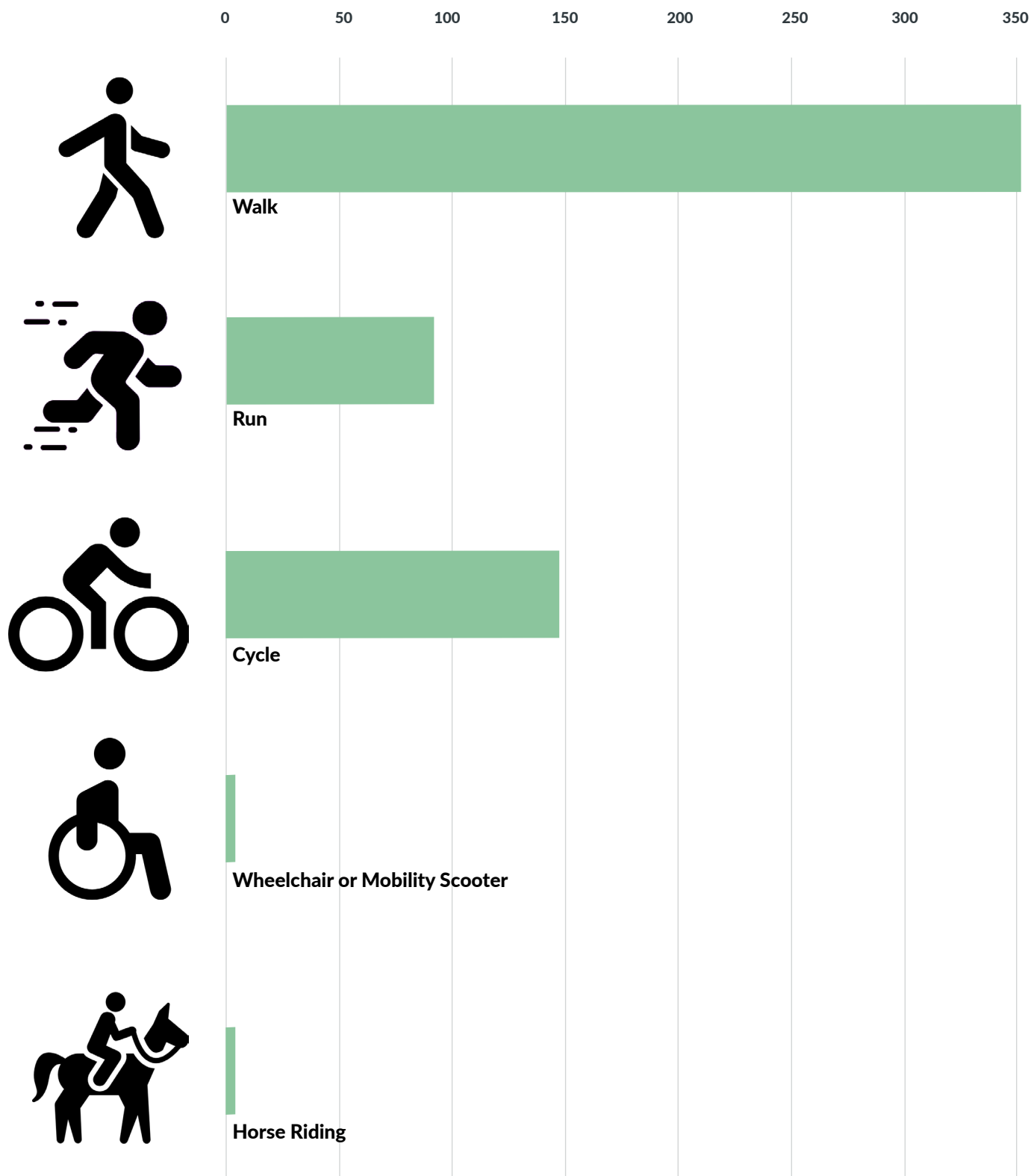
How do you travel to the Loch Leven Heritage Trail?



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How do you travel around the Loch Leven Heritage Trail?

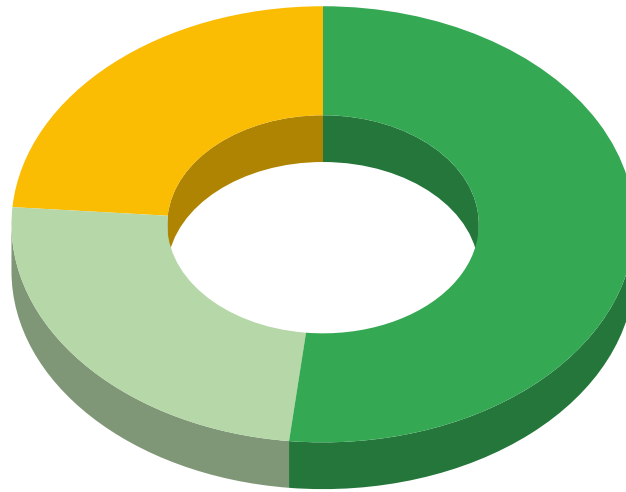


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How long did you spend on the Loch Leven Heritage Trail?

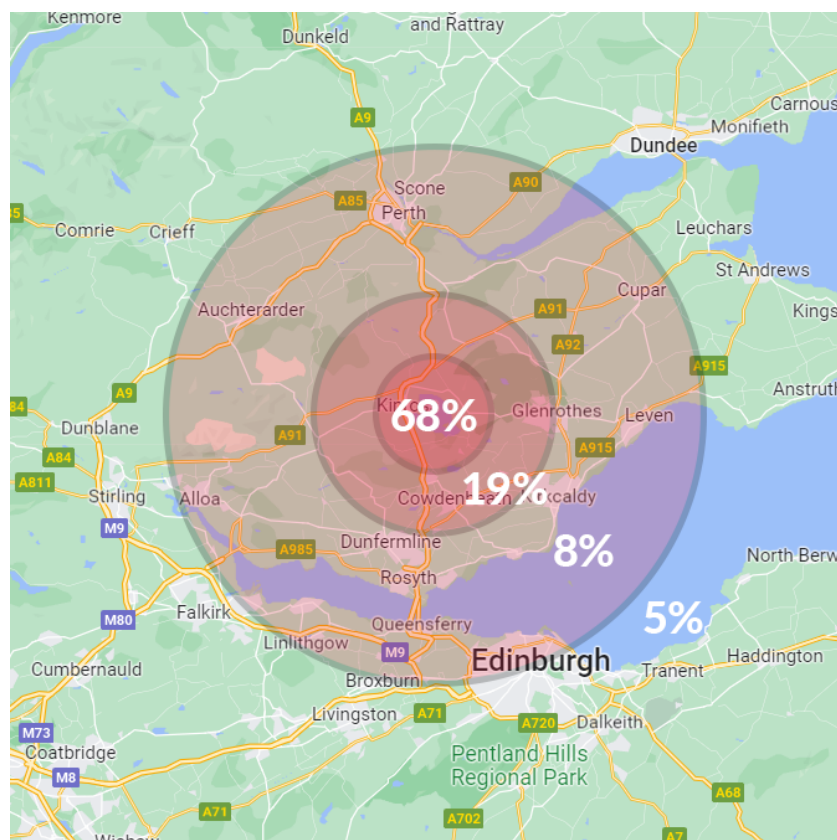
77% of visitors spend more than an hour enjoying the trail.



● Up to an Hour ● 1-2 Hours ● More than 2 Hours

How far did you travel to access the Heritage Trail?

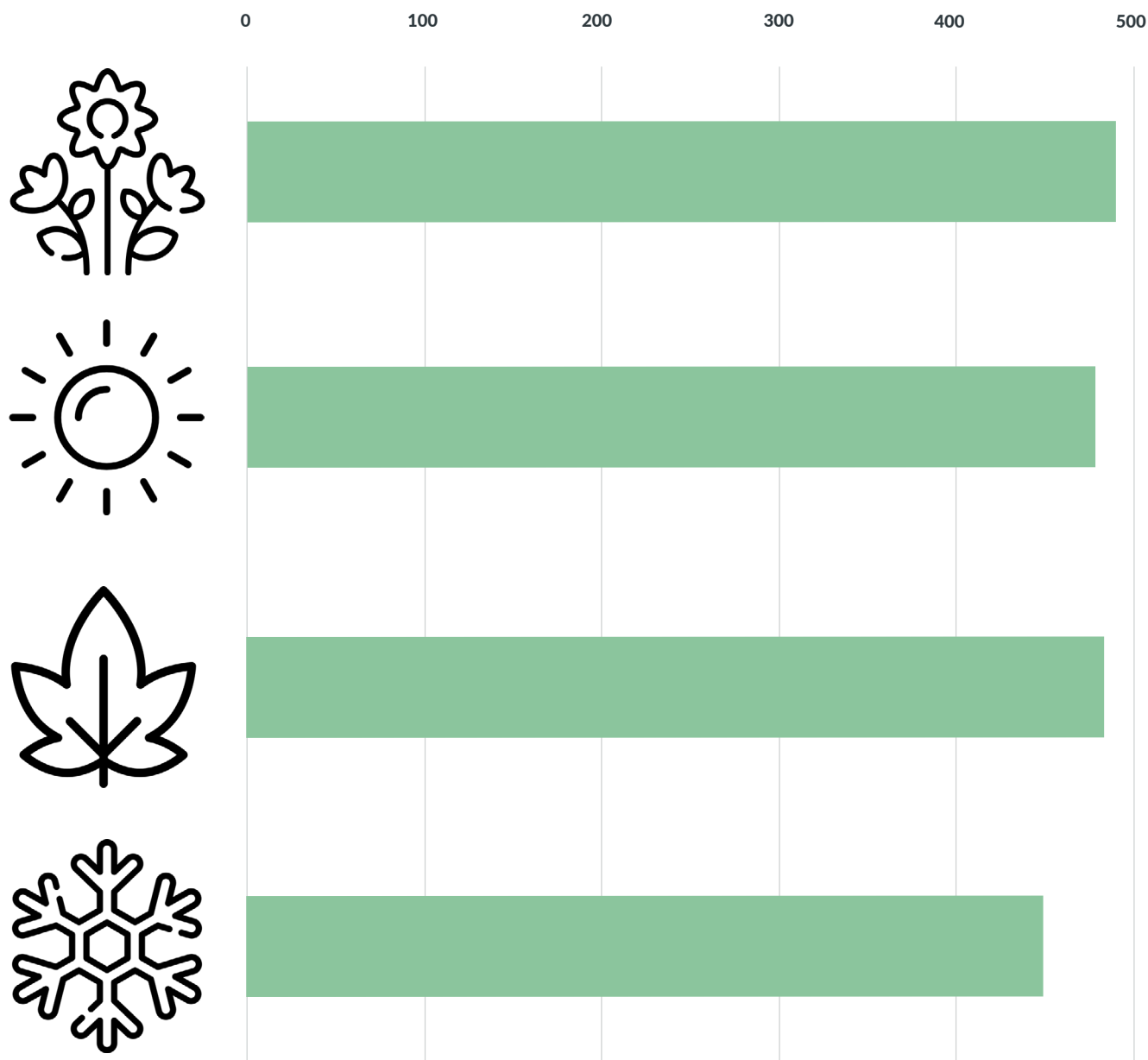
77% of visitors surveyed travelled less than 10 miles to visit the Loch Leven Heritage Trail.



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In which seasons do you visit the Loch Leven Heritage Trail?



"I avoid the loch in summer because of the risk from blue green algae."

"I much prefer using the trail during the winter months as it is less busy."

"I avoid the zig zag section coming towards Kinross in the winter as it still floods easily."

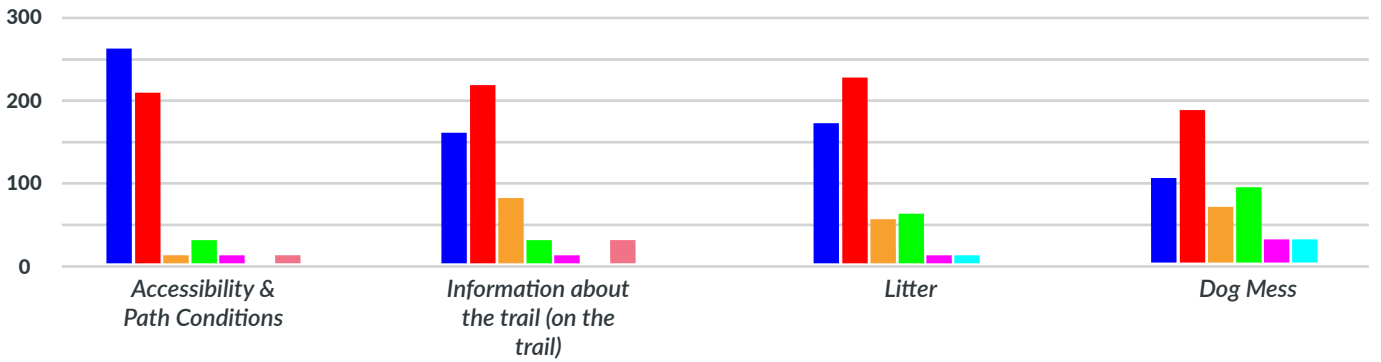
"Flooding during the winter at Findatie, Turfit and SW area is quite bad and severely restricts movement, even when wearing winter boots."



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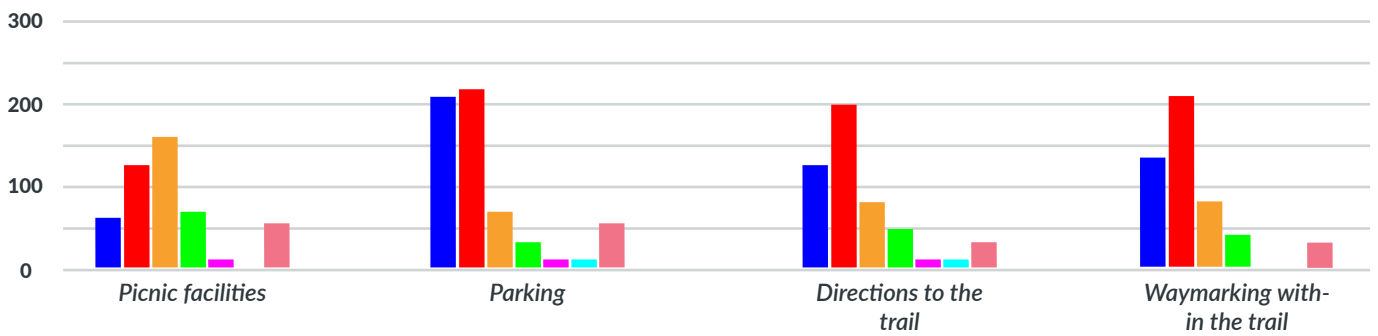
Please rate the following.

● Very Good, ● Good, ● Neutral/Not Sure, ● Could be Better, ● Poor, ● Very Poor, ● Not Applicable



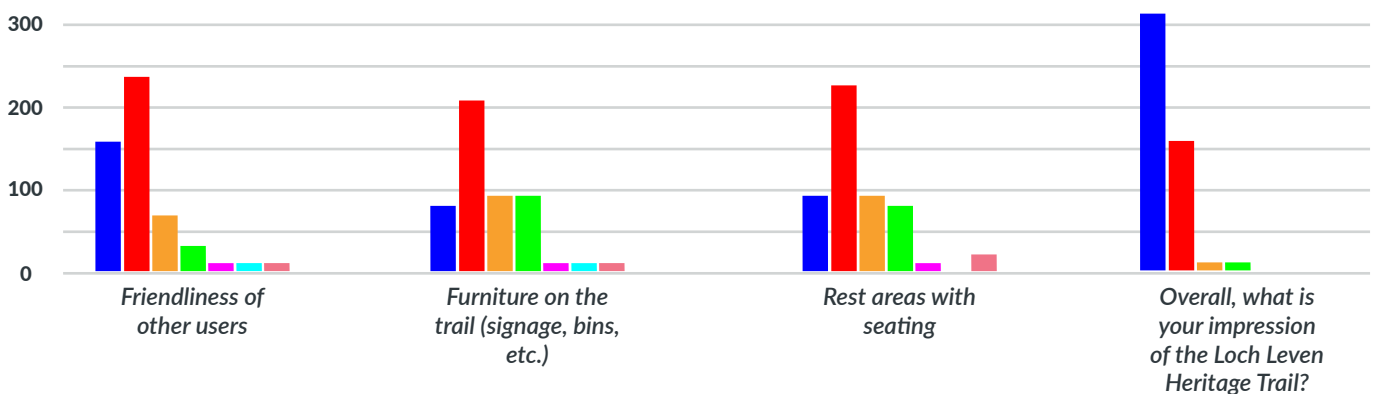
"I just think that the Heritage Trail has really been tranformative for Kinross and Milnathort."

"Some areas narrow with encroaching vegetation. Other areas very rough which makes cycling uncomfortable."



"The track makes kinross an amazing place to live."

"Camping should not be allowed - I have cleaned up more than one abandoned 'wild' campsite."



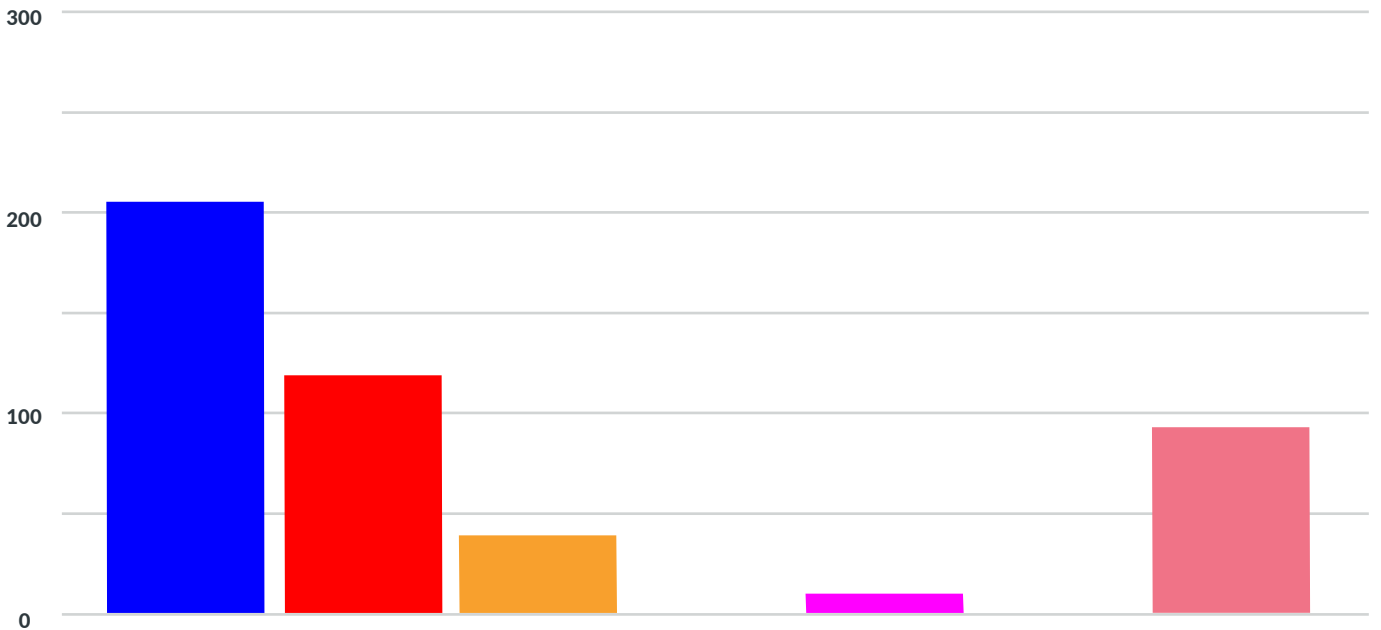
"It is a wonderful asset to the area and I really enjoy walking and cycling."

"Need more litter bins around trail."

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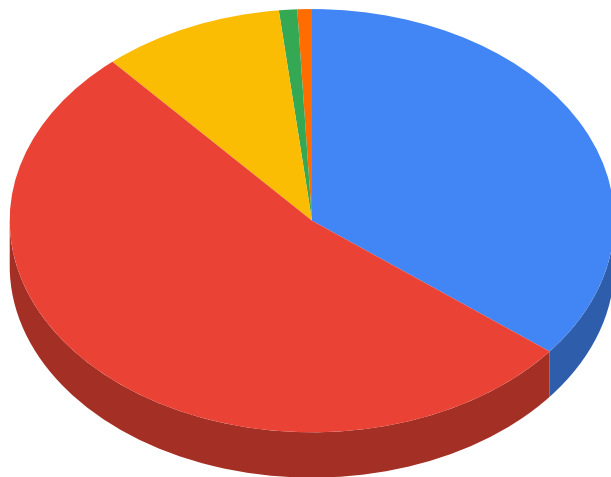
Please rate the following.

● Very Good, ● Good, ● Neutral/Not Sure, ● Could be Better, ● Poor, ● Very Poor, ● Not Applicable



If you have made use of the newly upgraded and repaired section of the Loch Leven Heritage Trail, which runs between Kirkgate Park and Pow Burn (near Loch Leven's Larder), since the works were completed; please rate the quality of the works.

When you last visited the Trail, how large was the group you visited with?



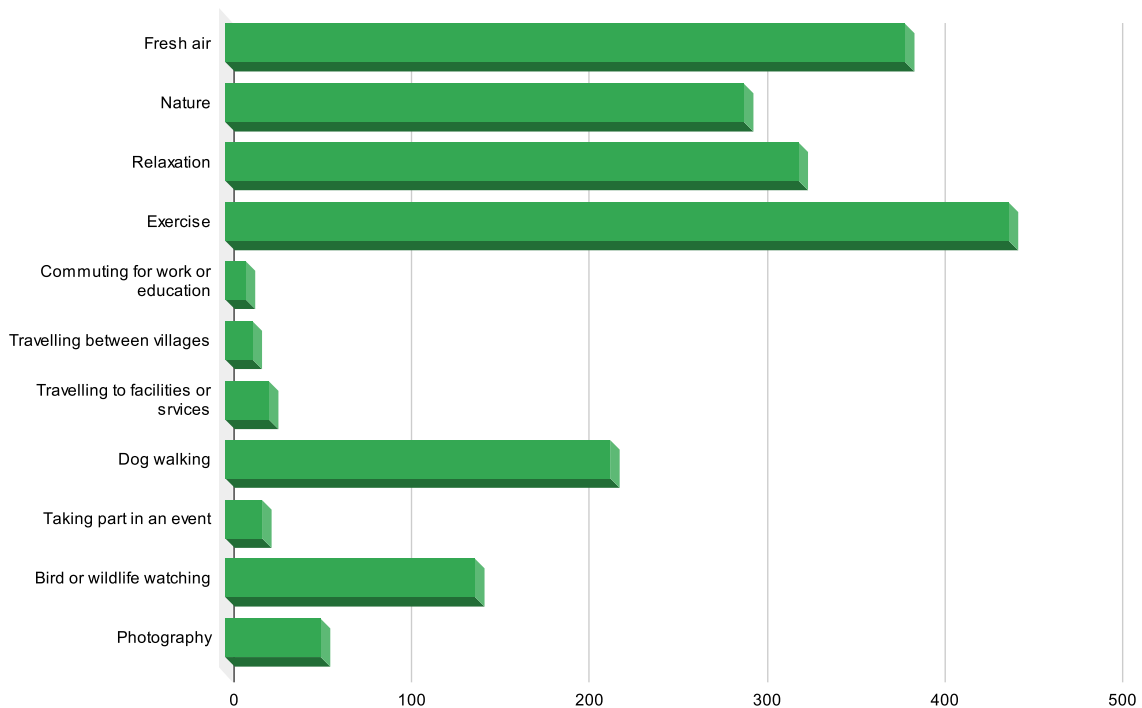
● Just me ● 2-3 ● 4-10 ● 11-20 ● 21+

Two thirds of survey respondents visit the trail with one or more other person.

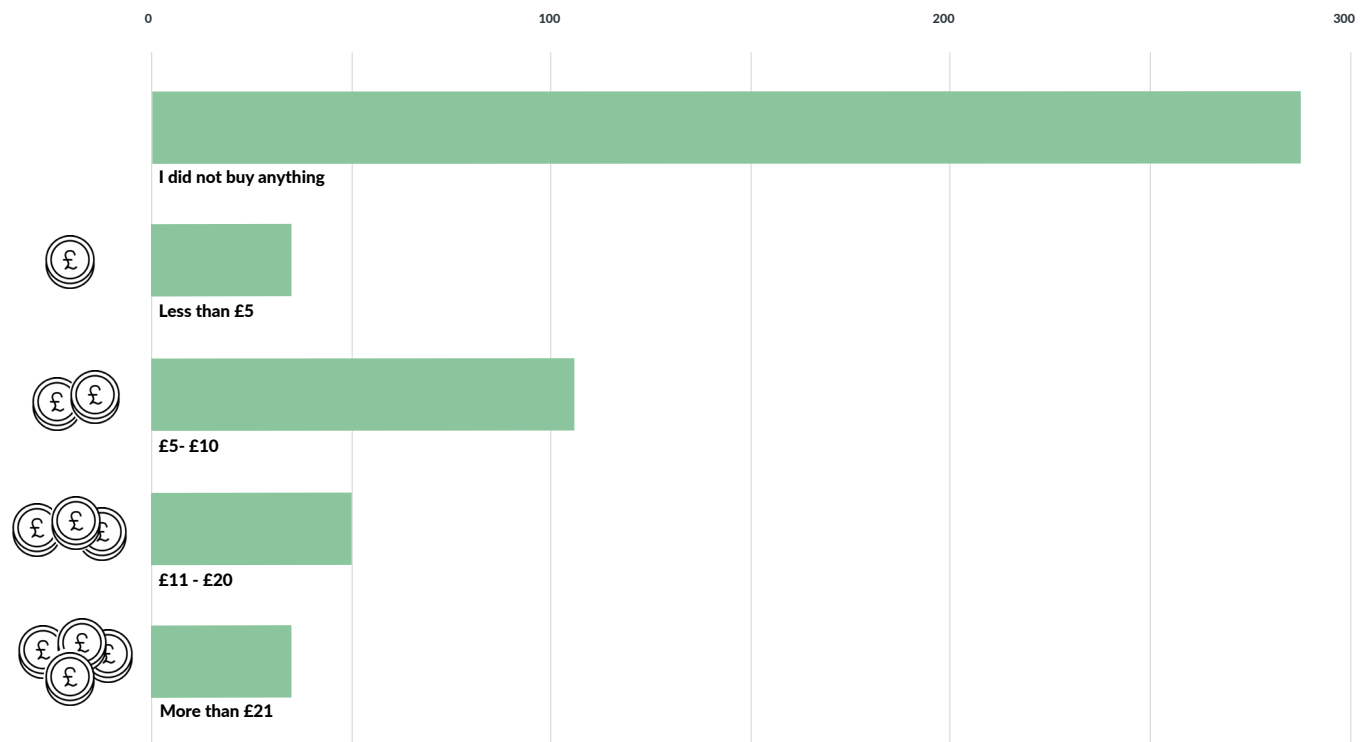
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What were your motivations for accessing the Loch Leven Heritage Trail?



When last visiting the Trail how much did you spend per person in the local area at cafes, shops, etc?



Over a third of survey respondents spent £5 or more in the local area when visiting the trail.

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Please enter any further observations here.

Positive Comments



"It's a great facility and we need to look after it for all to enjoy."

"It is a wonderful asset to the area and I really enjoy walking and cycling. A cafe at the pier would be good. Glad there is now a link to Lochend Farm Shop"

"We're so lucky to have it and wonderful to see it so well used. Thank you to the whole TRACKS team for all you do!"

"It is a huge part of our life living near the trail. It is a massive benefit to the community as somewhere enjoy and exercise and also as a draw for tourists and visitors to the area."

"I absolutely love the trail. We also love to tell our guests to come and enjoy the trail, especially the dog walking community."

Negative Comments



"Need more signage at Kirkgate for no overnight parking."

"Some of the cyclists use it as a speedway and can be very rude. There should be a speed limit for cyclists on the track."

"Paths could be wider. I used to cycle but too busy now with people with dogs off the lead."

"Sadly I have reduced access because I suspect the water has on occasion caused the dogs to be very ill."

"The stretch between the car auction and Vane Farm is really boring, how about adding a sculpture trail or something here?"

"The section between Todd and Duncan and the view point is impassable in winter/spring due to flooding. It needs a causeway."

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With thanks to our partners



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