

Rufford Abbey Country Park

Visitor Survey August 2016

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Part 1

Survey Aims & Objectives

Methodology

Sample Size & Location

Survey Aims & Objectives



This survey was commissioned by Nottinghamshire County Council's Country Park Service to gauge current visitor satisfaction at Rufford.

This is part of an annual programme of visitor insight research and includes:

- Demographic profile of visitors
- Frequency of visits
- Places visited once at the destination
- Specific insights into 'tourist' visitors
- Effectiveness of local promotion / visitor guides
- Assessment of service delivery perceptions
- Measurement of visitor satisfaction

Where possible comparisons will be drawn with previous surveys to identify improvement or decline but this will not be possible in all cases as survey questions and formats have changed over time.

Methodology



The survey took place over seven days from Monday 8th August – Sunday 14th August 2016.

It was conducted during August to mirror the dates of previous visitor surveys and to provide clearer year-on-year comparisons. (with the exception of 2015 which was conducted during the October half term)

The busy Robin Hood Festival week was avoided as this is not typical and brings thousands to visitors to the local area.

The survey was based on face-to-face interviews with visitors and two researchers were involved in the project.

Researchers used iPad tablet devices to quickly capture information. Questionnaires were programmed with icons, images, sliders and radio buttons to illustrate points and engage interviewees.

Methodology



The questionnaire consisted of 19 questions which were designed and agreed in advance with the Park Development Officer.

Surveys were timed and practiced in advance so that each could be completed in around 5 minutes. Researchers were given freedom to take more time if respondents wanted to take longer.

A site visit was conducted in advance of the survey to identify areas of greatest footfall and key locations where people would be most receptive and not in a hurry.

Researchers wore 'Park Survey Team' laminate badges on lanyards so that they were not mistaken for field sales or charity collection staff.

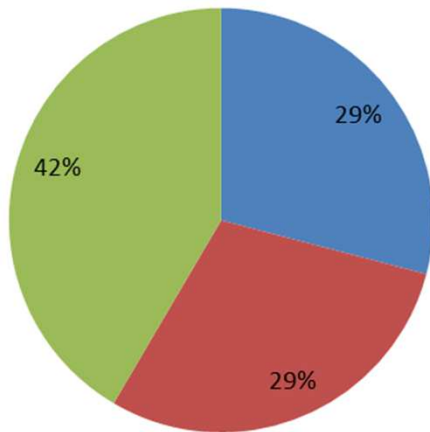
Weather permitting, researchers also wore 'Park Survey' T-shirts for the same reason.



Sample Size, Location & Time

Time of Interviews

■ Morning ■ Lunchtime ■ Afternoon



In total 337 parties were interviewed.

Surveys were conducted within three daytime segments as follows

- 98 in the mornings (10am - 12pm)
- 99 over lunchtimes (12pm – 2pm)
- 140 during the afternoon (2pm-4pm)

Afternoons were the most responsive and in-depth as many visitors had experienced the park facilities during the course of the day.



Part 2

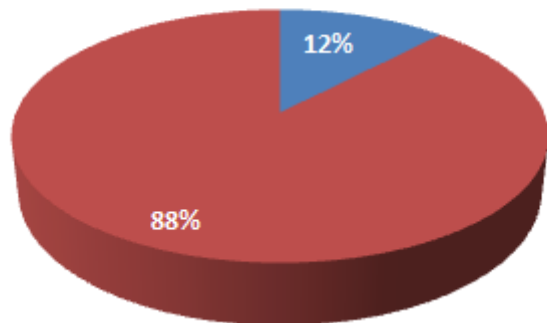
Visitor Characteristics



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Visitor Characteristics

Have you visited this country park before?



The vast majority of visitors (88%) have visited the park before. This is down from the last year (91%). In previous surveys this figure averages around 86%

Currently repeat visitors are at the highest level they have ever been since summer surveys began. But not as high as the 2015 autumn survey where visitors are less likely to be travelling long distances

The number of first time visitors remains around the 12% mark. This has been as high as 17% back in 2013.

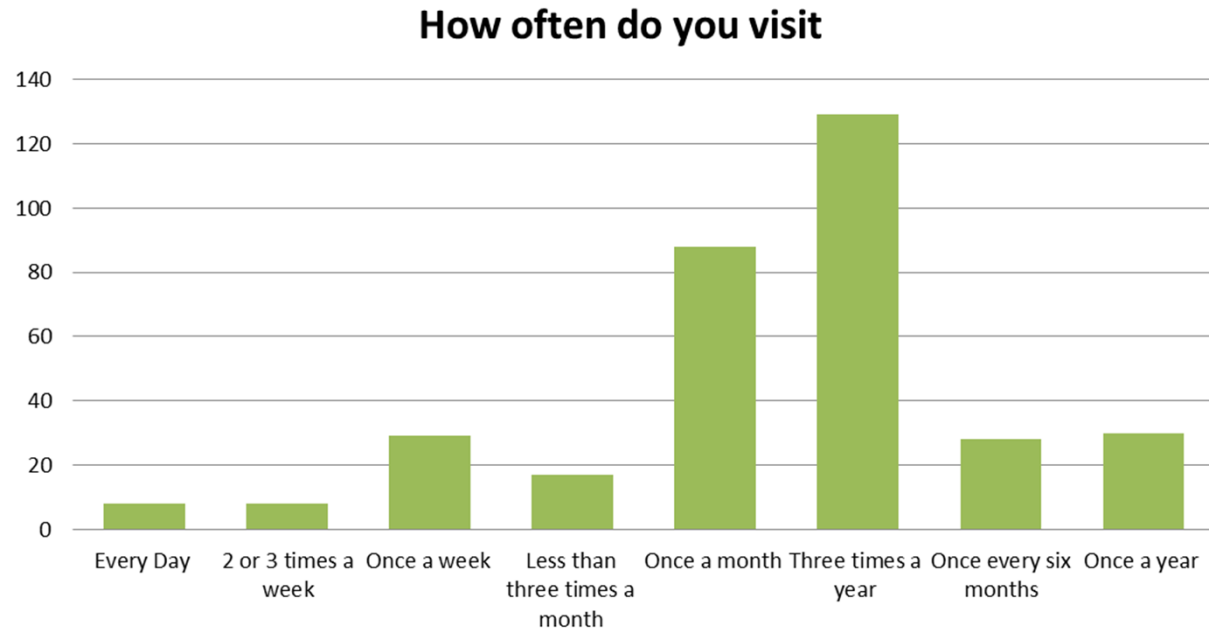
Frequency of Visits

Most people (38%) surveyed said they visited Rufford three times a year. This was also the top answer in the previous survey.

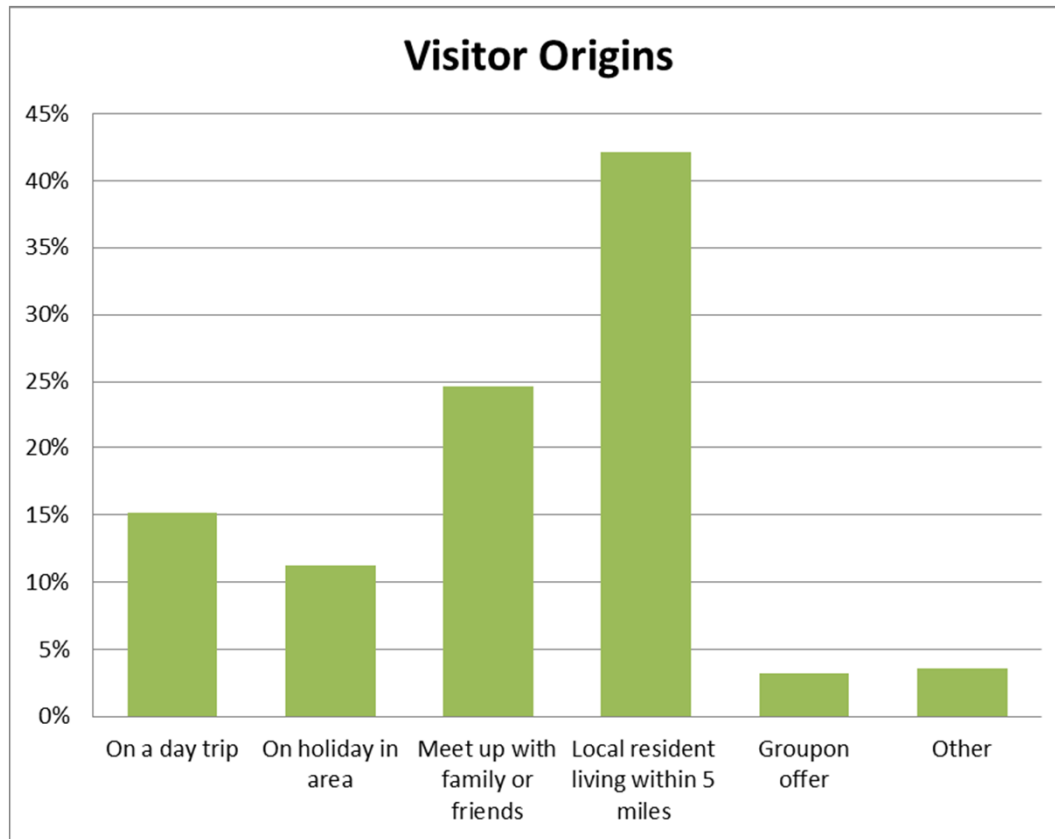
26% said they came back once a month.

More people are coming back to Rufford on a regular basis than ever before.

There is a core group of people who visit every day (2%). This is exactly in line with previous years.



Visitor Origins



Most people (42%) interviewed were local residents who travelled directly from home.

25% of responders were meeting up with family and friends.

15% were on a day trip

11% were holidaying in the area

3% mentioned they were on a Groupon offer. These were all coming for Lunch.

Care workers and childminders were the respondents who typically answered 'other' as they came with the people they were looking after. A few people came direct from work or from a shopping trip. One group were on a golf trip to a nearby course.

Visitor Postcode Map #1

National Visitor Clusters

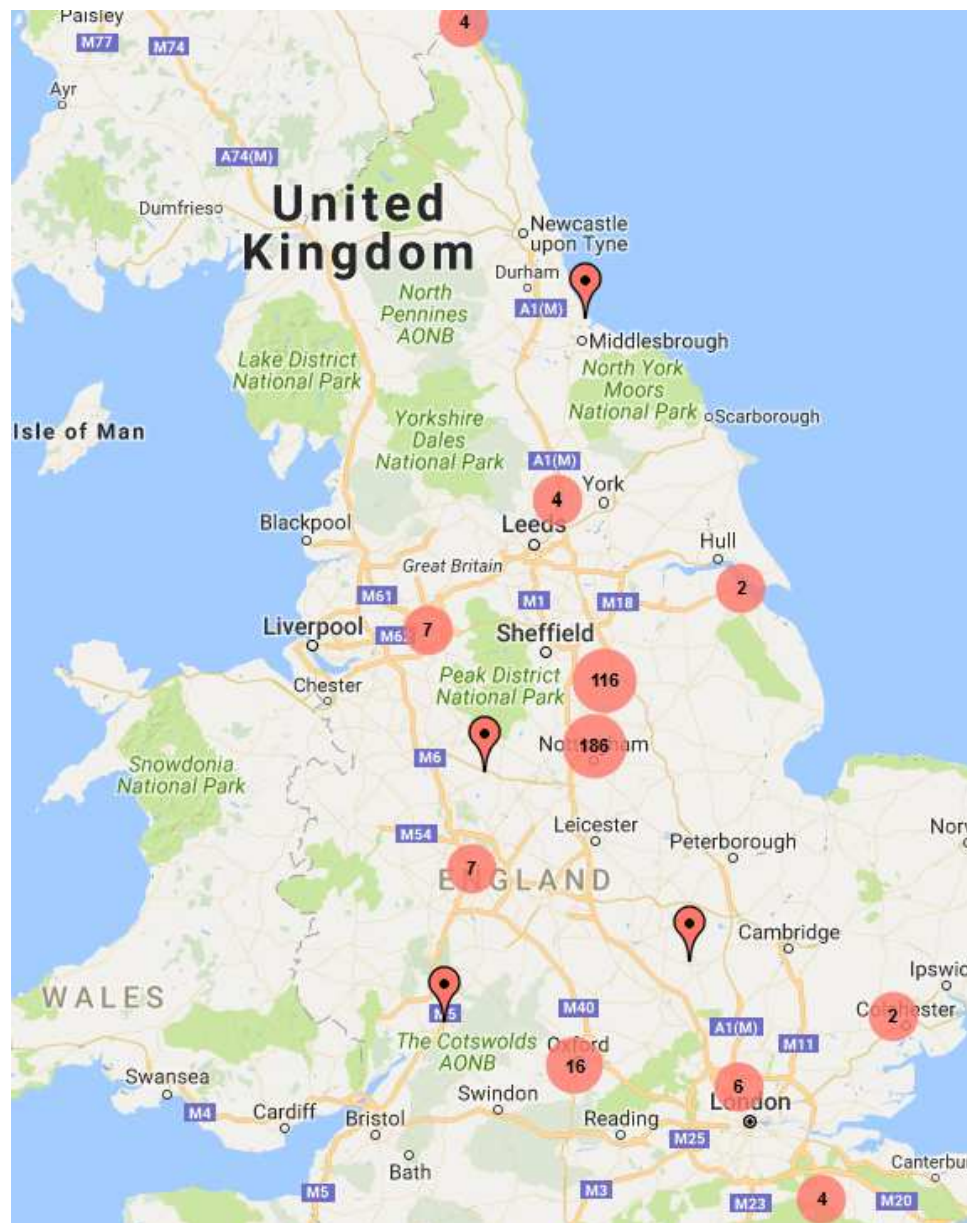
This map shows UK wide 'hotspot' clusters of visitors to Rufford.

It clearly shows that the highest concentration of those surveyed at Rufford are clustered around the Nottinghamshire and North Nottinghamshire area.

Visitors were recorded from Manchester, Tonbridge, Walsall, Harrogate, St Albans, Islington (north London), Donnington, Berwick upon Tweed and Oxford.

(please note 2 coaches with visitors from Oxford explain an unusually high concentration from this area)

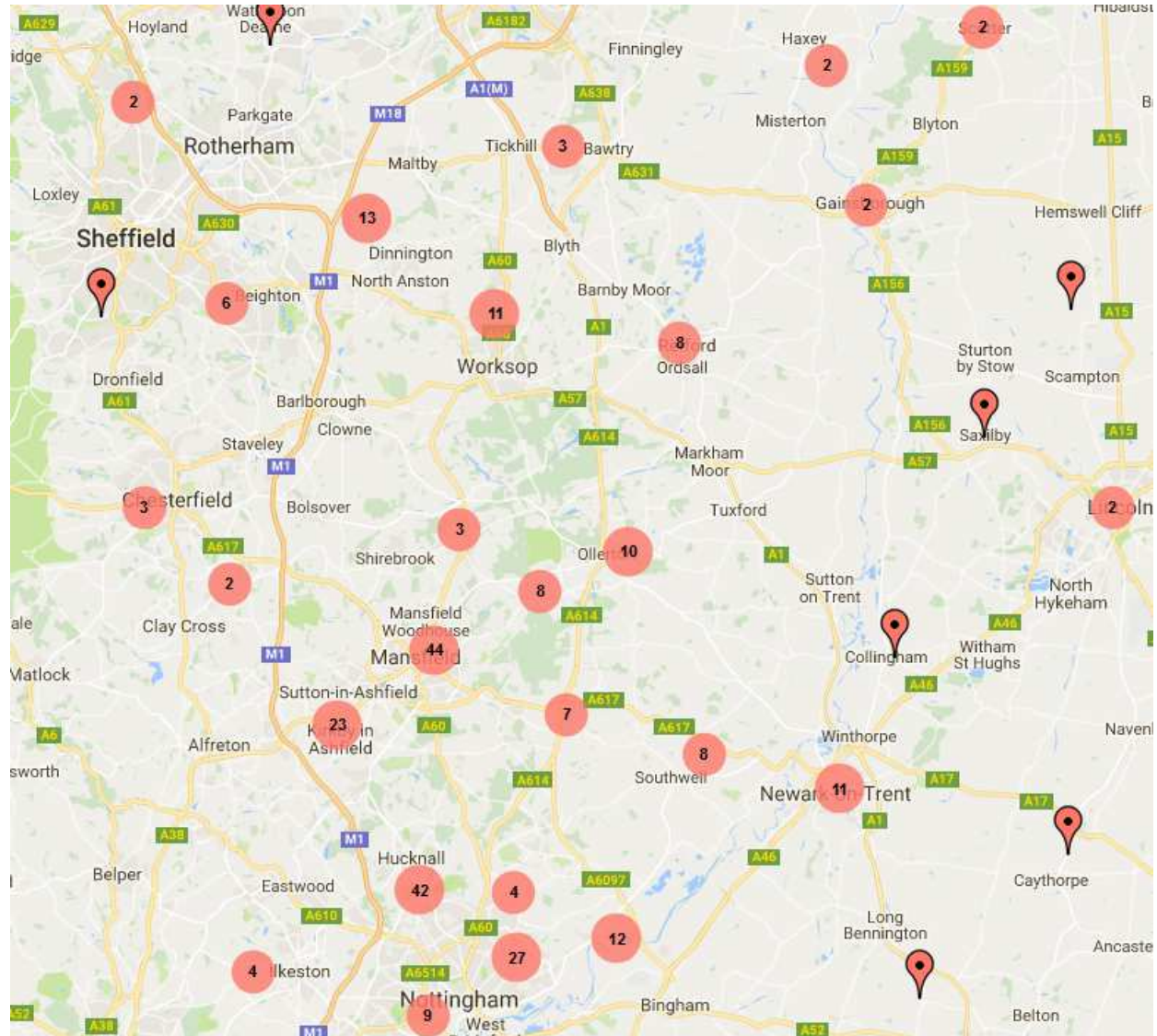
Not shown on this map, we also interviewed visitors from Australia, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Poland and South Africa.



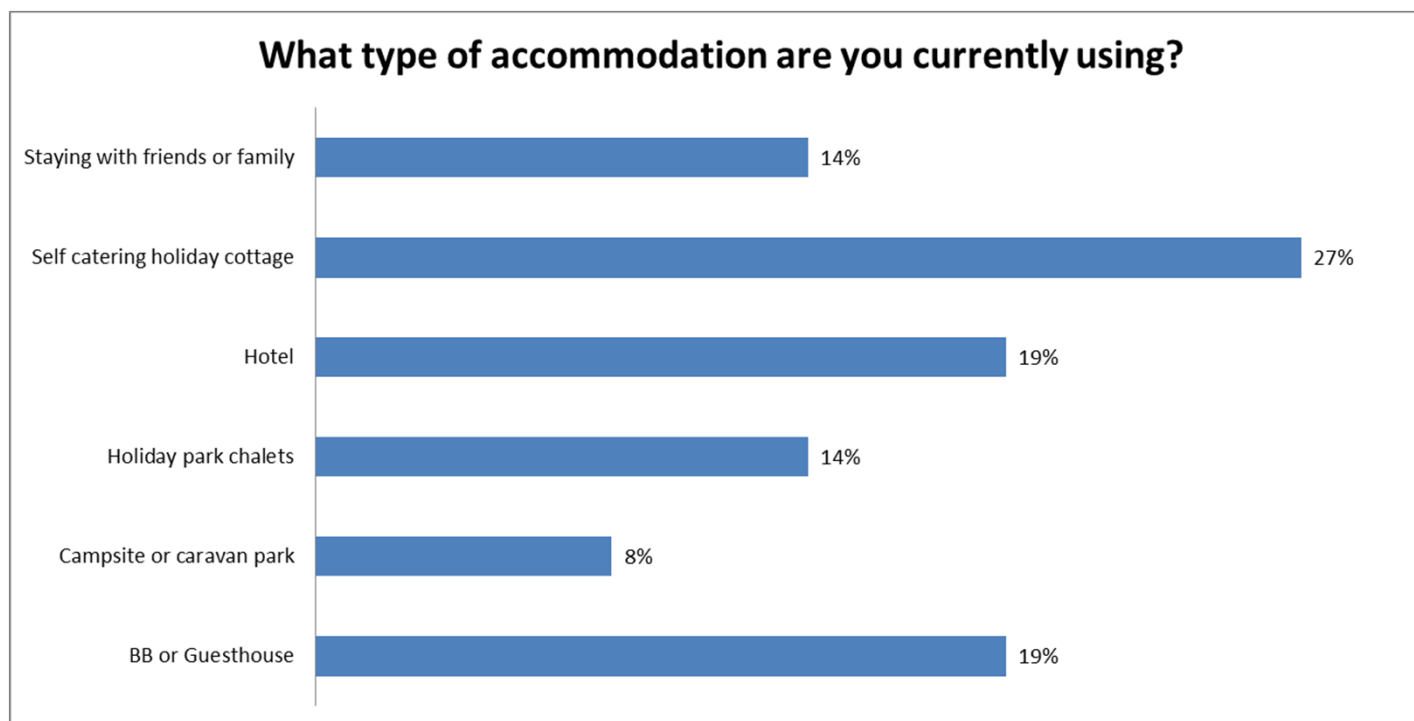
Visitor Postcode Map #2

Regional map showing clustering

This map highlights regionalised hotspots across North Nottinghamshire and its surrounding counties.



Tourist Accommodation



Note: This year we have added the option to select staying with friends or family.

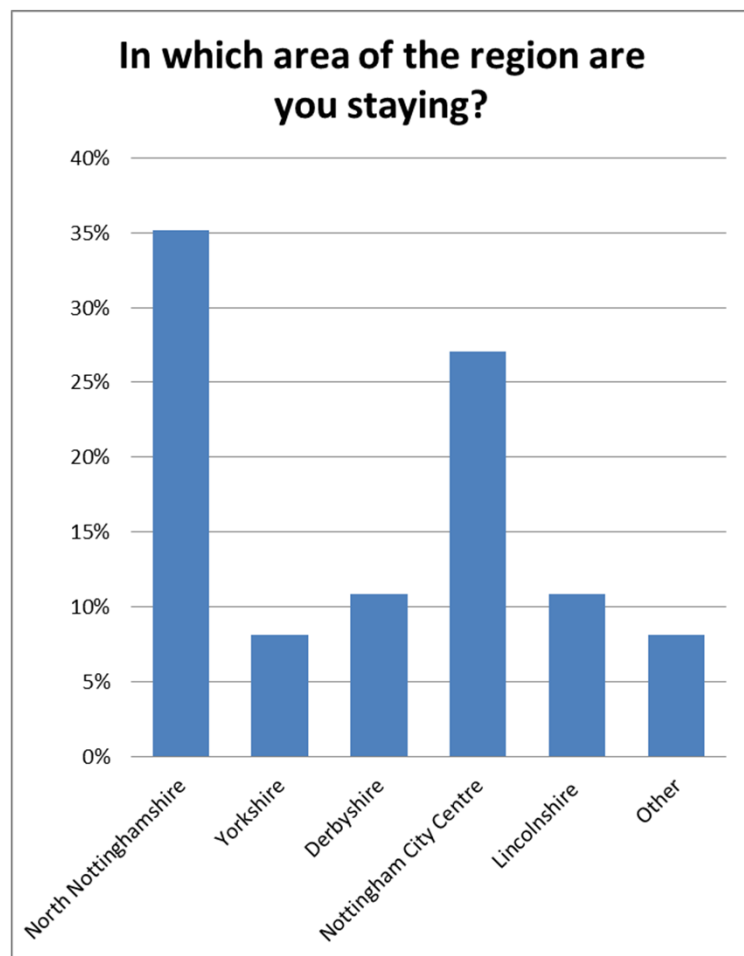
Most tourist visitors (27%) are staying in Self Catering Holiday Cottages. Last year this figure was 44% and also the top answer.

More people are using hotels and guest houses than in previous surveys. (Both 19%)

With 8% of visitors surveyed staying at Campsites / Caravan Parks, there has been a small decline in popularity. With this type of accommodation. Those staying in holiday park chalets were almost exclusively staying at the Center Parcs in Sherwood.

Significantly, we have discovered that 14% of those holidaying in the area are staying with friends or family.

Tourist Areas



As in previous surveys the vast majority of tourist visitors 35% were staying in the North Nottinghamshire area.

More people (27%) were staying in Nottingham City centre this year compared 22% in the previous survey. Coach trips from Nottingham accounted for some of these visitor groups.

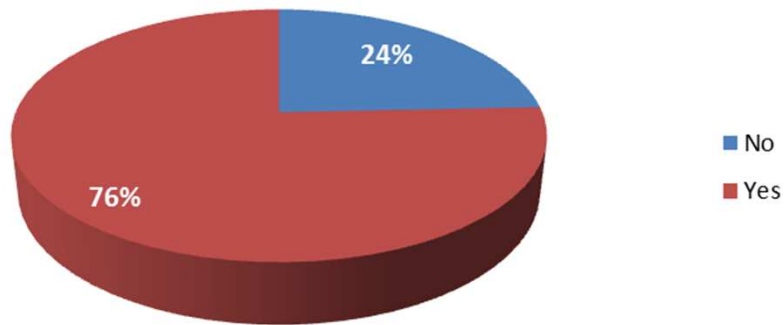
In this survey, both Derbyshire and Lincolnshire were mentioned by 11% of visitors. This shows an increase in popularity for Lincolnshire which has typically been the least represented tourist accommodation area.

Yorkshire, on the other, hand is less popular this year.

‘Other’ areas mentioned were Manchester and Leicester

Other Visit Locations

Do you intend to visit any other towns, villages or attractions?



76% of respondents said that they intended to visit other towns, villages and attractions in the region during their stay.

This is typical when compared to previous summer surveys.

Clumber Park and **Sherwood Forest** were the two most mentioned alternative destinations locally. (Clumber was hosting a running event during the week of the survey and Sherwood had hosted the Robin Hood Festival the previous day prior to the survey)

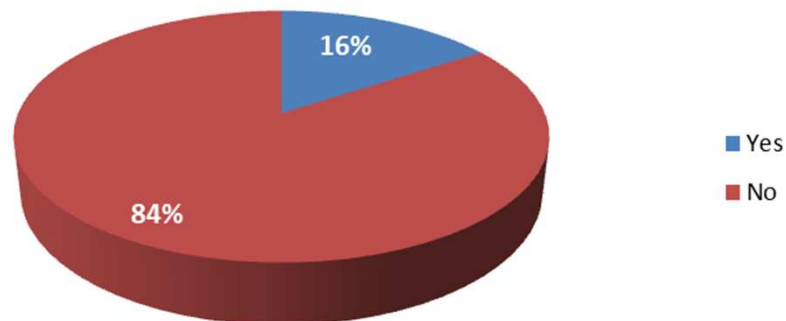
Nottingham City Centre was also mentioned for shopping trips.

Others destinations included:

Go Ape Nottinghamshire, Retford in Bloom; Creswell Crags, Bolsover Castle; Peak District National Park and Alton Towers.

Disabled Visitors

Do you or anyone in your party consider themselves as disabled?



This year, 16% of parties included someone who considered themselves as disabled. This is about average when looking back at past surveys over the last 6 years.

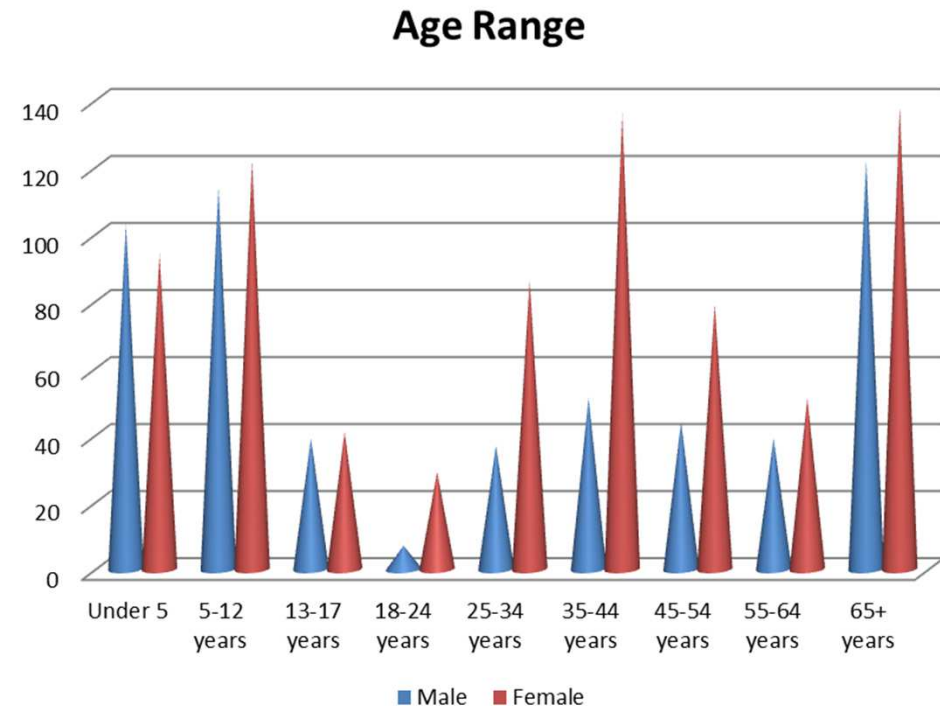
The percentage range of parties who considered themselves as disabled ranged from 18% in 2014 down to 11% in 2015. (Please note that the 2015 Survey was conducted in the Autumn and therefore this seasonal variation may have accounted for lower numbers of disabled visitors.

The vast majority of visitors to Rufford do not consider themselves as disabled. This year's figure of 84% is typical.

Gender & Age



As in previous surveys, the percentage of women visiting the park is greater than men. The difference has increased this year to 16%. Last year the gap was 14%.



The most represented age group this year have been 65+. (20%)
Closely followed 5-12 year olds. (18%)
(see next page for full age breakdown)

Age & Party Composition

	Under 5	5-12 years	13-17 years	18-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65+ years	TOTALS
Male	103	114	39	7	37	51	44	39	122	556
Female	94	122	41	29	86	136	79	51	138	776
Totals	197	236	80	36	123	187	123	90	260	
%	15	18	6	3	9	14	9	7	20	

The 337 visitor groups interviewed comprised 1332 people in total.

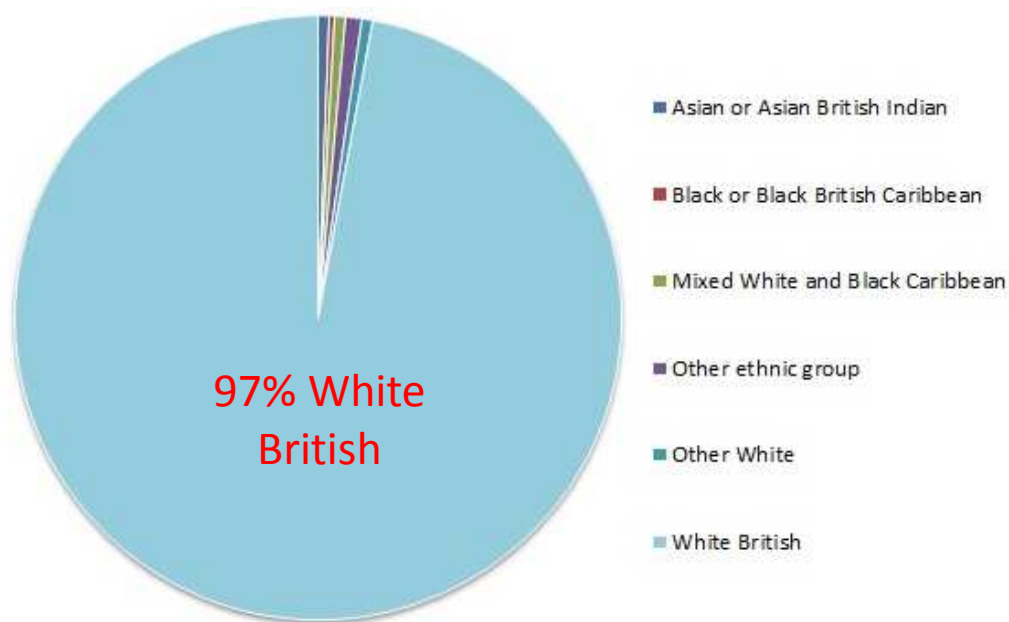
That makes an average party size of 3.9 This is higher the historical average of 3.

In the 18-24, 25-34 and 35-44 age brackets, females significantly outnumber males. Typically these are mothers with toddlers or young children.

In the 65+ age group the gender split is fairly even. This age group make up 20% of the visitors – the most common group. The next most common age group are 5-12 year olds.

The only age group where males outnumber females is in the under 5 category.

Ethnicity



Once again, as in previous surveys, 'White British' is the most frequent answer given by visitors when asked about their ethnic group.

This represents 97% of those interviewed. Last year this figure was 96%.

All other ethnic groups were equal at just under 1%

These figures are almost identical to last year and previous surveys.

What prompted visit?

As in previous surveys the majority of respondents said that previous visits / local knowledge is the main criteria which prompted their visit. However, the share of this majority has fallen from 77% of respondents in the last survey to 53%.

And personal recommendation which has always been the second most quoted answer has fallen into 4th place at 8%.

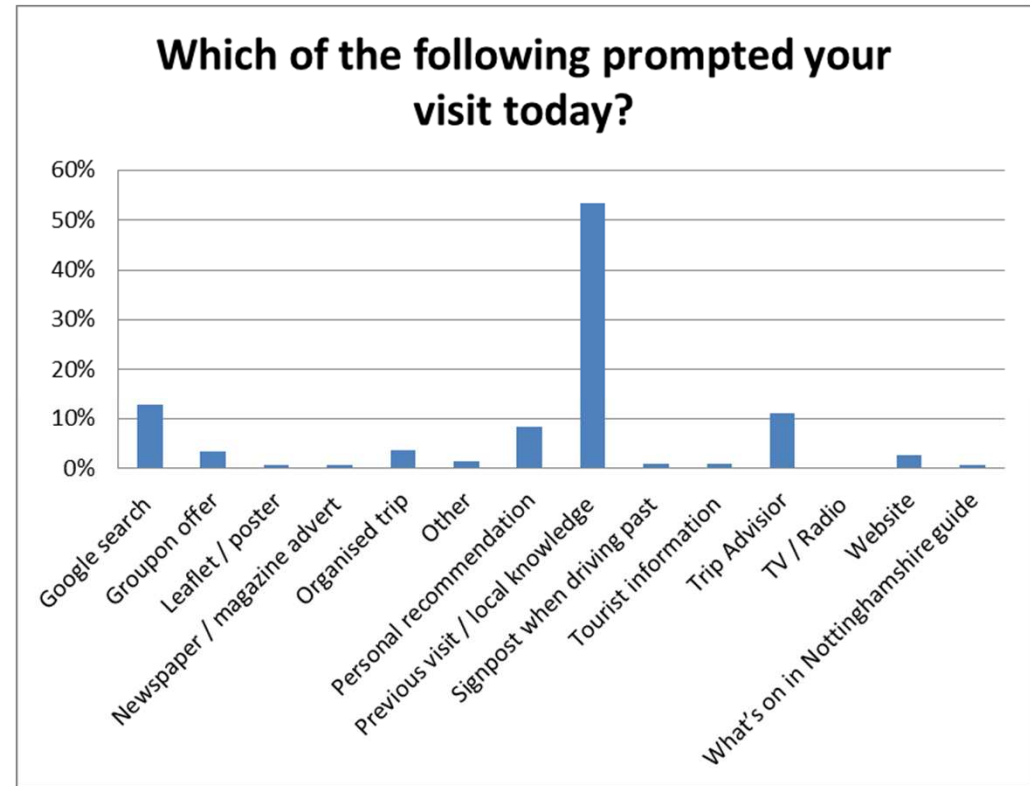
This changing pattern has been the direct result this year of including Google Search (13%), Trip Advisor (11%) and Groupon offer (3%) in the answer options. Plus 3% directly mentioned the Rufford web page. Therefore added together 30% of responders were prompted to visit by something online.

And 4% were part of an organised trip.

1% of respondents were drawn in by the signposts when driving past.

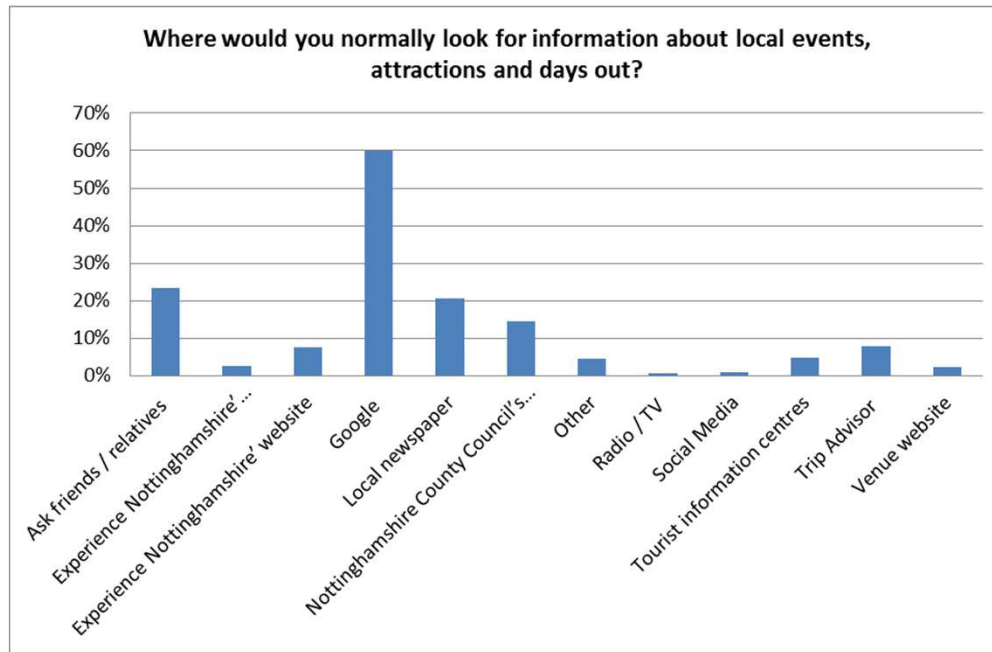
Newspapers / magazines were mentioned by 1% of those questioned. As was The 'what's on' in Nottinghamshire' guide.

3% of respondents said 'other'. Under this category answers given included: A (new?) North Nottinghamshire website and the 'Fragments In Time' exhibition.



30% visited through an 'online' prompt

Information Sources



60% of respondents said they would search Google if they were planning a day out. This is slightly lower than the last survey (68%). But on this survey we have added a specific option of 'Trip Advisor'. This was specifically mentioned by 9% of responders.

Asking friends and relatives (23%) is still important. This is similar to previous years.

Looking in a local newspaper (20%) comes next.

15% still like to use the County Council's printed 'What's On' Guide.

4% use a tourist information office. This continues a downward trend for the use of such facilities. The venue website is used by 2% of responders.

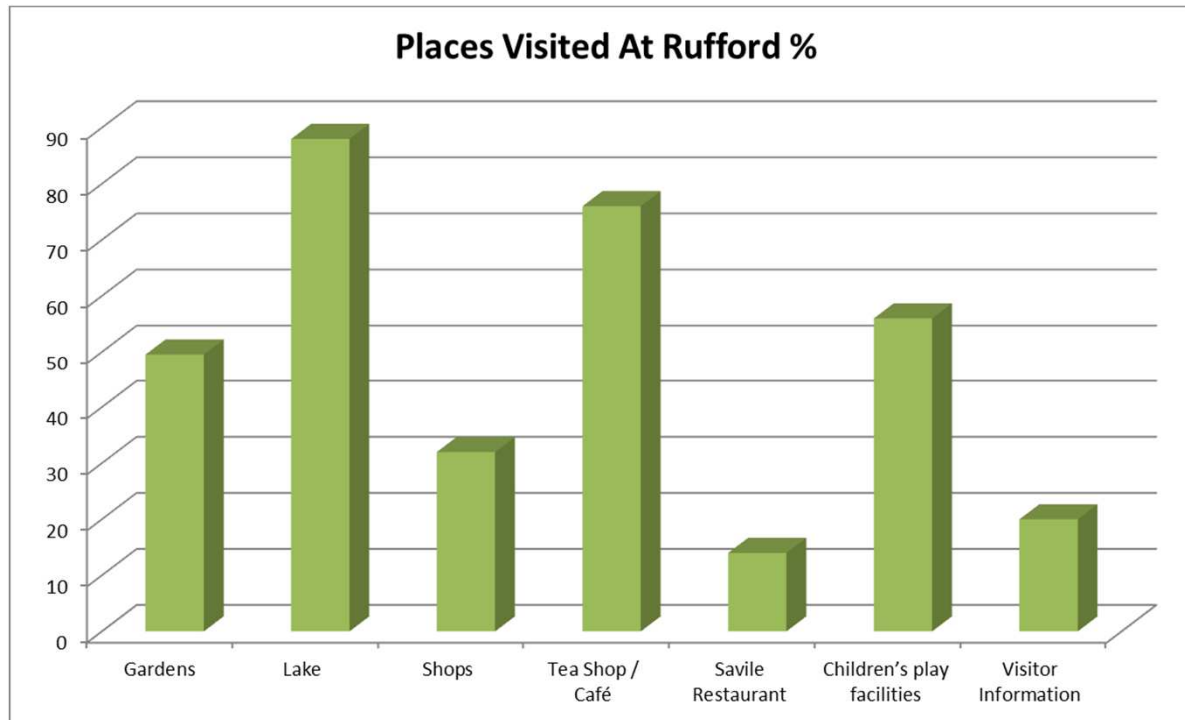
'Other' included local visitors who rely on display boards and billboards around Rufford to tell them what's going on in the park and locally. People also mentioned leaflets they pick up at hotels and B&Bs. Also there is a new North Nottinghamshire website mentioned by a few people.

Part 3

Rufford Visitor Experience



Places Visited



The Lake is always the most visited place at Rufford and this year 88% of all those surveyed said they made a trip to the water.

The Café was the next most mentioned location by 76% of those interviewed.

The children's play facilities were the next most visited place (56%) up from 55% last year

The Gardens (50%) saw fewer visitors than normal. In past summer surveys this figures averages around 72%. (Note: during the survey several days of rain may have contributed to this outcome)

32% of those surveyed had visited the shops. Although this is higher than the last (autumn) survey it continues a downward trend in recent (summer) surveys.

Savile Restaurant was visited by 14% of respondents. This is the highest percentage its ever been.

Places Visited Comparison

% trends from 2004 - 2016

	2004-10	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Gardens	62	77	74	80	66	72	54	50
Lake	0	0	0	81	86	75	91	88
Shops	30	34	64	57	47	42	20	32
Tea Shop / Café	77	65	73	72	71	64	80	76
Savile Restaurant	0	0	0	13	9	7	9	14
Craft Centre / Gallery	12	16	36	38	39	25	0	0
Children's play facilities	30	30	57	36	41	43	55	56
Tourist / Visitor Information	9	12	24	20	17	16	31	20

The chart above shows percentage trends from 2004.

The Lake continues to be the most popular destination. While the Gardens showed a surprisingly low response.

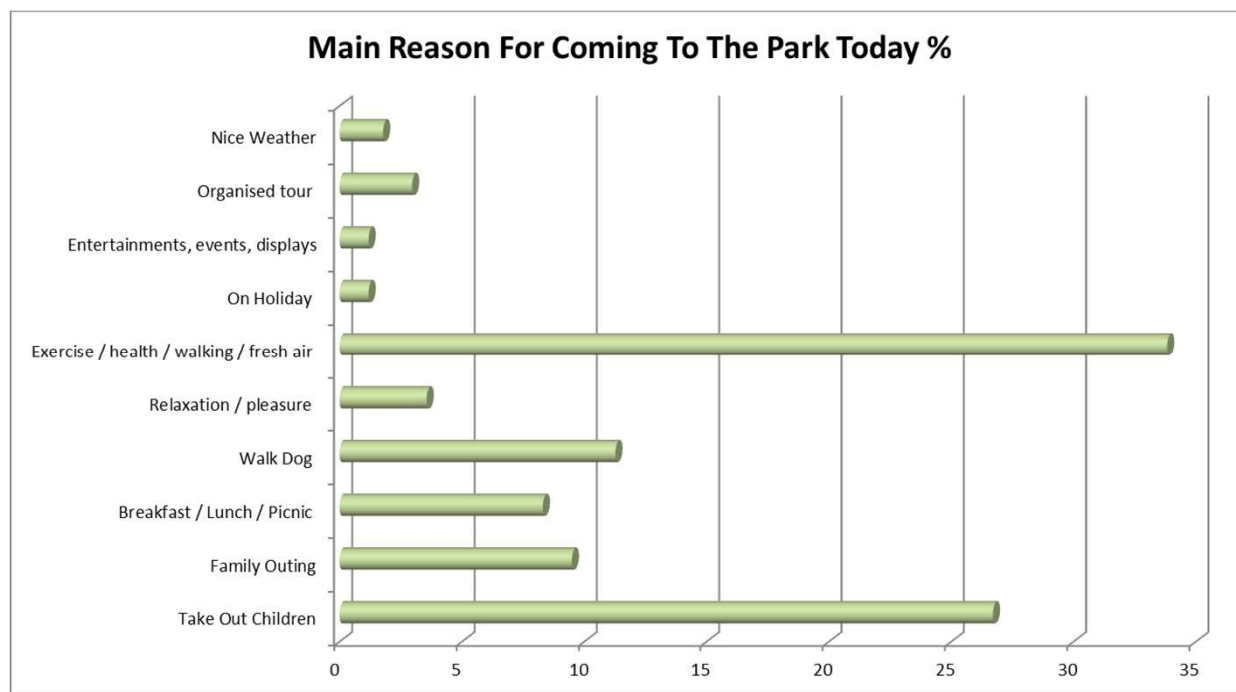
Children's play facilities are being used more than last year and the Savile Restaurant has recorded it's highest ever percentage.

The Café is as popular as its ever been in the summer but the Shops, after a major leap forward in 2011, continue to fall back in popularity.

Tourist Information / Visitor Information, after rallying last year have returned back to lower levels.

The craft centre and gallery have now closed.

Reasons to visit summary



Note: This chart attempts to categorise some of the most common responses

Exercise, health, walking and fresh air are most common reasons for adults without children.

There has been an 4% increase in people visiting for exercise, health, walking etc. This is still the most common 'single' reason for coming to the park for adults without children. 34% of visitors come for this reason.

Taking children out (27%) was the next most common reason for visiting the park.

In this survey only 2% of visitors said they came for the events, displays and entertainments organised in the park. This is typically around 8%.

There are more dog walkers this year. Up from 6% last year to 11% this year.

3% of responders mentioned organised tours. 1% said they were on holiday and 3% came out to simply enjoy the weather.

Some people came for specific events. E.g. brass band concert, poachers exhibition.



Most Enjoyed ?

More people said they enjoyed just going for a walk around Rufford than any other aspect of their visit . (29%).

The lake was enjoyed the most by 16% of respondents, with feeding the ducks a popular activity.

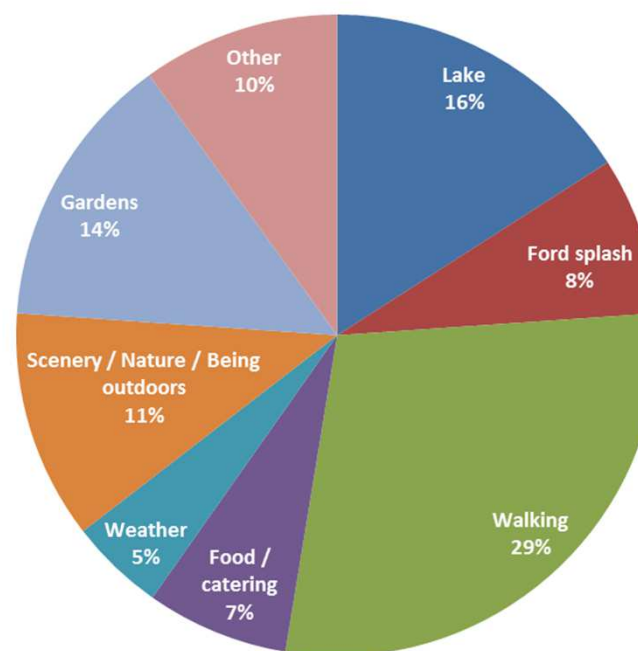
Gardens were enjoyed most by 14% of respondents while scenery, nature and just being outdoors was enjoyed most by 11%.

The ford/ splash remains popular with children and adults alike. 8% of respondents specifically mention this.

7% enjoyed the food /catering best of all. This includes a high proportion who said “ice cream” or “tea” Some referred specifically to “breakfast” or “lunch”. Sunday Carvery Lunch seems to be popular with regular visitors.

‘Other’ things mentioned were: Brass Band, treasure trail, children's play facilities, sculptures , poachers exhibition and good value of the entire visit.

What's been the most enjoyable part of your visit today?



Note: This chart attempts to categorise some of the most common responses

The old
Abbey ruins

Watching cars
go through
ford splash

Stunning
Grounds

Carvery
lunch

Bird watching
and feeding
ducks



Learning
about local
history in
poachers
exhibition

Fresh
Air and
exercise

Outdoor
sculptures
and maze

Brass
Band

Walk around
lake with the
whole family

**What's been the most enjoyable part of
your visit today?**



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

Rufford - Overall Visit

	Responses	%
Very Good	216	64%
Good	112	33%
OK	9	3%
Poor	0	0%
Very Poor	0	0%
N/A	0	0%

Most People (**64%**) said their overall visit was “**very good**”. Last year this figure was 70% (the highest its ever been) so there has been a decrease in the top level of overall satisfaction. (Historically this top level figure has averaged 60% across all previous surveys so overall satisfaction is still comparatively high in 2016.

33% said their visit was “**Good**” overall. This was 30% last year.

“Thus, 97% thought their overall visit was “Good” or “Very Good”

3% said the visit was OK. Satisfaction was typically marked down due to long wait for food and general overcrowding. Also play facilities criticised by some parents.

No respondents said their overall visit was “poor” or “very poor”

A great family day out. Something for everyone of all ages.



The perfect setting for a picnic.

It's like our second home. Everyone is so friendly and helpful. You can 'get lost' for hours on a nice day.

Rufford - Cleanliness of park in general

	Responses	%
Very Good	222	66%
Good	110	33%
OK	5	1%
Poor	0	0%
Very Poor	0	0%
N/A	0	0%

Most people 66% said cleanliness in general was “Very Good”. This was (72%) last year.

33% said cleanliness was “Good” overall. This was 28% last year.

1% thought it was “OK”, this was the same last year.

No visitors said cleanliness was poor or very poor.

Any negative comments received this year about cleanliness centred around the mess that other people had left after picnics etc. , not clearing up after themselves and allowing rubbish to fly around the site. Also occasional dog mess was mentioned.

It's all kept extremely tidy and clean. There are at least 5 dog bins which helps dog owners



Very clean
and child
friendly

I wish other people would
be more responsible and
take their rubbish home.

Rufford – Standard to which grounds are maintained

	Responses	%
Very Good	244	72%
Good	88	26%
OK	5	1%
Poor	0	0%
Very Poor	0	0%
N/A	0	0%

Most people (72%) said the standard to which grounds are maintained was “Very Good”. Last year this was 74%.

26% said the standard was “Good”. Last year this was 25%.

1% thought it was “OK”. Exactly the same as last year. No respondents thought the grounds were maintained to a poor standard. Although some thought that the children’s area could be presented better and that some areas looked a little tired.



Roses in full bloom are lovely

The gardens are welcoming without being too formal and perfect.

New herb garden is looking really good

Rufford – Range of facilities for children

	Responses	%
Very Good	159	47%
Good	112	33%
OK	28	8%
Poor	4	1%
Very Poor	0	0%
N/A	34	10%

Treasure trail is a cool idea.

The facilities are in keeping with the surroundings.

Most people who were able to express an opinion (47%) said the range of facilities for children was “Very Good”. This is lower than the last survey (58%) because the seasonal Halloween Trail was very popular with children and parents alike. The current treasure trail doesn’t seem as popular. Or at least awareness is not as high.

33% said the standard was “Good”. Up from 27% last year. 8% thought it was “OK”.

1% thought the standard was “Poor”. This was down to a lack of activities for toddlers.

10% did not have a view because they did not have or come with children.



Good that dogs are not allowed in this area

My kids can certainly burn of a lot of energy here. They love crawling through the tunnels and climbing over things.

Rufford – Amenities for visitors with special access or mobility requirements

	Responses	%
Very Good	130	39%
Good	78	23%
OK	13	4%
Poor	2	1%
Very Poor	0	0%
N/A	114	34%

We made use of the mobility scooter pre-booking service

Not enough disabled car park spaces



Most people (39%) said the amenities were “Very Good”. Last year this figure was 42%.

23% said amenities were good. Last year this figure was 22%

4% thought amenities were “OK”. This was 5% last year.

1% of respondents thought amenities were “Poor”. The reasons were all to do with limited disabled parking.

34% did not feel able to comment.

Good that there are disabled toilets at both ends of the park. They’re good amenities too!

Rufford – Road signage to the park

	Responses	%
Very Good	113	34%
Good	71	21%
OK	32	9%
Poor	9	3%
Very Poor	0	0%
N/A	112	33%

Most people 34% said the road signage to the park was “Very Good”. (41% last year)

21% said it was “Good”. Exactly the same as last year.

9% thought it was “OK”. This was 4% last year.

3% of respondents thought the signage was “Poor”. There was a comment about too many ‘tourist’ signs in the local area which made navigation confusing.

A high percentage (35%) did not have a view, mostly because they live locally and don’t really notice the signs. Others use satellite navigation and do not pay much attention to signage.

Must be good because we got here OK!



Yes it was all nice and clear

Ended up at the golf course entrance

Rufford – Quality of service from staff

	Responses	%
Very Good	177	53%
Good	81	24%
OK	9	3%
Poor	4	1%
Very Poor	0	0%
N/A	66	20%

Most people (53%) said the quality of service from staff was “Very Good”. This is down from 60% last year.

24% said it was “Good”. Last year this was 28%

3% thought it was “OK” . This was as 2% last year.

1% said staff service was “Poor”. Criticisms centred around slow service in the café.

20% did not have a view because they did not come into contact with a member or staff

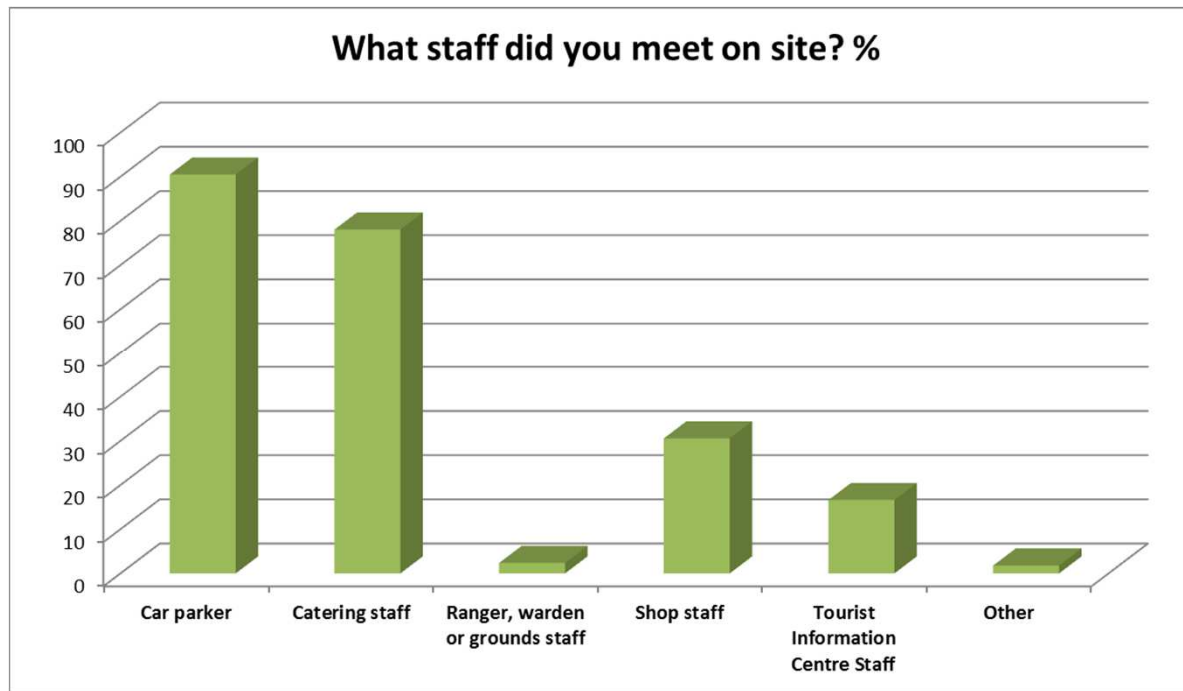


Super friendly helpful staff made a great day even better

Always have a good laugh with the car park man

Attentive serving staff at Saville restaurant

Rufford – Staff contact / customer care evaluation



91% of those surveyed said they came into contact with car parking staff.

78% came into contact with catering staff.

Shop staff were encountered by 31% of visitors and 17% met someone from tourist information.

2% met someone in a green uniform. (ranger, warden or grounds staff).

A few people said they came into contact with a cleaner.



74%
Very Happy



25%
Fine Overall



1%
Disappointed

How did you feel about their customer care?

Rufford – Quality of on-site catering

	Responses	%
Very Good	181	54%
Good	105	31%
OK	16	5%
Poor	6	2%
Very Poor	0	0%
N/A	29	9%

Most people (54%) said the quality of catering was “Very Good”. Last year this was 53%.

31% said it was “Good”. Last year this was 30%

5% thought it was “OK”. This was 6% last year.

2% respondents thought the catering was poor citing dry carvery meat and lack of healthy options.

9% did not have a view because they did not have anything to eat or drink.



I was surprise they catered for vegans. Top marks!

Ploughman's is exceptionally good

Great value lunch with family. Even better with a Groupon voucher. The best in the area.

Rufford – Quality of shops

	Responses	%
Very Good	141	42%
Good	84	25%
OK	19	6%
Poor	0	0%
Very Poor	0	0%
N/A	93	28%

Most people (42%) said the quality of shops was “Very Good”. This was 44% last year.

25% said it was “Good” down from 28% last year.

6% thought it was “OK”. This was 7% last year.

No respondents thought the shops were “poor” or “very poor”.

28 % did not have a view because they did not go into the shops.

Good place if your
are stuck for
present ideas



Prices are reasonable
compared to National
Trust shops

Would like to see
more local artists
work for sale

Rufford – Cleanliness of toilets

	Responses	%
Very Good	176	52%
Good	98	29%
OK	26	8%
Poor	0	0%
Very Poor	0	0%
N/A	37	11%

Most people (52%) said the cleanliness of toilets was “Very Good”. Last year this was 56%.

29% said it was “Good”. This was 20% last year.

8% thought it was “OK”. This was 4% last year.

11% did not have a view because they did not use the facilities.

Many regular visitors commented on the noticeable improvements year on year. And disabled visitors were particularly impressed with the facilities.



Baby change space is perfectly adequate and clean

I can't fault the facilities

Disabled toilet was clean and tidy

Rufford – How safe and secure do you feel when visiting the park?

	Responses	%
Very Good	269	80%
Good	68	20%
OK	0	0%
Poor	0	0%
Very Poor	0	0%
N/A	0	0%

Most people (80%) rated safety and security as “Very Good” This is up from 75% last year.

20% said it was “Good”. This was 25% last year.

No respondents gave an answer of OK or poor.

Some people mentioned the possibility of stray balls / kites hitting visitors as a potential danger.

100% of all respondents , when rating how safe they feel in the park said “Very Good” or “Good”.

It's safe to park, safe to walk and safe to play for children



The dogs on leads policy is sensible

I saw a rugby ball land on a family having a picnic.

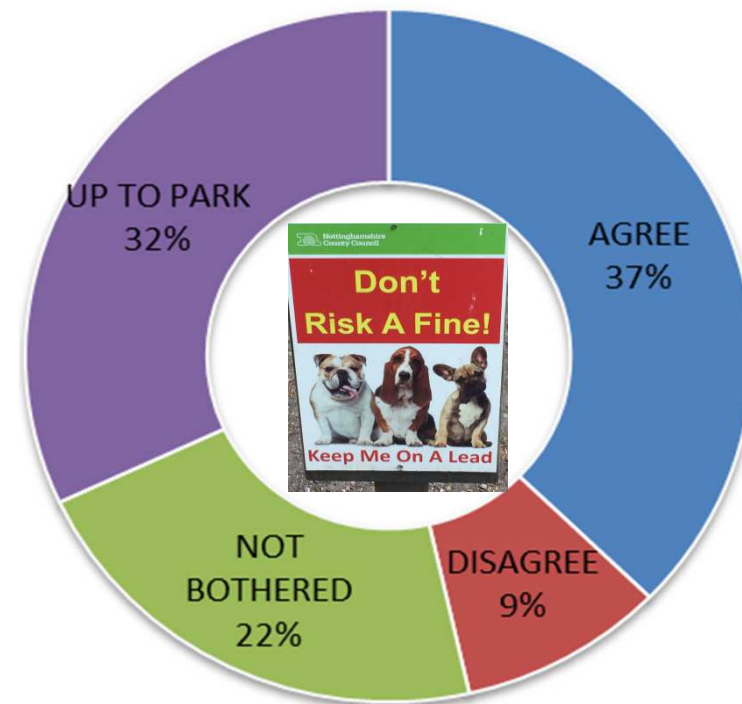
Rufford – We have a "Dogs on Leads" policy here. Do you agree with it?

	Responses	%
Yes - I prefer owners to keep dogs on the lead in this park	126	37%
No - I don't agree with it / don't like the policy	31	9%
It doesn't really bother me one way or another	73	22%
I think it's up to the park to decide what works best for everyone	108	32%

Most people (37%) said they agreed with the dogs on leads policy. Closely followed by those who thought that its right for the park to decide. (32%)

22% of responders were not bothered either way.

9% did not agree with the policy feeling that their well behaved dogs should be allowed to roam freely.



On a really busy day at Rufford it would be total chaos (not to mention dangerous) to have dogs running around

There are so many larger outdoor spaces nearby to let the dogs roam free. Not here please!

Rufford – Is the £3 car parking charge fair value?

	Responses	%
Fair value	290	86%
OK	36	11%
Unreasonable	11	3%

Motorbikes are only £1
so that's good for me

Good value
compared to other
English Heritage sites

Most people (86%) thought that the parking charge was “fair value” especially as entry to the park was free.

11% said value was “OK”.

A core 3% of mainly local people / dog walkers who want to visit everyday and remember when parking was free during the off season said that the parking charge was unreasonable. They were also unhappy about the £5 premium charged for certain special event days.

Also some blue badge holders thought that they should receive a concession.

Season ticket pricing for £30 was thought fair and reasonable by most local people. There was low awareness of the car park redemption when you spend £15 in the shops / café / restaurant.



When we come for lunch we
always get our parking
money back. It's a good deal.

Service Comparison Charts #1

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Overall Visit					
Very Good	68%	58%	62%	70%	64%
Good	29%	40%	37%	30%	33%
OK	2%	2%	1%	0%	3%
Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Very Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
N/A	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Cleanliness of park in general					
Very Good	56%	58%	62%	72%	66%
Good	39%	40%	37%	27%	33%
OK	4%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Poor	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Very Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
N/A	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Standard to which grounds are maintained					
Very Good	61%	59%	65%	74%	72%
Good	35%	38%	33%	25%	26%
OK	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Poor	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Very Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
N/A	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Range of facilities for children					
Very Good	22%	24%	23%	58%	47%
Good	28%	32%	26%	27%	33%
OK	8%	9%	9%	5%	8%
Poor	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%
Very Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
N/A	40%	35%	39%	8%	10%
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Amenities for visitors with special access or mobility requirements					
Very Good	15%	17%	25%	55%	39%
Good	44%	52%	57%	36%	23%
OK	13%	10%	10%	7%	4%
Poor	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Very Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
N/A	27%	20%	7%	1%	34%
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Road signage to the park					
Very Good	16%	23%	21%	41%	34%
Good	31%	33%	28%	21%	21%
OK	9%	7%	7%	4%	9%
Poor	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Very Poor	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
N/A	42%	35%	41%	32%	33%



Service Comparison Charts #2

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Quality of service from staff					
Very Good	33%	31%	35%	60%	53%
Good	34%	40%	39%	28%	24%
OK	7%	4%	4%	2%	3%
Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Very Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
N/A	26%	24%	23%	10%	20%
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Quality of on-site catering					
Very Good	30%	26%	29%	53%	54%
Good	32%	37%	37%	30%	31%
OK	8%	8%	4%	6%	5%
Poor	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%
Very Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
N/A	29%	28%	38%	10%	9%
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Quality of shops					
Very Good	22%	20%	23%	44%	42%
Good	38%	36%	40%	28%	25%
OK	9%	8%	7%	7%	6%
Poor	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Very Poor	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
N/A	30%	34%	30%	19%	28%

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Cleanliness of toilets					
Very Good	28%	31%	40%	58%	52%
Good	42%	47%	39%	30%	29%
OK	14%	7%	7%	4%	8%
Poor	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Very Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
N/A	15%	14%	13%	7%	11%
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
How safe and secure do you feel when visiting the park?					
Very Good	73%	70%	78%	75%	80%
Good	25%	29%	22%	25%	20%
OK	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Poor	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Very Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
N/A	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%





Comments & suggestions for improvement

Rangers should be more visible

Brass band was great. More events like this please

We're so lucky to have Rufford it should be treasured

Parking chap was really friendly

Outdoor cinema events in summer

Update and renovate the children's play area. It's all a bit dated

Where are the hawks?

Could sell ready made picnic hampers

The staff are fabulous here

Clear outdoor tables quicker to stop the wasps gathering

Pizza oven

More catering staff during busy periods

BBC could do Antiques Roadshow here?

Open a deli with local produce

Rowing boats on the lake?

Comments & suggestions for improvement





Part 4

Summary & Key Findings

Subject	Comment
Methodology	<p>Using Ipads to conduct surveys continues to work very well because they speed up interviews, provide visual interest and interactively engage respondents.</p> <p>Lunchtimes and afternoons continue to be more productive for asking people about their visits as they had a chance to experience the park.</p>
Visitors	<p>337 parties were interviewed. The average size of each visitor group is 3.9 people.</p> <p>88% of those interviewed at Rufford are repeat visitors. Most visitors come three times each year. More people are coming back to Rufford on a regular basis than ever before.</p> <p>Most people (42%) interviewed were local residents who travelled directly from home.</p>
Tourists	<p>11% of those interviewed were holidaying in the area</p> <p>These tourist visitors were mostly staying in self catering holiday cottages. More people are using hotels and guest houses than in previous surveys.</p> <p>Significantly, we have discovered that 14% of those holidaying in the area are staying with friends or family.</p> <p>The most popular local destinations to visit were Clumber Park, Sherwood Forest and Nottingham City Centre. Also mentioned were Go Ape Nottinghamshire, Retford in Bloom; Creswell Crags, Bolsover Castle; Peak District National Park and Alton Towers.</p>

Subject	Comment
Disability	<p>This year, 16% of parties included someone who considered themselves as disabled. This is about average when looking back at past surveys over the last 6 years.</p> <p>62% of visitors to Rufford (that have some direct experience or knowledge) thought that the amenities for visitors with special access or mobility requirements were ‘very good’ or ‘good’.</p> <p>The park is used by a number of care groups on a regular basis.</p>
Age, Gender & Ethnicity	<p>97% of all those surveyed were ‘White British’. This is typical compared to previous surveys at Rufford and tends to reflect the prevailing ethnic make up of the rural location.</p> <p>As in previous surveys, the percentage of women visiting the park is greater than men. The difference has increased this year to 16%. Last year the gap was 14%.</p> <p>20% of visitors were 65+ this was the most common visiting group. The next most common age group are 5-12 year olds. (18)</p> <p>Once again, 18-24 year olds are the least represented visitor age group.</p>

Subject	Comment
Information sources	<p>60% of respondents said they would search Google if they were planning a day out and specifically 9% said they would use Trip Advisor.</p> <p>Asking friends and relatives (23%) is still important. This is similar to previous years. 20% still check their local newspaper to find out what's going on and 15% still like to use the County Council's printed 'What's On' Guide.</p> <p>Fewer people than ever (4%) are using tourist information offices. This continues a year-on-year downward trend for the use of such facilities.</p> <p>Many regular local visitors rely on the display boards and billboards around Rufford to tell them what's going on in the park and locally. People also mentioned leaflets they pick up at hotels and B&Bs. Also there is a new North Nottinghamshire website mentioned by a few people.</p>
Park policy / rules and entry fees	<p>This year we measured public perception of the dogs on leads policy and standard the car parking tariff.</p> <p>Most people (37%) said they agreed with the dogs on leads policy. Closely followed by those who thought that its right for the park to decide. (32%). There was a definite link between the enforcement of this policy and the public's perception of safety in the park which was equal to record levels.</p> <p>Most people (86%) thought that the parking charge was "fair value" especially as entry to the park was free.</p>

Subject	Comment
Visitor Experience	<p>97% of those surveyed thought their overall visit to Rufford was “Good” or “Very Good. There has been an 4% increase in people visiting for exercise, health, walking etc. This is still the most common ‘single’ reason for coming to the park for adults without children. 34% of visitors come for this reason. Taking children out (27%) was the next most common reason for visiting the park.</p> <p>This year, the Lake (88%) was once again the most visited place at Rufford. However, the Gardens (50%) saw fewer visitors than normal. The Café was mentioned by 76% of those interviewed. Savile Restaurant was visited by 14% of respondents. This is the highest ever percentage with the Groupon scheme a definite contributing factor. In contrast, the Shops continue to reduce in (summer) visitor numbers.</p> <p>The service comparison charts in this report show that compared to previous summer surveys the standard of service provision is relatively high. However, when compared to the 2015 Autumn survey, percentage scores are lower across the board. We can conclude that, the demands of busy summer months, with a broader range of visitor types plus tourists, put more strain on Park services.</p>
Likes	<p>Positive things were said about: Brass band concert, treasure trail, facilities for children, the ford ‘splash’, beautiful surroundings, well maintained grounds, herb garden, rose garden, mobility scooters, dogs on leads, service from staff and general good value. All catering continues to be popular at Rufford with most saying its good value especially with a Groupon deal.</p>
Dislikes	<p>Negative comments were said about: overcrowding, the need for more disabled parking spaces, need for renovation work at children’s play area, dry carvery meat / food, awareness of car park fee redemption scheme, enforcement of ‘dogs on leads’ rule, and not feeding bread to ducks. Pulling out onto the A614 continues to be an issue on busy days.</p>