

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

# LAKE MARKET RESEARCH WRITTEN REPORTS



To support the Kent Rights of Way Improvement Plan  
Produced for Kent County Council Final Report November 2017



# Kent County Council Public Rights of Way Written Report – Online Consultation

Prepared by Lake Market Research for Kent County Council

October 2017

JOB REFERENCE 9170042-01



*"This report complies with ISO 20252 and any other relevant codes of conduct."*

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## **RESEARCH CONTEXT**

### **BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Kent County Council is required to publish a Countryside Access Improvement Plan covering Kent (excluding Medway). In drawing up the plan, they are required to assess the extent to which local Rights of Way meet the present and likely future needs of the public and the opportunities provided by local Rights of Way for exercise and other forms of open-air recreation.

A forward-thinking plan is envisaged to set out how any perceived benefits will be delivered and how the future needs of Kent's residents will be met: supporting local communities, building a strong economy and benefiting the health and wellbeing of Kent's residents.

Kent County Council commissioned Lake Market Research to gather insight and information from Kent residents and to inform the content and priorities of the Countryside Access Improvement Plan. The research has been commissioned to understand to what extent Public Rights of Way meets current demand and how it needs to evolve to meet future requirements. More specifically, it needs to assess:

- Current levels and usage purposes amongst those who use them
- Experience of using Public Rights of Way
- Barriers to using Public Rights of Way
- Suggested improvements / links to other facilities / access routes
- The extent to which any issues have been encountered to date
- The degree of awareness of how to report and issue and the extent to which this has been used
- Any comments with regards to access requirements amongst those with children or have a disability / a family member with a disability

### **METHODOLOGY & RESPONDENT PROFILE**

Kent County Council featured a link to complete the survey online for just over 6 weeks, between 11<sup>th</sup> August and 17<sup>th</sup> September. The survey was featured on the Kent County Council Consultation homepage, Visit Kent and the Public Rights of Way portal site. Overall, 1,260 submissions were received of which 1,253 were Public Rights of Way users and 7 non users. This report is therefore based on the 1,253 users answering.

The number of survey submissions received from each of the 12 Districts of Kent is shown in the chart below. In addition, 50 residents completed the survey from outside of Kent.

## Online submissions received by district

District	Online submissions received
Ashford	106
Canterbury	104
Dartford	46
Dover	96
Gravesham	82
Maidstone	192
Sevenoaks	117
Shepway	82
Swale	86
Thanet	55
Tonbridge	97
Tunbridge Wells	108
Outside of Kent	50
Prefer not to answer	39

Total Sample Size: 1,260

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An overview of the resident profile responding to the online survey can be found below:

## Profile of residents responding

### Gender

Male	47%
Female	53%

### Age

16 – 24	1%
25 – 34	7%
35 – 44	13%
45 – 54	22%
55 – 64	28%
65 – 74	24%
75+	5%

### Ethnicity

White; English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	98%
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White & Black Caribbean	*
Asian/Asian British; Indian	*
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; African/Other	*
Other ethnic group	1%

\*Less than 0.5%

### Disability

Yes	6%
No	90%
Prefer not to answer	4%

### Type of impairment

Physical impairment	53%
Long standing illness or health condition	34%
Sensory impairment (hearing, sight or both)	24%
Mental health condition	11%
Learning disability	3%
Other / prefer not to answer	8%

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The term 'Users' is used throughout the survey and these were defined as someone who uses at least one of the following at least once every 6 months: public footpaths, bridleways, byways open to all traffic, restricted byways and cycle paths / tracks.

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

It should be noted that a sample of residents participated in the survey rather than all residents within the Kent County Council boundary. The survey itself was self selecting and 99% of the sample completing are users of Public Rights of Way.

For the purposes of reporting a true reflection of views, all elements of the question scales have been included in our reporting, including any 'don't know' or 'not applicable' references. In addition, questions have been reported in the order in which they were asked of residents.

Lake has identified where significant differences lie in terms of subgroup analysis and have referenced these in this report. For each question, this report identifies relevant significant differences occur across the following:

- Gender
- Age
- Disability

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the team at Kent County Council for all their help and advice in developing the project. We would also like to thank all the residents who agreed to take part and whose views made this research possible.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **FAMILIARITY & CONFIDENCE WITH PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

Familiarity with Public Rights of Way is strong with more than nine in ten 'users' (92%) indicating that they were confident / have a basic knowledge / know enough about 'Rights of Way' in general. In the other six areas where their level of knowledge was questioned, the lowest response (for how to find information about Rights of Way) is still high at over three quarters of 'users' (78%). Knowledge of Public Rights of Way is higher amongst males and 'users' aged 55 and over and lower amongst those who indicated they have a disability.

### **USAGE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

Overall, just over eight in ten (81%) use at least one of these Public Rights of Way at least once a week. The most frequently used are footpaths with just over three quarters (76%) using them at least once a week while the lowest is restricted byways used by 21%. Frequency of use of most types of Right of Way is significantly lower amongst those who indicated they have a disability.

Countryside (90%), woodland/forest (87%), coastal (79%) and riverside (73%) are the most popular places to visit and almost nine in ten (86%) go beyond the confines of open spaces when walking, cycling or horse riding.

The most popular form of transport for all the four types of Public Rights of Way is by foot mentioned by over eight in ten in each case. Similar proportions (over eight in ten) use them at weekends.

The major motivations for all four types of Right of Way are to be active and healthy, visiting wildlife/nature and to visit viewpoints and attractions.

The most common words used to describe the experiences and feelings of using Public Rights of Way are in relation to enjoyment and keeping healthy both in body and mind - for example 'happy / pleasure / fun enjoyable', 'energetic / healthy / active / refreshing / exercise' and 'relaxing / peaceful / quiet / calm'. There are relatively few negative feelings and the most common relate to the poor maintenance, and possible safety fears.

When visiting Public Rights of Way, over two thirds of 'users' use maps, 40% use phone apps and 36% use guides.

### **BARRIERS TO USING / SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS TO PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

The main barriers for use for daily journeys were summarised into six categories with individual elements within each. Environmental aspects are the biggest barrier mentioned by 59% of 'users'. Within this category, overgrown vegetation is the main problem followed by accessibility, mentioned by 38%. Other barriers mentioned are poor maintenance of path surfaces (27%) and poor maintenance of stiles and gates (27%). Routes are mentioned by 35% with the lack of circular routes the main problem. Information (29%) is next with the emphasis on poor information and signage, 28% mention practicalities with the main criticism

being that routes did not take them where they wanted to go. Just over a fifth (21%) are not put off at all.

The results for leisure trips are very similar although environmental factors are considered even more important, mentioned by two thirds (66%) of respondents.



## **FAMILIARITY & USAGE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

'Users' were asked to indicate their level of knowledge on a number of statements concerning various aspects of 'Rights of Way'. The majority of 'users' indicated they were confident / have a basic knowledge / know enough about 'Rights of Way in general' for their needs at 92%. Confidence is high across the board, with even the lowest proportion of 78% recorded for 'how to find information about 'Rights of Way'.

### **How much do you know about each of the following.....?**

	Net: I am confident/basic knowledge/ enough for needs	I am confident in my knowledge	I have a basic knowledge	I know enough for my needs	I have no knowledge at all	I would like to know more	Don't know
Rights of Way in general	92%	39%	37%	16%	1%	7%	0%
Where the rights of way are near my house / village	89%	51%	27%	11%	2%	8%	1%
How or where to find information about rights of way	78%	40%	27%	12%	8%	13%	1%
What rights of way I am allowed to use	87%	46%	28%	12%	3%	10%	0%
The Countryside Code	88%	45%	31%	13%	4%	7%	1%
Map reading	90%	52%	25%	13%	4%	5%	1%
Knowing how to use rights of way without a map	81%	32%	33%	16%	6%	12%	1%

Base: All users of PROW (1,253)

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### **SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:**

There are significant differences in confidence / knowledge by gender, age and between those who indicated they are disabled and not disabled:

- Male 'users' and 'users' aged 55 and over are more confident on most aspects when compared with females and younger respondents.
- Those who indicated they are disabled are significantly less confident on all aspects with the exception of knowledge of the Countryside Code.

## ATTITUDES TOWARDS USAGE

In terms of the type of landscapes preferred to visit, countryside is the most popular (90%) followed closely by woodland / forest (87%), coastal (79%) and riverside (73%).

Overall in terms of travelling on Public Rights of Way, 98% indicated they walk, 40% cycle, 15% ride horses and 13% drive.

Which of the following types of landscape / places do you prefer to visit?	
Countryside	90%
Woodland / forests	87%
Coastal	79%
Riverside	73%
Nature reserves	61%
Viewpoints / features / attractions	55%
Historic places	53%
Urban	18%

How do you travel on the Public Rights of Way?	
On foot	98%
Cycling/mountain biking	40%
Horse riding	15%
Driving	13%
Carriage driving	1%
Other	2%

Base: Users of PROW (1,253)

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## TYPE AND FREQUENCY OF USAGE

‘Users’ were then asked to indicate the frequency to which they use each type of Public Right of Way: Public footpaths, Bridleways, Byways open to all traffic, Restricted byways and Cycle paths / tracks.

Overall, just over three quarters of ‘users’ (76%) indicated that they use public footpaths at least once a day or at least once a week; (1% claim never to use them). Claimed use of other types of Public Rights of Way is lower:

- 45% use ‘bridleways’ at least once a day / at least once a week; 15% rarely/never
- 30% use ‘byways open to all traffic’ at least once a day / at least once a week; 23% rarely/never

- 28% use 'cycle paths / tracks' at least once a day / at least once a week; 33% rarely/never
- 21% use 'restricted byways' at least once a day / at least once a week; 32% rarely/never

#### How often do you use the following Public Rights of Way.....?

	Net: Once a day or more/At least once a week	Once a day or more	At least once a week	At least once a fortnight	At least once a month	At least once every six months	Less often / never
Footpaths	76%	32%	44%	10%	8%	5%	1%
Bridleways	45%	10%	36%	13%	15%	12%	15%
Byways open to all traffic	30%	7%	23%	12%	19%	16%	23%
Restricted byways	21%	4%	17%	10%	19%	19%	32%
Cycle paths / tracks	28%	6%	21%	9%	14%	16%	33%

Base: All users of PROW (1,253)

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#### **SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:**

There are significant differences in confidence / knowledge by gender, age and between those who indicated they are disabled and not disabled:

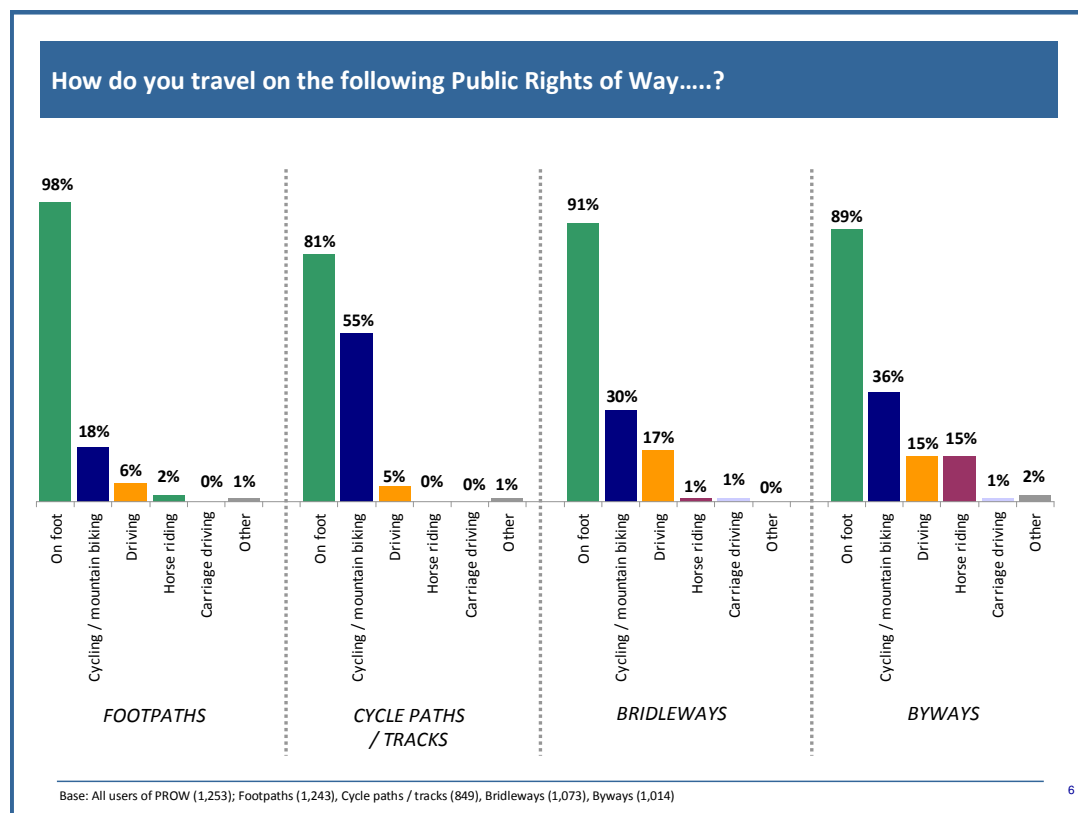
- Use of cycle path/tracks is higher amongst males (33%) compared with females (22%).
- There is a greater use of restricted byways amongst those aged 16-34 years old (32%) compared to those 55 and over (18%).
- There is a significant difference in the frequency of footpath usage between those who indicated they are disabled and not disabled - 65% of those who indicated they are disabled use footpaths once a day or more or at least once a week compared with 77% of those who do consider themselves to be disabled.

## PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY USAGE BEHAVIOUR – HOW, WHEN & PURPOSE

All Public Rights of Way ‘users’ were then asked to indicate:

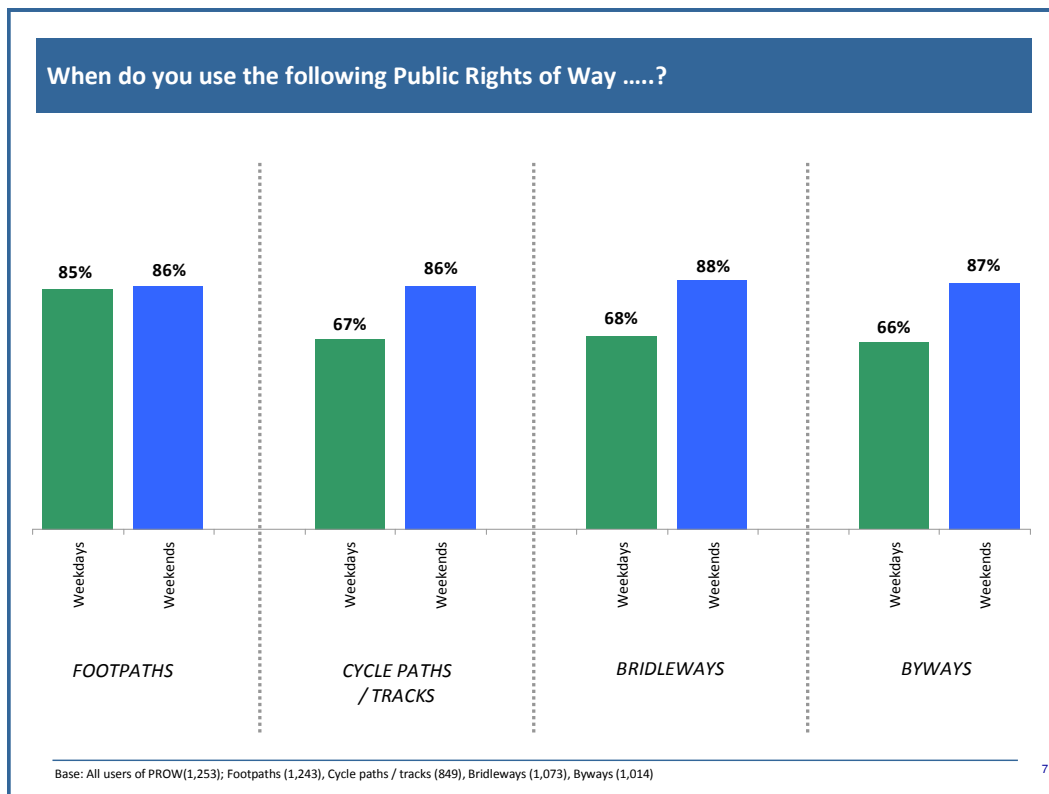
- How they travel on each of the Public Rights of Way they use
- The time of week they use each of the Public Rights of Way they use
- The reasons for using each of the Public Rights of Way they use
- Whether they use maps, guides or phone apps when using

The most common **means on travel** on all types of Public Rights of Way is on foot – 98% for footpaths, 81% for cycle paths / tracks, 91% for bridleways and 89% for byways. The next most common means of travel for all of the rights of way was cycling/mountain biking.



Just under three quarters of footpath ‘users’ (85%) indicated they **use Public Rights of Way on weekdays** and 86% at **weekends**. The proportion using weekday to weekend varies more widely for other types of Public Rights of Way:

- 67% of cycle path/track ‘users’ use them on weekdays; 86% use them on weekends.
- 68% of bridleway ‘users’ use them on weekdays; 88% use them on weekends.
- 66% of byway ‘users’ use them on weekdays; 87% use them on weekends.



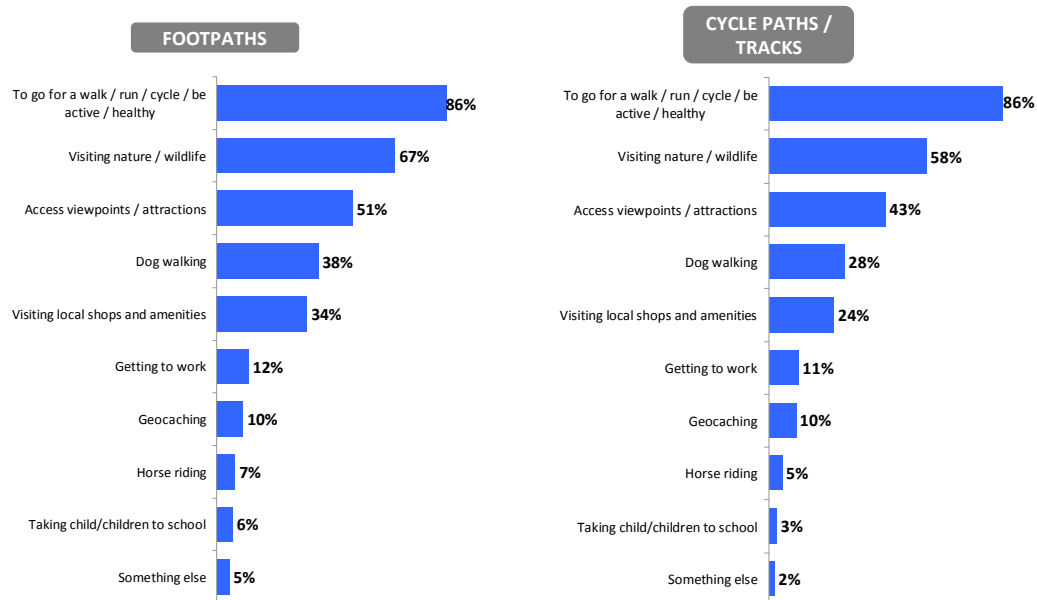
The most **common reason for using all types of Public Rights of Way** is to 'go for a walk / run / cycle / be active / healthy' – 86% for footpaths, 86% for cycle paths / tracks, 81% for bridleways and 75% for byways.

'Visiting nature / wildlife' is the second most common reason for using across all types of Public Rights of Way – 67% for footpaths, 58% for cycle paths / tracks, 61% for bridleways and 59% for byways.

The response in full is shown on the charts overleaf.



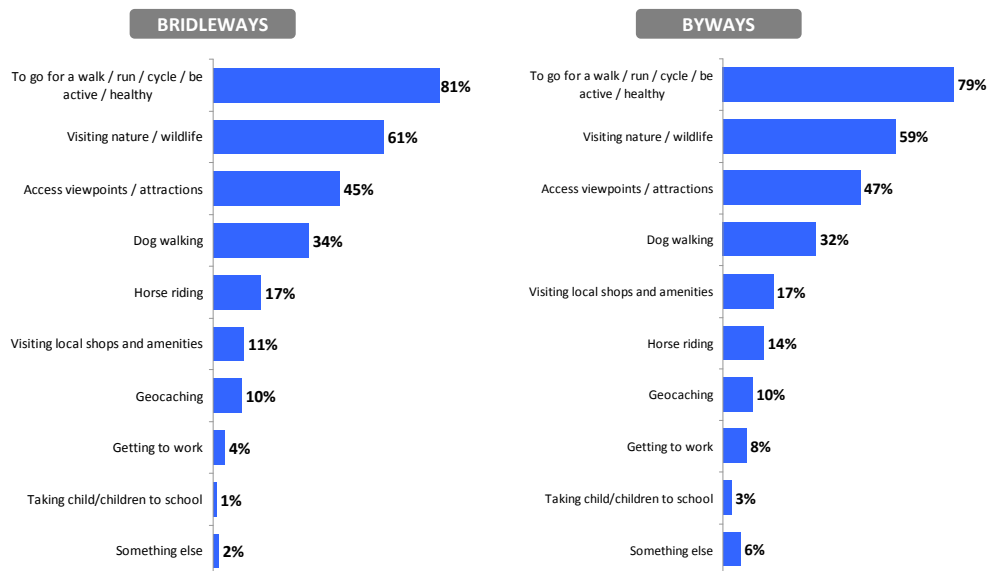
## For what purpose do you use the following Public Rights of Way.....?



Base: All users of PROW(1,253); Footpaths (1,243), Cycle paths / tracks (849)

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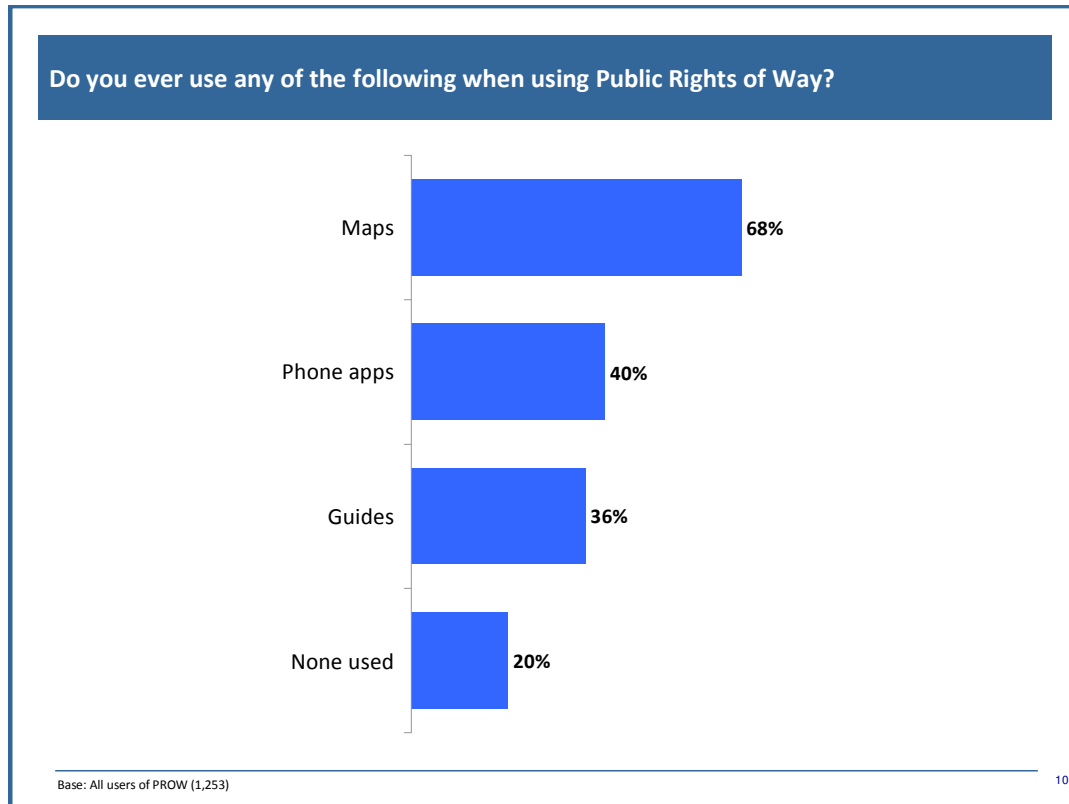
## For what purpose do you use the following Public Rights of Way .....



Base: All users of PROW (1,253); Bridleways (1,073), Byways (1,014)

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When 'users' were asked **whether they use phone apps, maps or guides on Public Rights of Way** (of any type), 20% indicated that they did not use any of these. Of those used, the most common are maps at (68%), phone apps (40%) and guides (36%).



#### **SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:**

There are significant differences in confidence / knowledge by gender and age:

- A significantly higher proportion of male 'users' use maps (75%).
- A significantly higher proportion of 'users' aged 55 and over use maps (74%) and guides (43%). A significantly higher proportion of 'users' aged under 55 use apps, especially the 35-44 age group (60%).

## **VIEWS OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

All Public Rights of Way 'users' were then asked to:

- Describe their experience / how they feel when using Public Rights of Way in up to three words
  - Any barriers that prevent them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for any of their daily journeys (e.g. work / school / local shops / doctors)
  - Any barriers that prevent them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for any of their leisure trips
  - Anything that would encourage them to use Public Rights of Way more often / for other purposes
  - Where applicable, rank the top three factors that would most encourage them to use Public Rights of Way more often / for other purposes
  - Interest in the development of a range of additional routes
- 

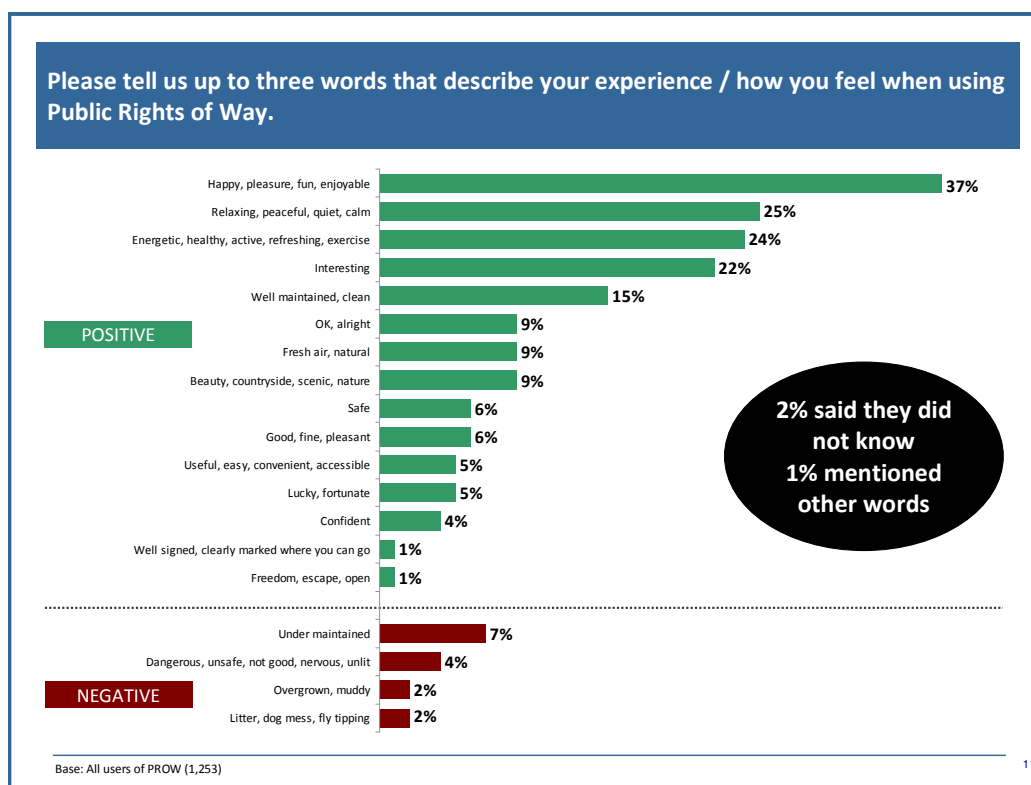
### **EXPERIENCE**

Users were asked to **describe in their experience / how they feel when using Public Rights of Way in their own words, as a verbatim comment**. Lake Market Research have reviewed the comments and developed a codeframe to group together common themes, in order to quantify the feedback received. The chart overleaf displays the results in full.

The most common experiences / feelings reported are in relation to enjoyment and keeping healthy both in body and mind. The exact proportions reporting these are as follows:

- 'Happy / pleasure / fun / enjoyable' – 37%
- 'Relaxing / peaceful / quiet / calm' – 25%
- 'Energetic / healthy / active / refreshing / exercise' – 24%

The most common negative response was 'under maintained' – 7%. The full response for both positive and negative comments is shown in the chart above.



## BARRIERS TO USE – DAILY JOURNEYS

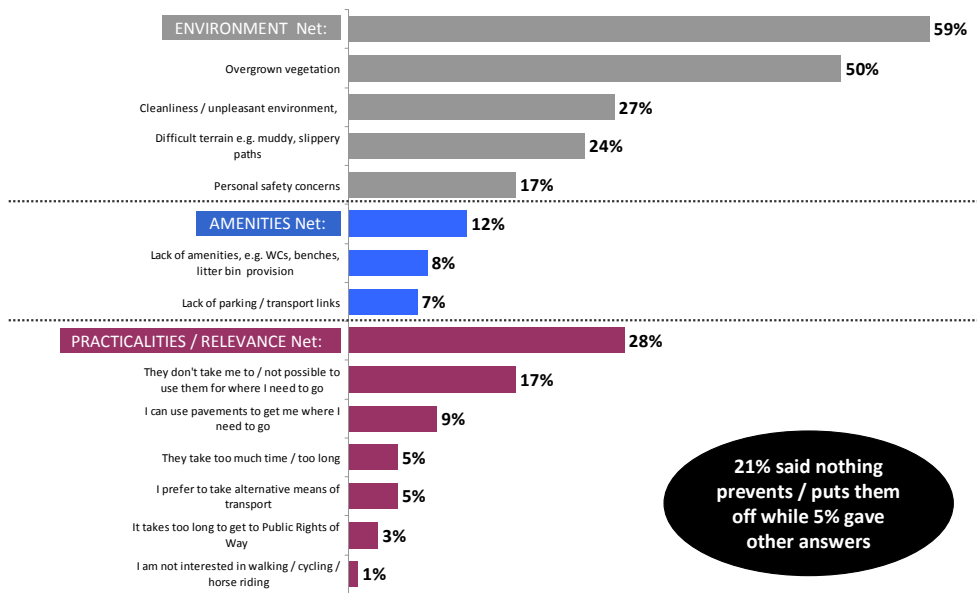
‘Users’ were then asked whether there was anything that **prevents them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for any of their daily journeys** (e.g. work / school / local shops / doctors), and presented with a list of 25 prompted responses grouped into six wider themes: Environment, Information, Routes, Accessibility, Practicalities / Relevance and Amenities. The charts overleaf summarise the percentage of responses that fall within each of the wider themes as well as the individual percentages for the prompted response codes.

For daily journeys, while 21% of users indicated that nothing would prevent them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way, the environment and accessibility are the two most common themes identified in terms of barriers, at 59% and 38% respectively. Within the environment theme, the most common responses selected are ‘overgrown vegetation’ (50% of ‘users’), ‘cleanliness / unpleasant environment’ (27%) and ‘difficult terrain e.g. muddy, slippery paths’ (24%). Within the accessibility theme, the dominant response selected is ‘poor maintenance of paths’ (27% of ‘users’) and ‘stiles and gates’ (20%).

Routes are the next most important barrier (35%). Within routes, the lack of ‘circular routes’ (17%) and ‘unsafe road crossings’ (13%) were the two most important.

For some users, ‘information’ is a barrier (29%). Within information, ‘poor information / signage on routes’ (22%) and not knowing ‘where there will be barriers preventing my use’ (13%).

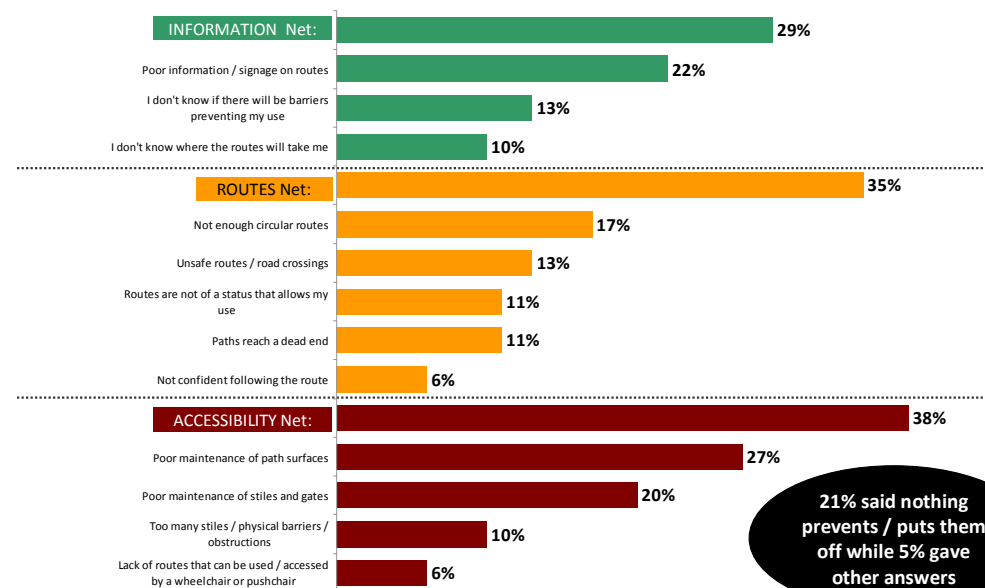
**In general, is there anything that either prevents you from using / puts you off using Public Rights of Way for any of your DAILY JOURNEYS?**



Base: All users of PROW (1,253)

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**In general, is there anything that either prevents you from using / puts you off using Public Rights of Way for any of your DAILY JOURNEYS?**



Base: All users of PROW (1,253)

14



### **SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:**

There are significant differences in response to the themes that prevent 'users' from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for daily journeys by age, gender and disability:

- A significantly higher proportion of female 'users' consider the information and routes themes as bigger barriers. Within these two themes, female 'users' are more likely to suggest that almost every feature are a bigger barrier.
  - The same was true although to a lesser extent for those aged 16-34 and those who indicated they are disabled.
- 

### **BARRIERS TO USE – LEISURE TRIPS**

'Users' were then asked whether there was anything that **prevents them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for leisure trips**, and presented with the same list of 25 prompted responses and the same six wider themes. The chart below is in a consistent format to daily journeys responses.

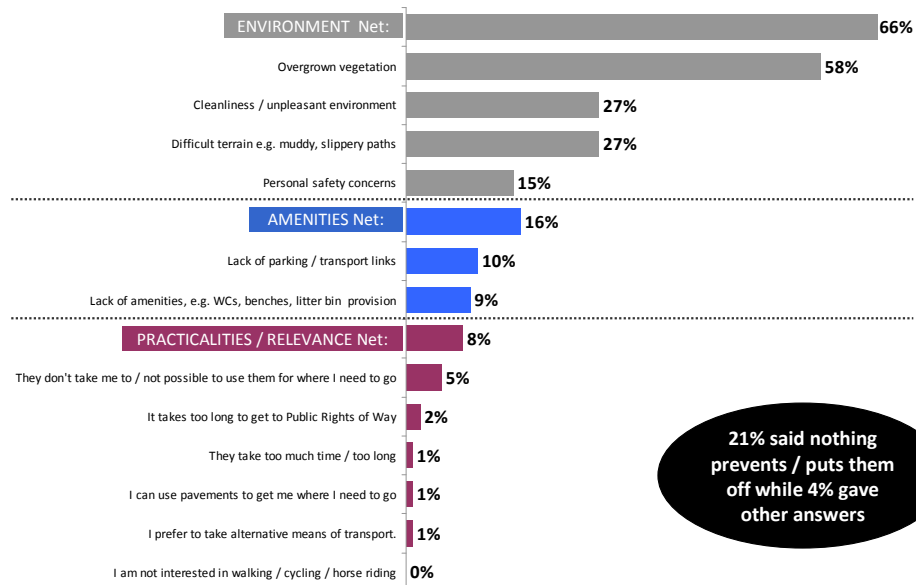
21% of 'users' indicated that nothing would prevent them from using / put them off using Public Rights of Way. Consistent with response to daily journeys barriers, the environment is the most common theme at 66%. However, the joint second most common at 40% are routes and accessibility. The charts overleaf show the response to all themes and the elements contained in them.

Within the environment theme, the most common responses selected are 'overgrown vegetation' (58% of 'users'), 'cleanliness / unpleasant environment' (27%) and 'difficult terrain e.g. muddy, slippery paths' (27%).

Within routes, the lack of circular routes is the major concern (23%) while for accessibility the most important are 'poor maintenance of styles and gates' (26%) and 'path surfaces' (25%).

Whilst relatively marginal, information is identified as more of a barrier for leisure trips at (14% compared to 9% for daily journeys) – the most common response selected is 'poor information / signage on routes' (10%). Response to the route, practicalities / relevance and amenities themes is broadly consistent as observed for daily journeys.

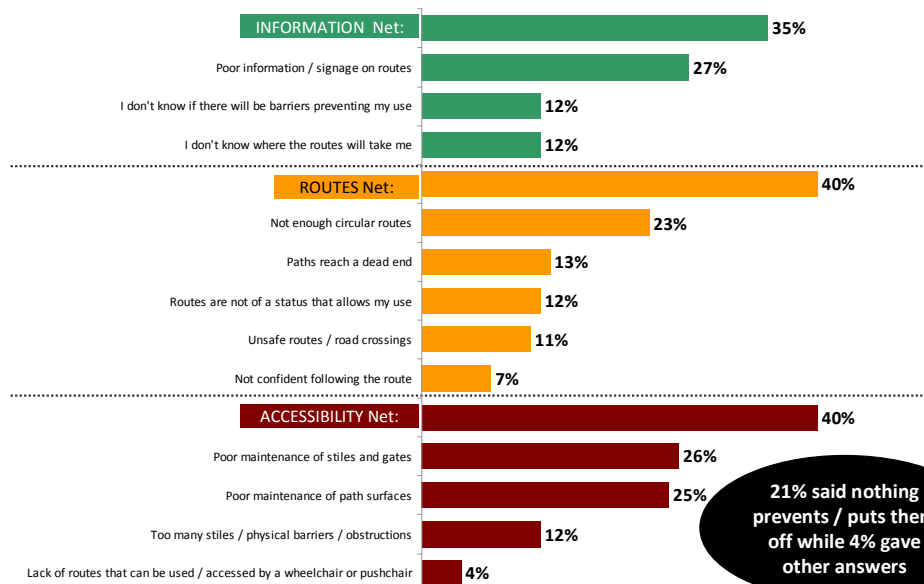
**In general, is there anything that either prevents you from using / puts you off using Public Rights of Way for any of your LEISURE TRIPS?**



Base: All users of PROW (1,253)

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**In general, is there anything that either prevents you from using / puts you off using Public Rights of Way for any of your LEISURE TRIPS?**



Base: All users of PROW (1,253)

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### **SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:**

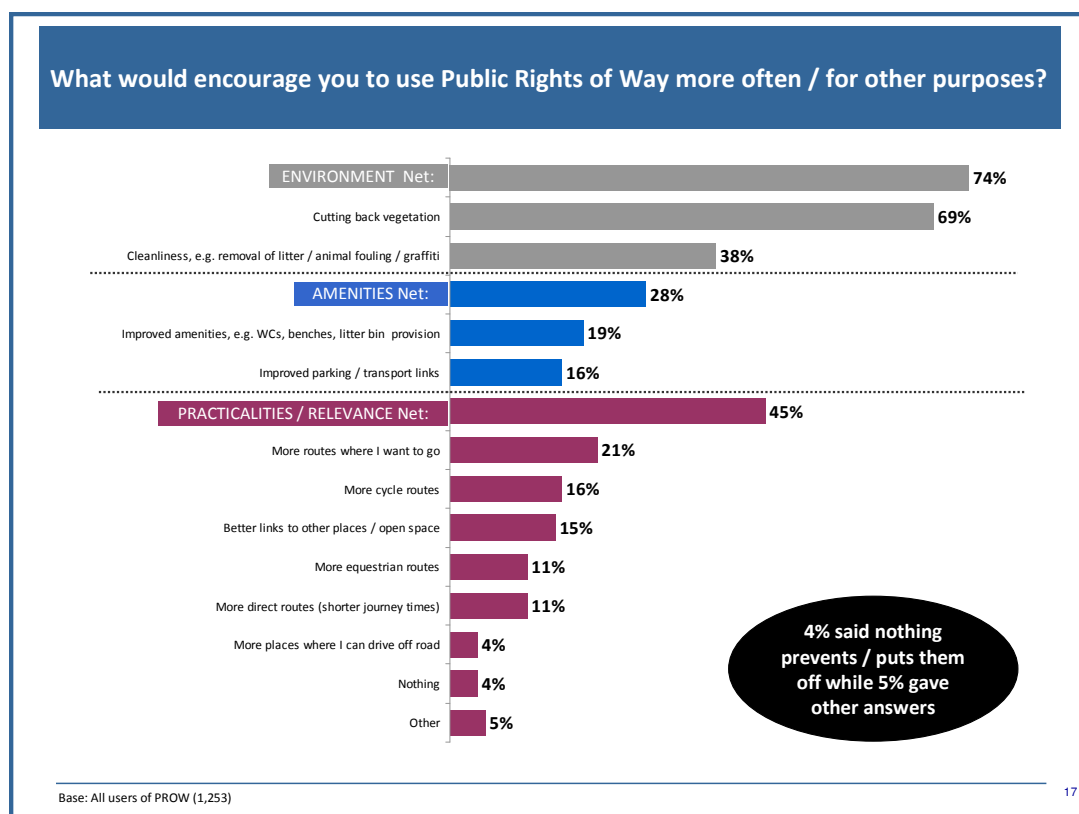
There are significant differences in response to the themes that prevent 'users' from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for 'leisure trips' by gender and disability:

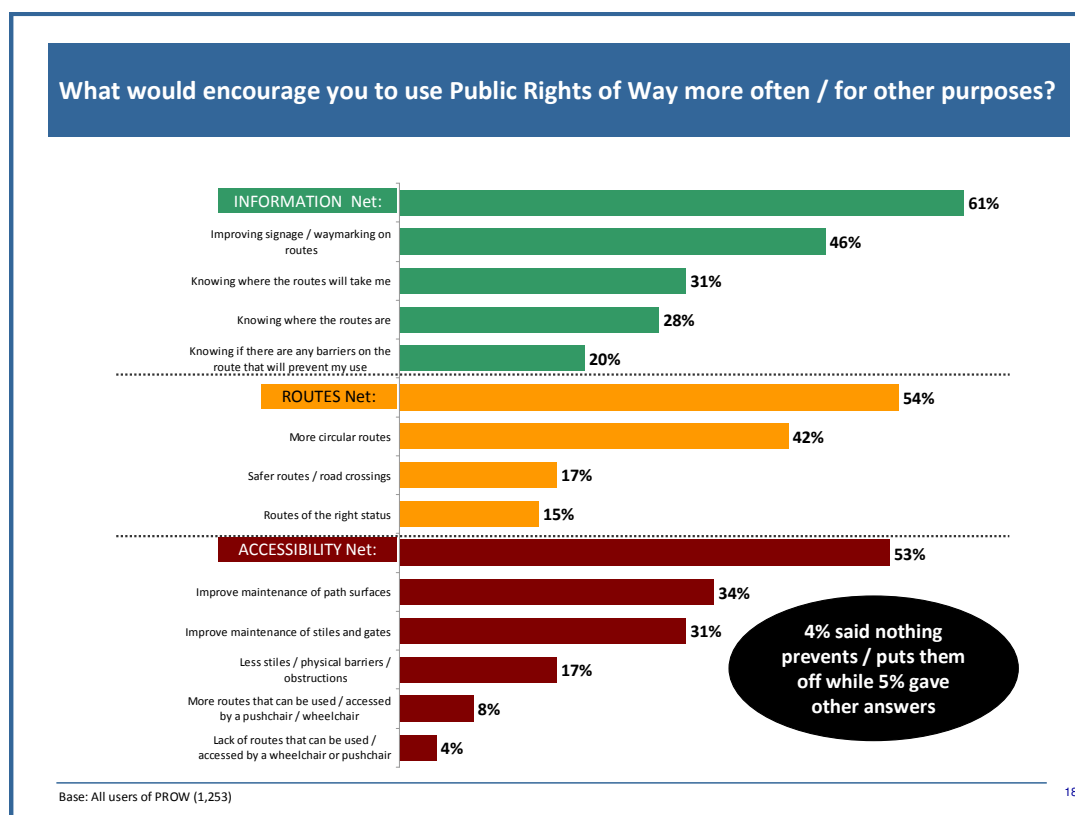
- Consistent with the response observed for daily journeys, female 'users' and those who indicated they are disabled mention a number of elements in most themes.
- Female 'users' in particular, are more likely to be critical in every element of information and routes.

### **BARRIERS TO USE – OTHER PURPOSES**

'Users' were then asked whether there was anything that **would most encourage them to use Public Rights of Way more often / for other purposes** and presented with the same list of 25 prompted responses and the same six themes.

4% of 'users' indicated that nothing would encourage them to use / puts them off using Public Rights of Way. Consistent with the response to daily journeys and leisure trips, the environment is the most common theme at 74%, again cutting back vegetation (69%) and cleanliness (38%) are the most common elements. The next most common themes are accessibility (53%) and routes (54%). Within accessibility, 'improved maintenance of path surfaces' (34%) and 'stiles/gates' (31%) are the most important issues.





### SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:

There are significant differences in response by gender and disability:

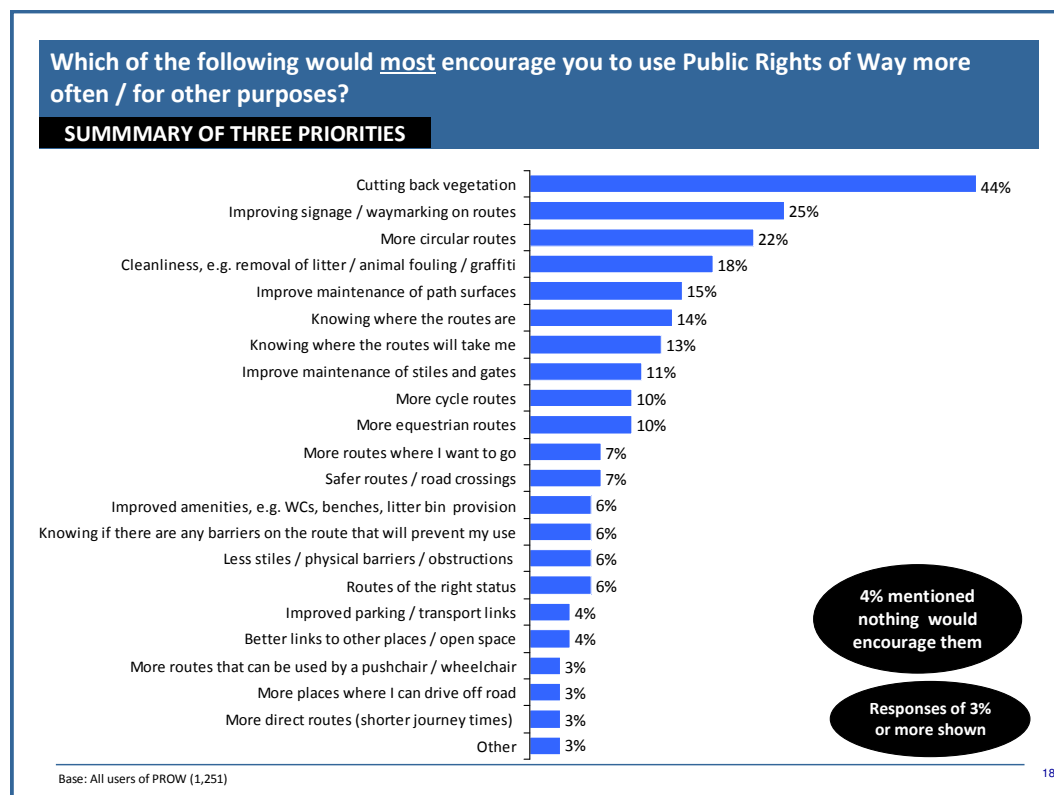
- A significantly higher proportion of female 'users' and 'users' who indicated they are disabled make suggestions to promote greater use.

## SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENT – TOP 3 RANKING

All 'users' who selected at least one area that would encourage them to use Public Rights of Way more often / for more purposes were ranked in terms of their first, second and third priority (where applicable). There are two charts below, the first looks at the top three priorities and the second looks at the top priority (the charts exclude the 4% of 'users' who indicated nothing would encourage them).

The most frequently suggested top 3 priorities included:

- Cutting back on vegetation – 44%
- Improving route signage and waymarking – 25%
- More circular routes – 22%
- Cleanliness – 18%

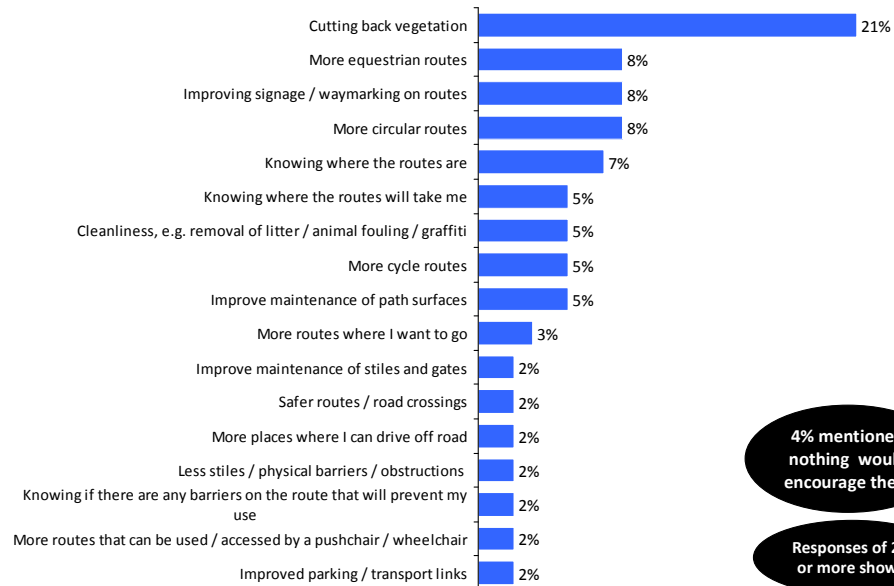


The chart below shows the top priority and confirms that the clear preference is the cutting back of vegetation with 21% of users putting this first.



Which one of the following would most encourage you to use Public Rights of Way more often / for other purposes?

**FIRST PRIORITY**



4% mentioned  
nothing would  
encourage them

Responses of 2%  
or more shown

Base: All users of PROW (1,251)

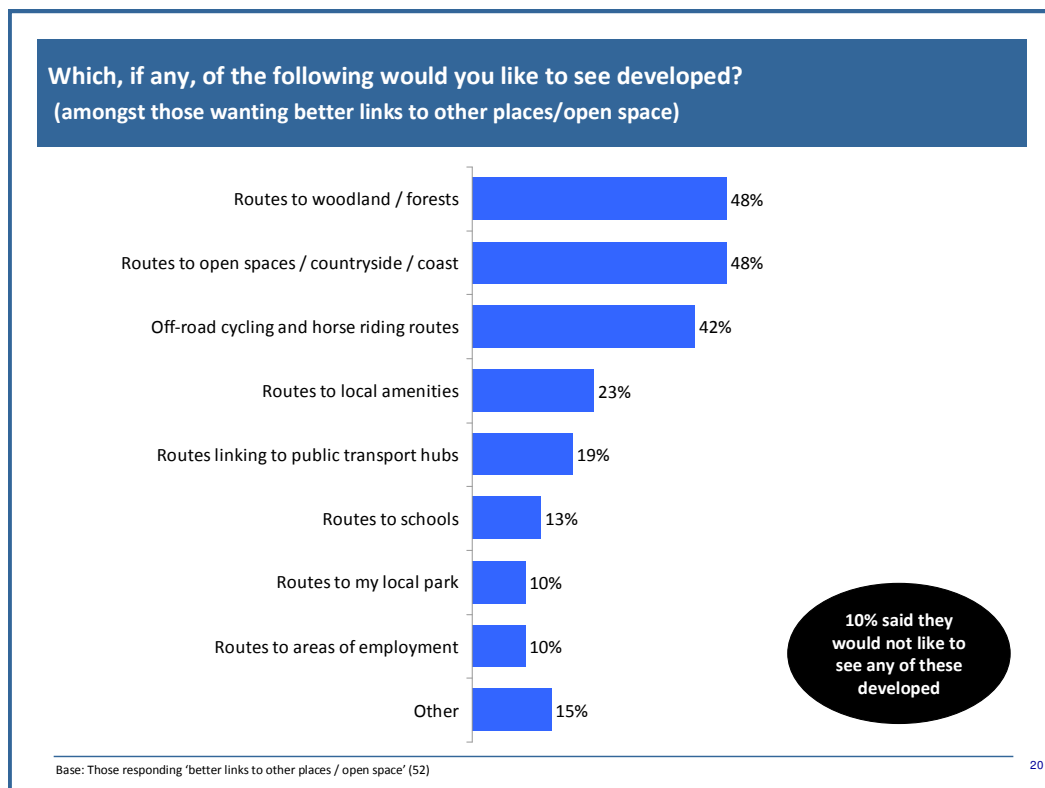
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### PREFERRED DEVELOPMENTS (amongst those wanting better links)

Those who suggested the need for better links to other places/open spaces in the previous question were asked their preferred developments. The chart below summarises the response.

The top three suggestions are:

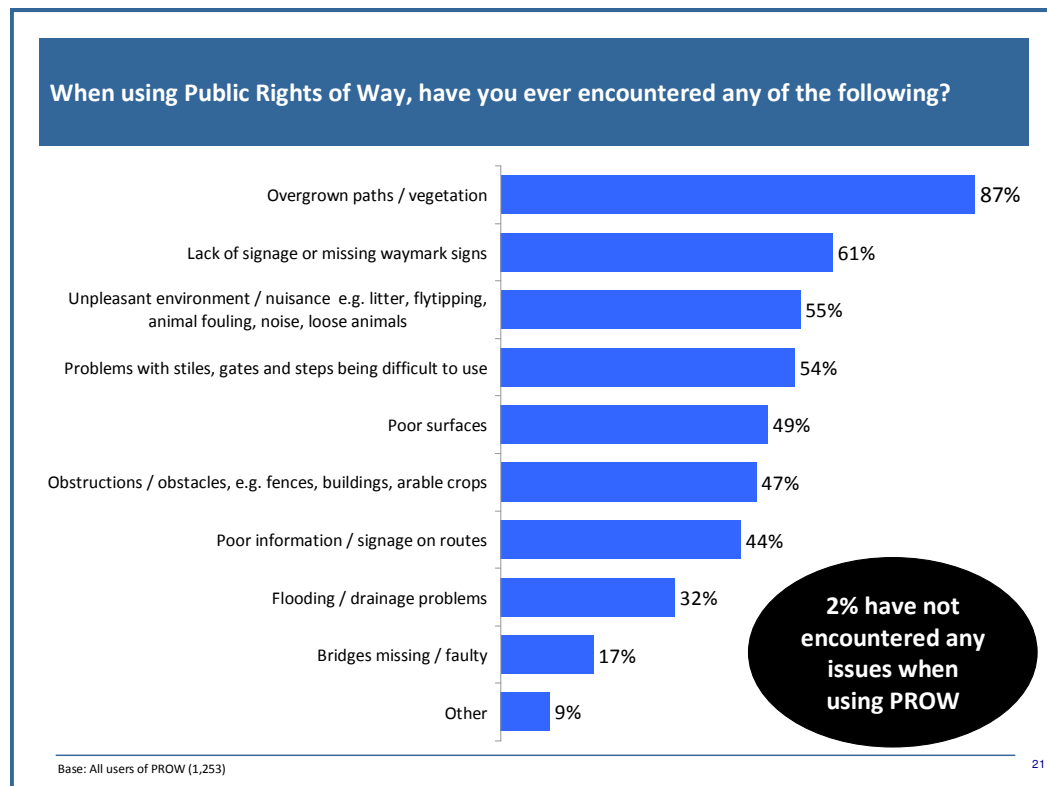
- Routes to woodland/forest – 48%
- Route to open spaces/countryside/coasts – 48%
- Off road cycling and horse riding routes – 42%



## ISSUES ENCOUNTERED

'Users' were then asked **whether they had encountered any issues when using Public Rights of Way** via a series of prompted responses and the option to reference a free text answer for an area not covered by the responses.

Only 2% of 'users' indicated that they have not encountered any issues when using Public Rights of Way. The most common response echoes previous responses in terms of usage barriers – 'overgrown paths / vegetation' (87%) followed by 'lack of signage' (61%), unpleasant environment / nuisance' (55%) and 'problems with stiles gates and steps' (54%).



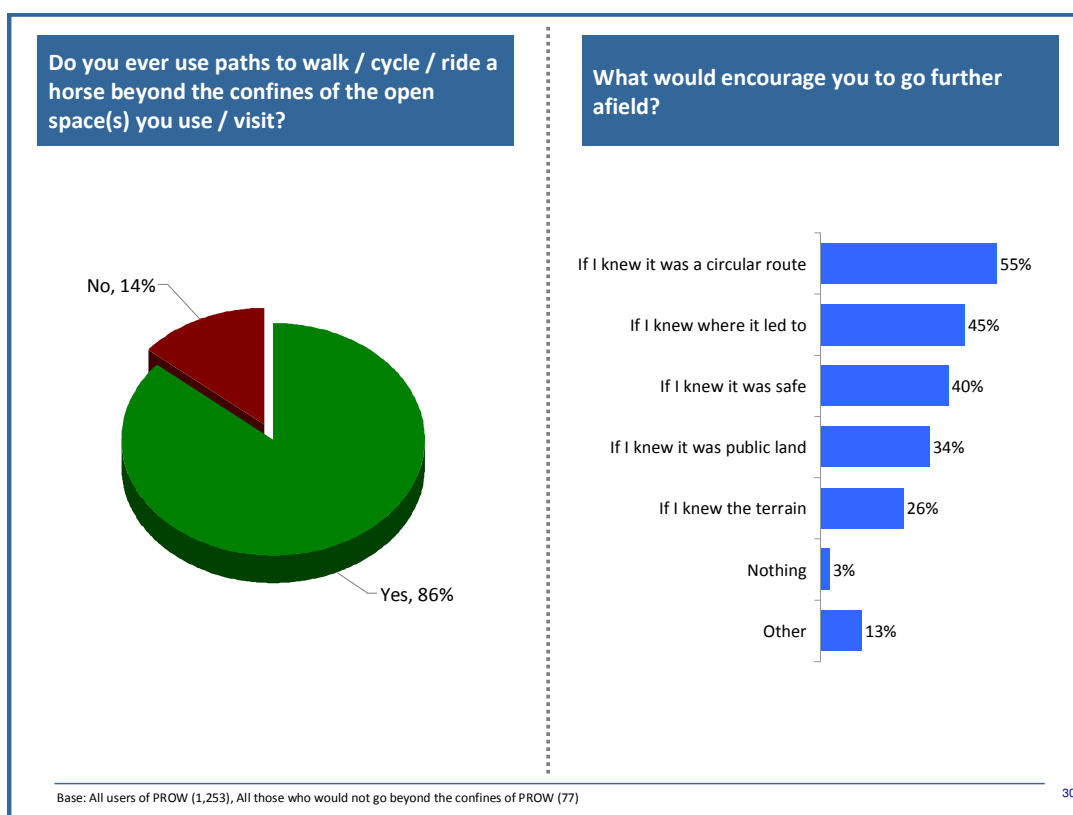
## SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:

There are significant differences by disability – a significantly higher proportion of those who indicated they are disabled mentioned poor surfaces (68%).

## PROPENSITY TO GO BEYOND THE CONFINES OF OPEN SPACES

Users were asked if they ever use paths to walk / cycle / ride a horse beyond the confines of the open space that they visit; 86% replied that they did.

Amongst the 14% who did not go further afield, 55% would be encouraged to do so if they 'knew it was a circular route' (55%), 'they knew where it led to' (45%) or 'they knew it was safe' (40%).

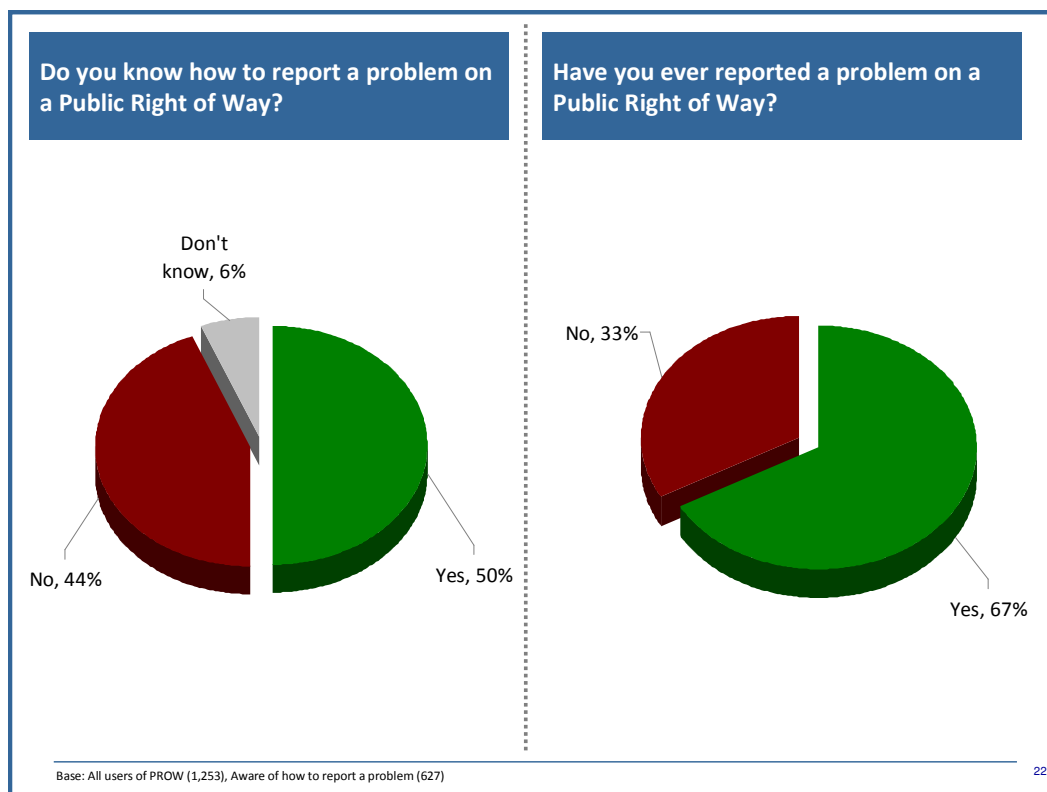


## AWARENESS AND USE OF ISSUE NOTIFICATION

'Users' were asked to indicate whether they were **aware of how to report a problem on a Public Right of Way**, and for all those aware **whether they have ever reported a problem on a Public Right of Way**.

50% of 'users' indicated they knew how to report a problem on a Public Right of Way; of those aware of how to report a problem, 67% have done so.

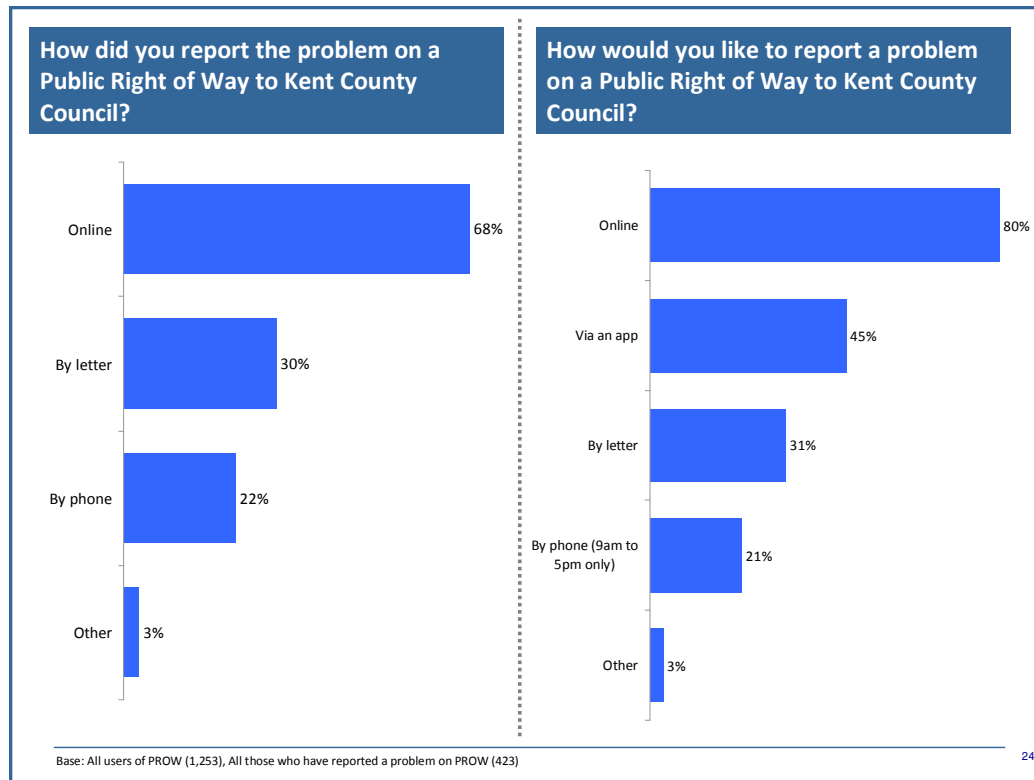
There are significant differences observed by age, with a significantly higher proportion of 'users' aged 55 and over indicating they know how to report a problem at 54%.





## HOW THE PROBLEM WAS REPORTED TO KCC AND HOW RESPONDENT WOULD LIKE TO REPORT IT

The most common form of reporting a problem is online (64%), followed by email (28%), phone (21%) and letter (2%). In terms of preference, the majority (80%) of users favour an online approach.

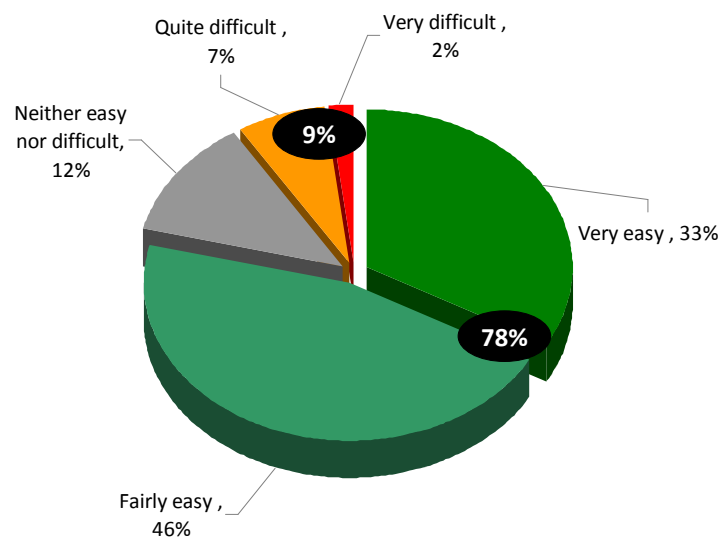


## THE EASE WITH WHICH A PROBLEM WAS REPORTED AND THE LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH THE SERVICE

For all users that indicated they had ever reported a problem with a Public Right of Way, they were asked to assess **how easy it was to report the problem, their satisfaction with the service they received and by how they reported the problem**. The majority (78%) indicated that it was easy (either very – 33% or fairly – 46%); 9% indicated that it was difficult.

Online was the most satisfactory method of communication with 82% finding it easy.

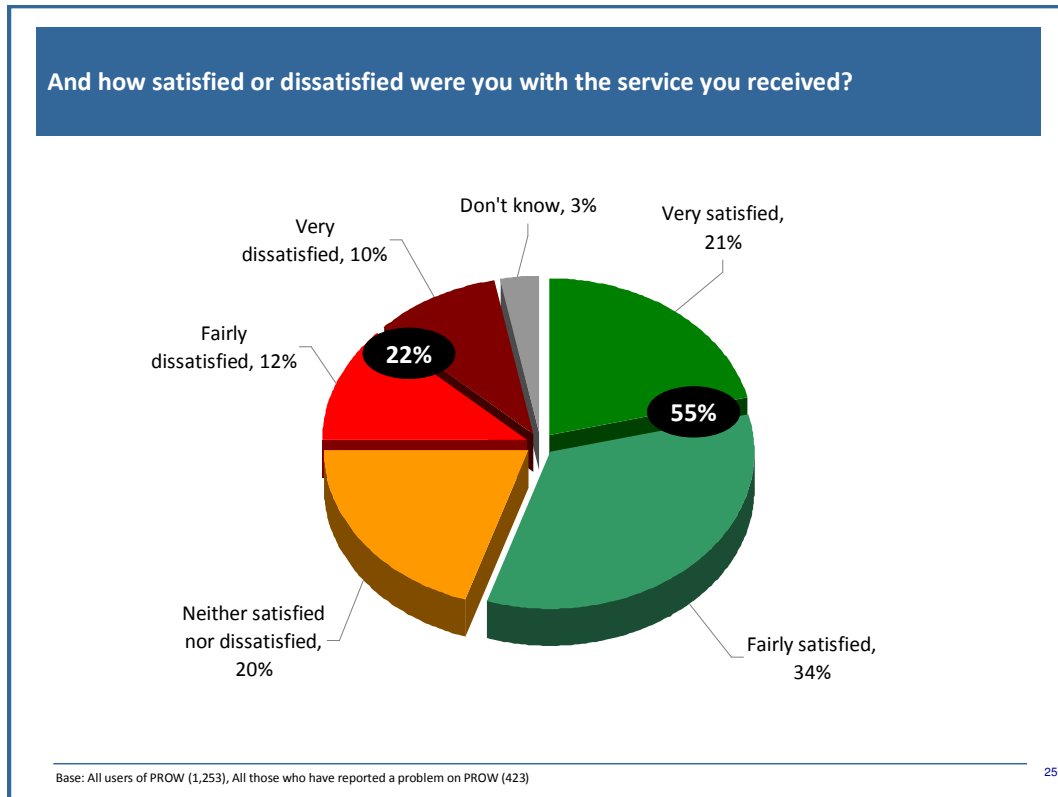
From what you have experienced, how easy was it to report the problem?



Base: All users of PROW (1,253), All those who have reported a problem on PROW (423)

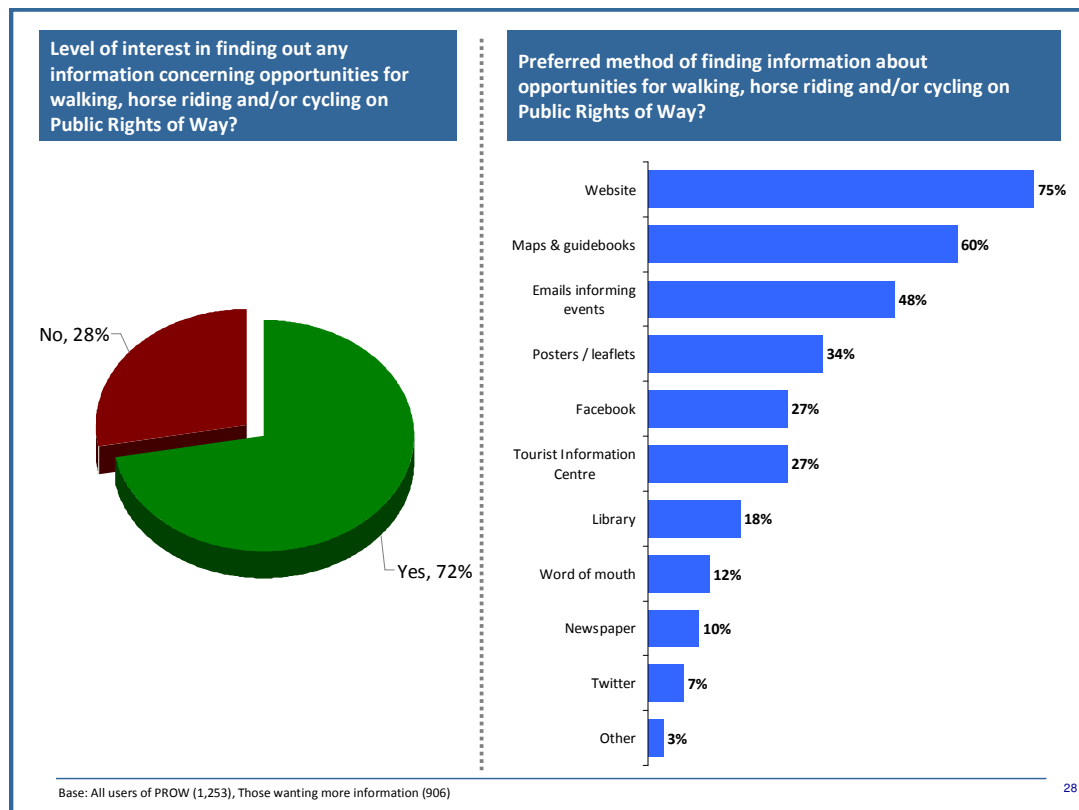
24

The chart below shows the level of satisfaction with the service received. 55% of users indicated they were satisfied with the service they received (either very – 21% or fairly – 34%). 22% indicated they were dissatisfied with the service they received.



## LEVEL OF INTEREST IN OBTAINING FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT USING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

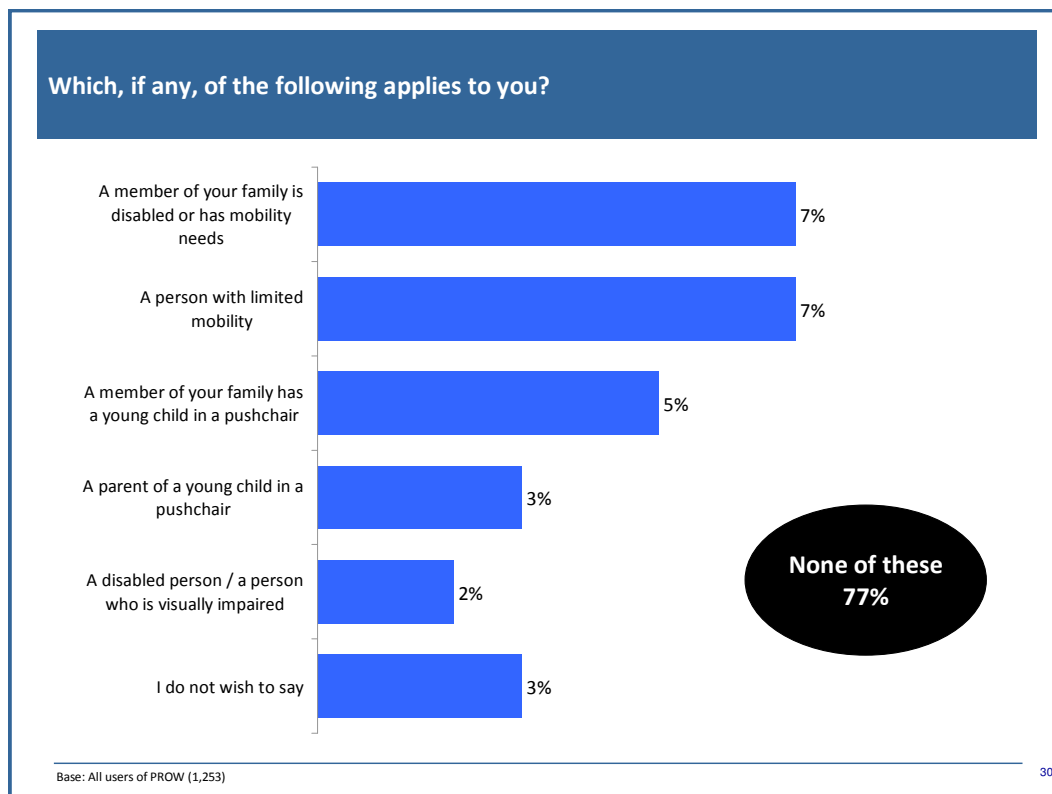
Almost three quarters of users (72%) would like more information on using Public Rights of Way and of these users, the preferred medium is online mentioned by (75%) followed by maps and guides (60%). 48% said would like to receive information about events via email. The response breakdown can be seen in the chart below:



## ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

'Users' were also asked to indicate whether they or a member of their family were of limited mobility, a disabled person / a person who is visually impaired or a parent of a young child in pushchair. This question was included to ascertain whether there were any issues / concerns with regards to accessing Public Rights of Way that need to be taken into account for the future.

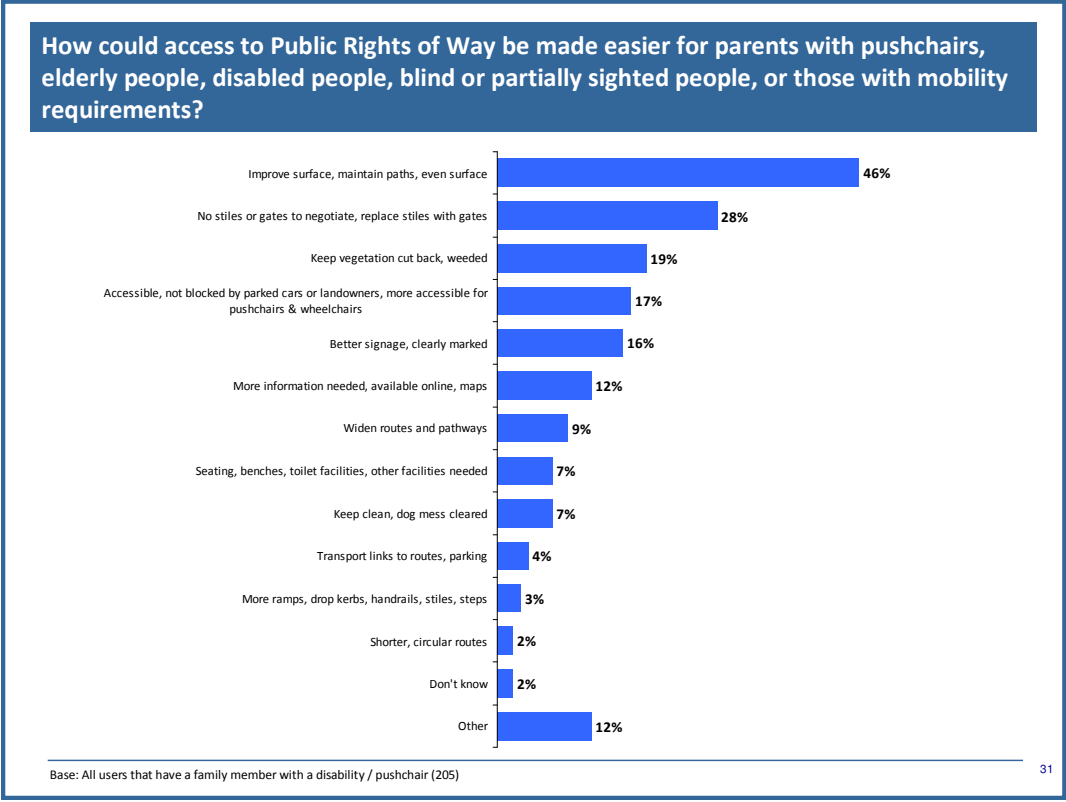
77% of 'users' indicated that none of these factors applied to them. 7% indicated they have limited mobility and 2% indicated they are a disabled person / visually impaired. 3% indicated they are a parent of a young child in a pushchair.



Users who indicated that any of the access factors applied to them were asked to **how access to Public Rights of Way be made easier for parents with pushchairs, elderly people, disabled people, blind or partially sighted people, or those with mobility requirements in their own words, as a verbatim comment**. Lake Market Research have reviewed the comments and developed a codeframe to group together common themes, in order to quantify the feedback received.

The most common response would be to 'improve the surface / maintain paths', i.e. smoother surfaces that are easier to navigate, at 46%. This is followed by 'No stiles or gates to negotiate/replace stiles with gates' at 28%, 'keeping vegetation cut back / weeded' at 19%

and ‘making them ‘accessible / not blocked by parked cars / more accessible for pushchairs and wheelchairs’ at 17%.





# Kent County Council Public Rights of Way Written Report

Prepared by Lake Market Research for Kent County Council

18<sup>th</sup> September 2017

JOB REFERENCE 9170042-01



*"This report complies to ISO 20252 and any other relevant codes of conduct."*

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## **RESEARCH CONTEXT**

### **BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Kent County Council is required to publish a Countryside Access Improvement Plan covering Kent (excluding Medway). In drawing up the plan, they are required to assess the extent to which local Rights of Way meet the present and likely future needs of the public and the opportunities provided by local Rights of Way for exercise and other forms of open-air recreation.

A forward-thinking plan is envisaged to set out how any perceived benefits will be delivered and how the future needs of Kent's residents will be met: supporting local communities, building a strong economy and benefiting the health and wellbeing of Kent's residents.

Kent County Council commissioned Lake Market Research to gather insight and information from Kent residents to inform the content and priorities of the Countryside Access Improvement Plan. The research has been commissioned to understand to what extent Public Rights of Way meets current demand and how it needs to evolve to meet future requirements. More specifically, it needs to assess:

- Current levels and usage purposes amongst those who use them
- Experience of using Public Rights of Way
- Barriers to using Public Rights of Way
- Suggested improvements / links to other facilities / access routes
- The extent to which any issues have been encountered to date
- The degree of awareness of how to report and issue and the extent to which this has been used
- Any comments with regards to access requirements amongst those with children or have a disability / a family member with a disability

### **METHODOLOGY & RESPONDENT PROFILE**

Residents completed the survey in a face to face interview at home during July and August 2017. Only one person per household was interviewed and 624 residents were interviewed in total.

An equal number of interviews were conducted in each of the 12 Districts of Kent, circa 50 in each. Within each District, residents were sampled across varying postcode sectors to ensure a good spread in terms of geography. A sample specification was set up in line with 2011 Census statistics for the Kent County Council boundary area, to ensure we interviewed a representative sample of residents in terms of gender and age. An overview of the resident profile interviewed can be found below:

## Interviews achieved per district & quota targets

District	Interviews achieved
Ashford	52
Canterbury	52
Dartford	52
Dover	50
Gravesham	52
Maidstone	52
Sevenoaks	52
Shepway	52
Swale	52
Thanet	54
Tonbridge	51
Tunbridge Wells	53

	Target proportion	Proportion Achieved
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	48%	46%
Female	52%	54%
<b>Age</b>		
18-34 years	25%	24%
35-54 years	36%	33%
55-64 years	16%	18%
65 years +	23%	25%

Total Sample Size: 624

2

## Profile of residents responding

<b>Gender</b>	
Male	46%
Female	54%

<b>Age</b>	
16 – 24	9%
25 – 34	15%
35 – 44	15%
45 – 54	18%
55 – 64	18%
65 – 74	13%
75+	11%

<b>Ethnicity</b>	
White; English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	95%
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups; White and Black Caribbean	1%
Asian/Asian British; Indian	2%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; African/Other	1%

<b>Disability</b>	
Yes	11%
No	88%
Prefer not to answer	2%

<b>Type of impairment</b>	
Physical impairment	70%
Long standing illness or health condition	24%
Sensory impairment (hearing, sight or both)	12%
Mental health condition	7%
Learning disability	0%
Other / prefer not to answer	4%

3

The exact proportion of Kent residents who 'use at least one type of Public Right of Way at least once every six months' (i.e. 'users' of Public Rights of Way) is unknown. Throughout

fieldwork, we monitored the proportion of 'users' and 'non users' in order to approximately quantify their incidence. One central questionnaire was used for both 'users' and 'non users' but questions were routed / rephrased accordingly and where appropriate to do so. 'Users' were defined as someone who uses at least one of the following at least once every 6 months: Public footpaths, Bridleways, Byways open to all traffic, Restricted byways and cycle paths tracks.

## **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

It should be noted that a sample of residents participated in the survey rather than all residents within the Kent County Council boundary. Results are therefore subject to sampling error, which means that not all differences observed are statistically significant. Overall Kent results are accurate to a confidence interval (also called margin of error) of +/- 4% at the 95% confidence level. There are three factors that determine the size of the confidence interval for a given confidence level: sample size; percentage; and population size. In calculating the general level of accuracy for reporting purposes we have used:

- The sample size of 624 achieved;
- The worst case percentage (50% - when responses are for example 51% and 49% the chances of sampling error are greater than at 99% or 1%. To determine a general level of accuracy for a sample interviewed you should use the worst case percentage (50%) to calculate it.);
- 2011 Census data estimate of 1,232,800 residents across the Kent County Council area aged 16 and over.

Interviewing approximately 50 residents per District (i.e. Ashford, Canterbury and Dartford etc.) would give us a confidence interval of +/- 14% in any results at a total District level. For example, if 50% of the 50 people interviewed in Ashford said they 'use footways at least once every six months', then in reality this figure could be somewhere between 36% or 64%. As a result, and given the varying proportion of 'users' to non 'users' in each District, we have only commented on the proportions of users to non users per District as any other scores would be misleading.

For the purposes of reporting a true reflection of residents' views, all elements of the question scales have been included in our reporting, including any 'don't know' or 'not applicable' references. In addition, questions have been reported in the order in which they were asked of residents.

A number of subgroups have been explored to identify significant differences in response. For each question, this report identifies where significant differences occur across the following:

- Gender
- Age
- Disability

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the team at Kent County Council for all their help and advice in developing the project. We would also like to thank all the residents who agreed to take part and whose views made this research possible.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **FAMILIARITY & CONFIDENCE WITH PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

Self reported familiarity with Public Rights of Way is strong with at least two thirds of residents indicated they were confident / have a basic knowledge / know enough about 'Rights of Way' in general for their needs, and 'where Public Rights of Way are near their house / village'. There is a marked difference in familiarity between those who indicated they are disabled and those who are not; with confidence significantly lower amongst those who indicated they are disabled.

### **USAGE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

At a total level, just over six in ten use at least one of these Public Rights of Way at least every six months. The ratio of 'users' to 'non users' varies considerably per district, with a high proportion of 'users' sampled in Ashford, Dover, Maidstone, Shepway and Tunbridge Wells. At a total level, just over a third of residents indicated they use 'public footpaths' at least once a day or at least once a week. Usage of other types of Public Rights of Way is lower, as expected. There is a marked difference in the claimed frequency of use of public footpaths, between those who indicated they are disabled and those who are not; with claimed frequency significantly lower amongst those who indicated they are disabled.

'User' familiarity and confidence proportions in terms of 'how or where to find information about Rights of Way' and 'what Rights of Way I am allowed to use' are high, but comparatively lower to familiarity with other elements of Public Rights of Way usage such as where they are.

The most common reasons for using Public Rights of Way are to go for a walk / run / cycle / be active / healthy', 'visiting nature / wildlife' and 'dog walking'. 'Visiting local shops and amenities' and 'accessing viewpoints / attractions' are also selected by a proportion of 'users' of cycle paths / tracks and bridleways.

The most common experiences / feelings when using Public Rights of Way are in relation to enjoyment and keeping healthy both in body and mind - for example 'happy / pleasure / fun enjoyable', 'energetic / healthy / active / refreshing / exercise' and 'relaxing / peaceful / quiet / calm'.

### **BARRIERS TO USING / SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS TO PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

The table below summarises the most common barriers referenced by 'users' and 'non users' of Public Rights of Way. The proportion referencing 'nothing' however should be accordingly taken into account when interpreting common responses. There is a degree of commonality between the two groups in terms of environmental and information concerns / improvements. Path maintenance is more prominent amongst 'users' and the availability of routes accessible to wheelchairs / pushchairs is more prominent amongst 'non users'.

USERS	NON USERS
<p>DAILY JOURNEY BARRIERS (54% no barriers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The environment, e.g. overgrown vegetation, cleanliness / unpleasant environment, e.g. litter / animal fouling graffiti</li> <li>• Accessibility, i.e. the poor maintenance of path surfaces</li> </ul>	<p>DAILY JOURNEY BARRIERS (34% no barriers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practicalities / relevance, e.g. prefer alternative means of transport, not interested in walking / cycling / horse riding, can use pavements to get me where I need to go</li> <li>• The environment, e.g. overgrown vegetation, difficult terrain e.g. muddy, slippery paths</li> <li>• Information, e.g. knowing where the routes will take them</li> </ul>
<p>LEISURE TRIP BARRIERS (54% no barriers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The environment, e.g. overgrown vegetation, cleanliness / unpleasant environment, e.g. litter / animal fouling graffiti</li> <li>• Accessibility, i.e. the poor maintenance of path surfaces</li> <li>• Information, e.g. poor information / signage on routes</li> </ul>	<p>LEISURE TRIP BARRIERS (34% no barriers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practicalities / relevance, e.g. prefer alternative means of transport, not interested in walking / cycling / horse riding, can use pavements to get me where I need to go</li> <li>• The environment in general</li> <li>• Information, i.e. knowing where the routes will take them</li> <li>• Accessibility, e.g. lack of routes accessible by wheelchair / pushchair, poor maintenance of path surfaces</li> </ul>
<p>SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS (38% nothing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information, e.g. knowing where routes take me, knowing where routes are</li> <li>• The environment, e.g. cutting back vegetation, cleanliness / unpleasant environment, e.g. litter / animal fouling graffiti</li> <li>• Accessibility, i.e. improve maintenance of paths</li> <li>• Information, e.g. improve signage / waymarking on routes</li> </ul>	<p>SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS (57% nothing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information, e.g. knowing where the routes take me, knowing where the routes are</li> <li>• Accessibility, e.g. more routes accessible by wheelchair / pushchair, improve maintenance of path surfaces</li> </ul>

In support of the barriers / improvements suggested by users above, the issues most commonly experienced by users are overgrown paths / vegetation, unpleasant environment / nuisance e.g. litter, flytipping, animal fouling, noise, loose animals, poor surfaces and lack of signage or missing waymark signs.

## FAMILIARITY & USAGE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

### FAMILIARITY

Residents were asked to indicate their level of knowledge on a number of statements concerning Rights of Way, The Countryside Code and map reading. At least two thirds of residents indicated they were confident / have a basic knowledge / know enough about 'Rights of Way in general' for their needs, and where they are near their house / village (66% and 69% respectively).

Broadly consistent proportions indicated they were confident / have a basic knowledge / know enough about 'how or where to find information about Rights of Way' and 'what Rights of Way they are allowed to use' for their needs (63% and 61% respectively).

61% indicated they were confident / have a basic knowledge / know enough about 'The Countryside Code' for their needs. 57% indicated they were confident / have a basic knowledge / know enough about 'map reading' and 'knowing how to use Rights of Way without a map' for their needs.

How much do you know about each of the following.....?							
ALL RESIDENTS							
	Net: I am confident / basic knowledge / enough for needs	I am confident in my knowledge	I have a basic knowledge	I know enough for my needs	I have no knowledge at all	I would like to know more	Don't know
Rights of Way in general	66%	11%	27%	28%	21%	4%	9%
Where the rights of way are near my house / village	69%	19%	27%	23%	17%	3%	11%
How or where to find information about rights of way	63%	14%	23%	26%	22%	3%	12%
What rights of way I am allowed to use	61%	12%	24%	25%	24%	3%	12%
The Countryside Code	61%	13%	23%	25%	24%	3%	11%
Map reading	57%	15%	21%	21%	27%	4%	12%
Knowing how to use rights of way without a map	57%	10%	20%	27%	26%	3%	14%

Base: All answering (624)

### **SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:**

There are significant differences in confidence / knowledge between those who indicated they are disabled and not disabled:

- 52% of those disabled indicated they were confident / have a basic knowledge / know enough about 'Rights of Way in general' for their needs; conversely 68% of those not disabled indicated they were confident / have a basic knowledge / know enough about 'Rights of Way in general' for their needs.
- 38% of those disabled indicated they were confident / have a basic knowledge / know enough about 'knowing how to use Rights of Way without a map'; conversely 60% of those not disabled indicated they were confident / have a basic knowledge / know enough about 'knowing how to use Rights of Way without a map'.

The table below displays responses to the same question metrics but responses are filtered to be based on those classified as **'users' of Public Rights of Way only (i.e. use public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways, byways open to all traffic or cycle paths at least every six months)**. Unsurprisingly, confidence and knowledge proportions are considerably higher than observed at a total level, notably in terms of 'Rights of Way in general' and 'where the Rights of Way are near my house / village' at 82% and 95% respectively. Whilst still high, confidence and knowledge proportions are comparatively lower in terms of 'how or where to find information about Rights of Way' and 'what Rights of Way I am allowed to use' at 75% and 77% respectively.

How much do you know about each of the following.....?							
PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY 'USERS' ONLY							
	Net: I am confident / basic knowledge / enough for needs	I am confident in my knowledge	I have a basic knowledge	I know enough for my needs	I have no knowledge at all	I would like to know more	Don't know
Rights of Way in general	82%	15%	36%	31%	12%	3%	2%
Where the rights of way are near my house / village	95%	25%	32%	38%	10%	2%	4%
How or where to find information about rights of way	75%	17%	28%	30%	15%	4%	6%
What rights of way I am allowed to use	77%	16%	30%	31%	14%	3%	5%
The Countryside Code	76%	18%	29%	29%	16%	3%	5%
Map reading	70%	19%	26%	25%	19%	4%	7%
Knowing how to use rights of way without a map	73%	13%	26%	34%	18%	3%	7%

Base: All users of PROW (389)



The table below displays responses to the same question metrics but responses are filtered to be based on those classified as **‘non users’ of Public Rights of Way**. As expected, confidence and knowledge proportions are considerably lower than ‘users’ across all metrics (ranging from 33% to 43%) and broadly equal proportions are observed.

How much do you know about each of the following.....?							
PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY ‘NON USERS’ ONLY							
	Net: I am confident / basic knowledge / enough for needs	I am confident in my knowledge	I have a basic knowledge	I know enough for my needs	I have no knowledge at all	I would like to know more	Don't know
Rights of Way in general	38%	3%	13%	22%	36%	4%	22%
Where the rights of way are near my house / village	43%	9%	18%	16%	31%	3%	23%
How or where to find information about rights of way	43%	8%	14%	21%	33%	2%	23%
What rights of way I am allowed to use	33%	5%	14%	14%	40%	3%	24%
The Countryside Code	39%	6%	13%	20%	37%	3%	23%
Map reading	37%	9%	13%	15%	39%	5%	20%
Knowing how to use rights of way without a map	33%	6%	11%	16%	40%	3%	25%

Base: All non-users of PROW (235)

## FREQUENCY OF USAGE

Residents were then asked to indicate the frequency to which they use each type of Public Right of Way: Public footpaths, Bridleways, Byways open to all traffic, Restricted byways and Cycle paths / tracks.

At a total level, just over six in ten (62%) use at least one of these Public Rights of Way at least every six months. The ratio of ‘users’ to ‘non users’ varies considerably per district, and is as follows:

- Ashford – 87% users, 13% non users
- Canterbury – 52% users, 48% non users
- Dartford – 35% users, 65% non users
- Dover – 80% users, 20% non users
- Gravesham – 44% users, 56% non users

- Maidstone – 87% users, 13% non users
- Sevenoaks – 42% users, 58% non users
- Shepway – 88% users, 12% non users
- Swale – 48% users, 52% non users
- Thanet – 67% users, 33% non users
- Tonbridge & Malling – 47% users, 53% non users
- Tunbridge Wells – 72% users, 28% non users

At a total level, just over a third of residents (35%) indicated they use 'public footpaths' at least once a day or at least once a week. Claimed use of other types of Public Rights of Way is lower:

- 11% use 'cycle paths / tracks' at least once a day / at least once a week; 68% use them less often than every six months or never.
- 10% use 'bridleways' at least once a day / at least once a week; 69% use them less often than every six months or never.
- 18% use 'byways open to all traffic' at least once a day / at least once a week; 71% use them less often than every six months or never.
- 2% use 'restricted byways' at least once a day / at least once a week; 83% use them less often than every six months or never.

Filtering responses on those classified as **'users' of Public Rights of Way only**, just over half of 'users' (54%) indicated they use public footpaths at least once a day or at least once a week. Use of other types of Public Rights of Way is lower:

- 17% use 'cycle paths / tracks' at least once a day / at least once a week; 49% use them less often than every six months or never
- 15% use 'bridleways' at least once a day / at least once a week; 51% use them less often than every six months or never
- 13% use 'byways open to all traffic' at least once a day / at least once a week; 54% use them less often than every six months or never
- 4% use 'restricted byways' at least once a day / at least once a week; 73% use them less often than every six months or never

### How often do you use the following Public Rights of Way.....?

ALL RESIDENTS	Net: Once a day or more / at least once a week	Once a day or more	At least once a week	At least once a fortnight	At least once a month	At least once every six months	Less often / never
Footpaths	35%	16%	19%	7%	7%	10%	40%
Bridleways	10%	2%	8%	5%	9%	8%	69%
Byways open to all traffic	8%	2%	6%	6%	6%	9%	71%
Restricted byways	2%	0%	2%	4%	5%	6%	83%
Cycle paths / tracks	11%	3%	8%	5%	9%	7%	68%

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY 'USERS' ONLY	Net: Once a day or more / at least once a week	Once a day or more	At least once a week	At least once a fortnight	At least once a month	At least once every six months	Less often / never
Footpaths	56%	25%	31%	12%	12%	17%	4%
Bridleways	15%	3%	12%	7%	14%	12%	51%
Byways open to all traffic	13%	3%	10%	9%	10%	14%	54%
Restricted byways	4%	1%	3%	6%	8%	10%	73%
Cycle paths / tracks	17%	4%	13%	8%	15%	11%	49%

Base: All answering (624)

7

### SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:

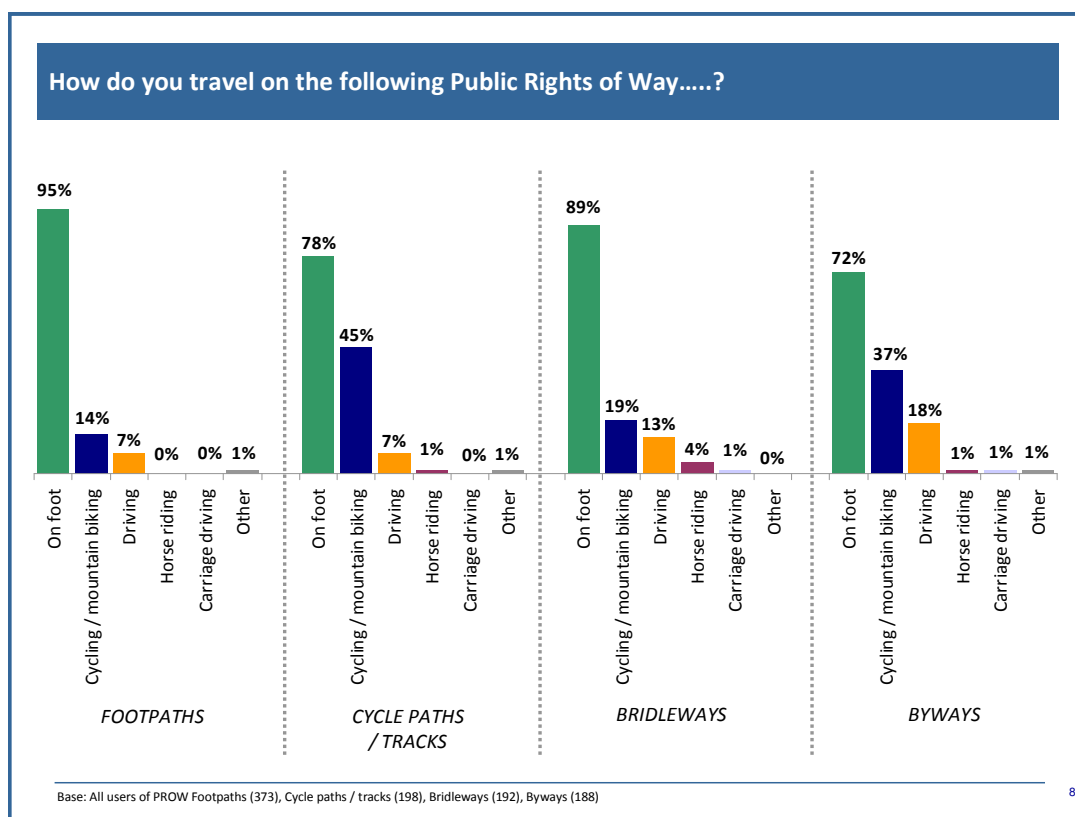
There is a significant difference in the frequency of footpath usage between those who indicated they are disabled and not disabled - 11% of those disabled indicated they use footpaths once a day or more or at least once a week; conversely 38% of those not disabled indicated use footpaths once a day or more or at least once a week.

## PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY USAGE BEHAVIOUR – HOW, WHEN & PURPOSE

All Public Rights of Way ‘users’ were then asked to indicate:

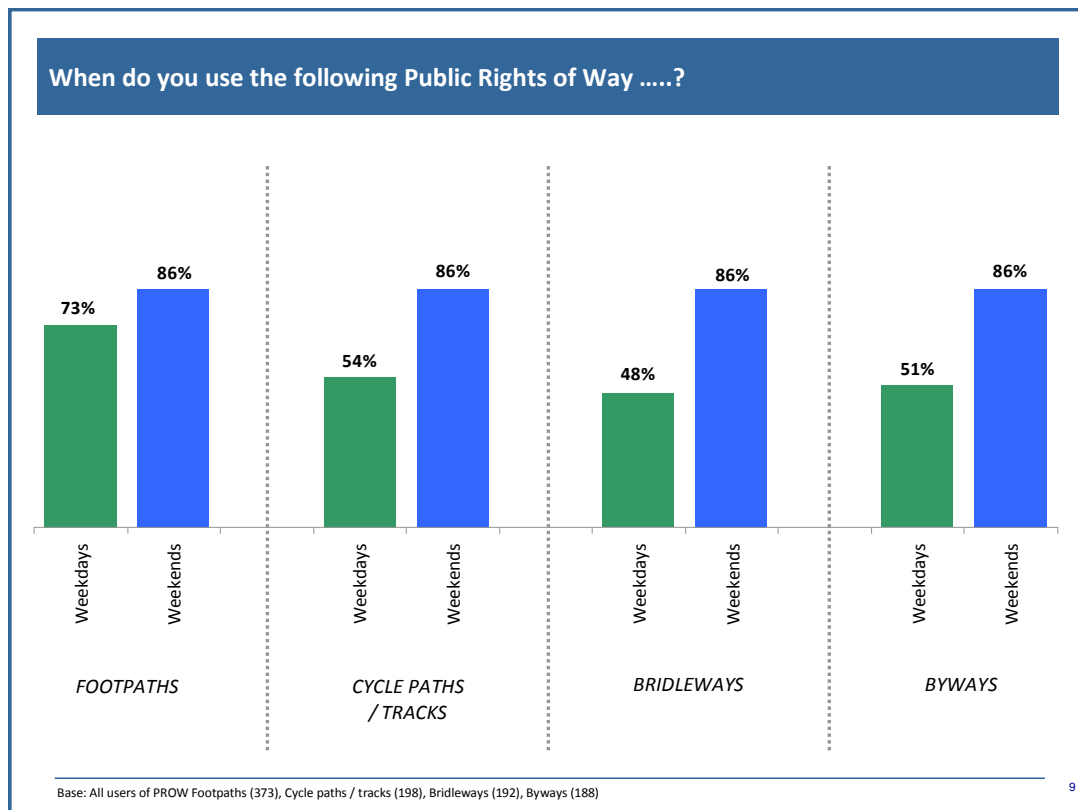
- How they travel on each of the Public Rights of Way they use
- The time of week they use each of the Public Rights of Way they use
- The reasons for using each of the Public Rights of Way they use
- Whether they use maps, guides or phone apps when using

The most common **means on travel** on all types of Public Rights of Way is on foot – 95% for footpaths, 89% for bridleways, 78% for cycle paths / tracks and 72% for byways. As expected, a higher proportion of cycle path ‘users’ and byways ‘users’ cycle / mountain bike on cycle paths / byways (45% and 37% respectively).



Just under three quarters of footpath ‘users’ (73%) indicated they **use Public Rights of Way on weekdays** and 86% indicated they use them on **weekends**. The proportion using weekday to weekend varies more widely for other types of Public Rights of Way:

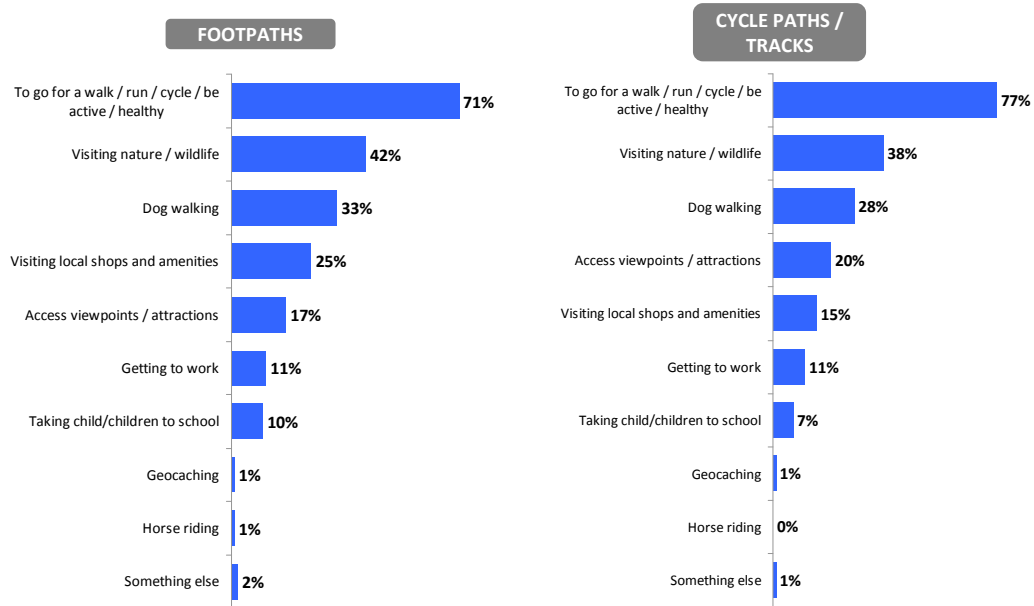
- 54% of cycle path/track ‘users’ use them on weekdays; 86% use them on weekends.
- 46% of bridleway ‘users’ use them on weekdays; 86% use them on weekends.
- 51% of byway ‘users’ use them on weekdays; 86% use them on weekends.



The most **common reason for using all types of Public Rights of Way** is to ‘go for a walk / run / cycle / be active / healthy’ – 71% for footpaths, 77% for cycle paths / tracks, 70% for bridleways and 68% for byways. ‘Visiting nature / wildlife’ is the second most common reason for using across all types of Public Rights of Way – 42% for footpaths, 38% for cycle paths / tracks, 39% for bridleways and 35% for byways. ‘Dog walking’ is the third most common reason for using across all types of Public Rights of Way - 33% for footpaths, 28% for cycle paths / tracks, 35% for bridleways and 28% for byways.

‘Visiting local shops and amenities’ are selected by approximately a quarter of footpath ‘users’ and byways ‘users’ (25% and 27% respectively). ‘Accessing viewpoints / attractions’ are also selected by approximately a fifth of cycle path / track ‘users’ and bridleway ‘users’ (20% and 23% respectively).

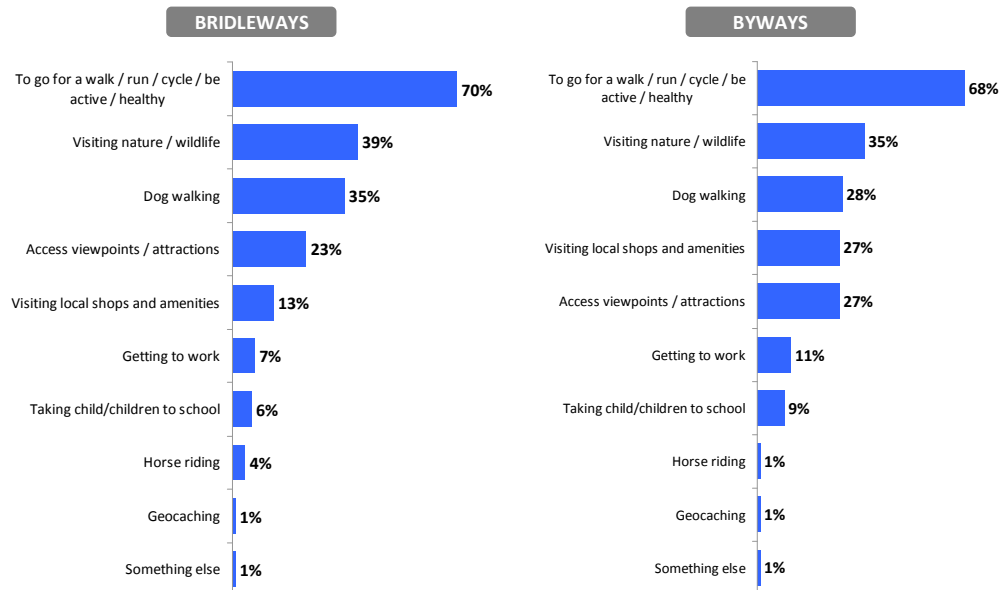
## For what purpose do you use the following Public Rights of Way.....?



Base: All users of PROW Footpaths (373), Cycle paths / tracks (198)

10

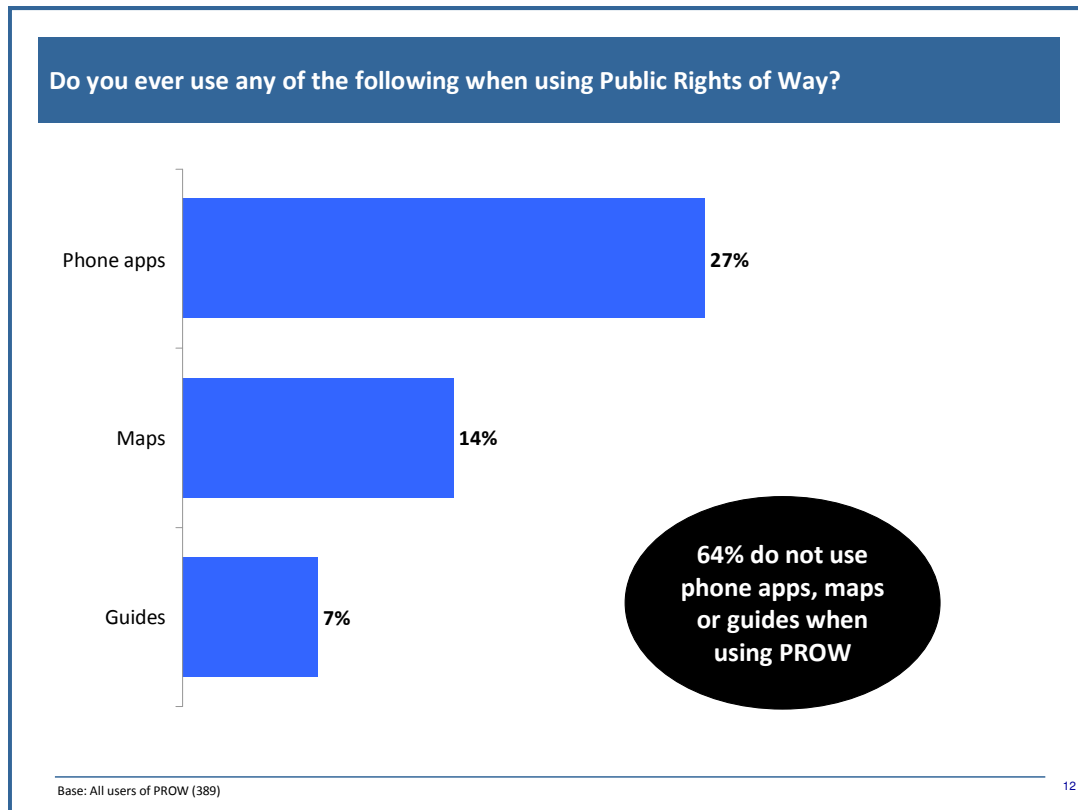
## For what purpose do you use the following Public Rights of Way .....?



Base: All users of PROW Bridleways (192), Byways (188)

11

When residents were asked **whether they use phone apps, maps or guides on Public Rights of Way** (of any type), 64% indicated that they did not use any of these. Of those used, the most common is phone apps (27%), followed by maps (14%) and guides (7%).



#### **SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:**

There is a significant difference in the proportion of 'users' using phone apps by age - 42% of 'users' aged 16-34 indicated they use phone apps when using Public Rights of Way; conversely 25% of 'users' aged 35-54 and 19% of 'users' aged 55+ indicated they use phone apps when using Public Rights of Way.

## VIEWS OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY - 'USERS'

All Public Rights of Way 'users' were then asked to:

- Describe their experience / how they feel when using Public Rights of Way in up to three words
- Any barriers that prevent them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for any of their daily journeys (e.g. work / school / local shops / doctors)
- Any barriers that prevent them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for any of their leisure trips
- Anything that would encourage them to use Public Rights of Way more often / for other purposes
- Where applicable, rank the top three factors that would most encourage them to use Public Rights of Way more often / for other purposes
- Interest in the development of a range of additional routes

### EXPERIENCE

'Users' were asked to **describe in their experience / how they feel when using Public Rights of Way in their own words, as a verbatim comment**. Lake Market Research have reviewed the comments and developed a codeframe to group together common themes, in order to quantify the feedback received.

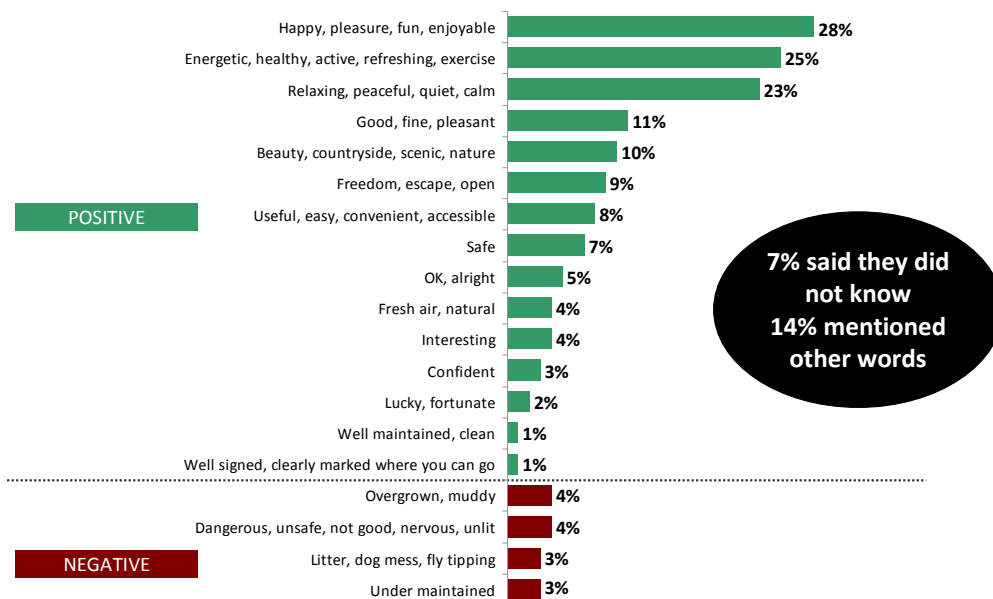
The most common experiences / feelings reported are in relation to enjoyment and keeping healthy both in body and mind. The exact proportions reporting these are as follows:

- 'Happy / pleasure / fun / enjoyable' – 28%
- 'Energetic / healthy / active / refreshing / exercise' – 25%
- 'Relaxing / peaceful / quiet / calm' – 23%

Other experiences / feelings reported include 'beauty / countryside / scenic' (10%), 'freedom / escape / open' (9%), 'useful / easy / convenient / accessible' (8%). Only 7% of 'users' interviewed stated they did not know how to describe their experience / feeling when using Public Rights of Way. There are no significant differences observed by subgroup.



Please tell us up to three words that describe your experience / how you feel when using Public Rights of Way.



Base: All users of PROW (389)

13

## BARRIERS TO USE – DAILY JOURNEYS

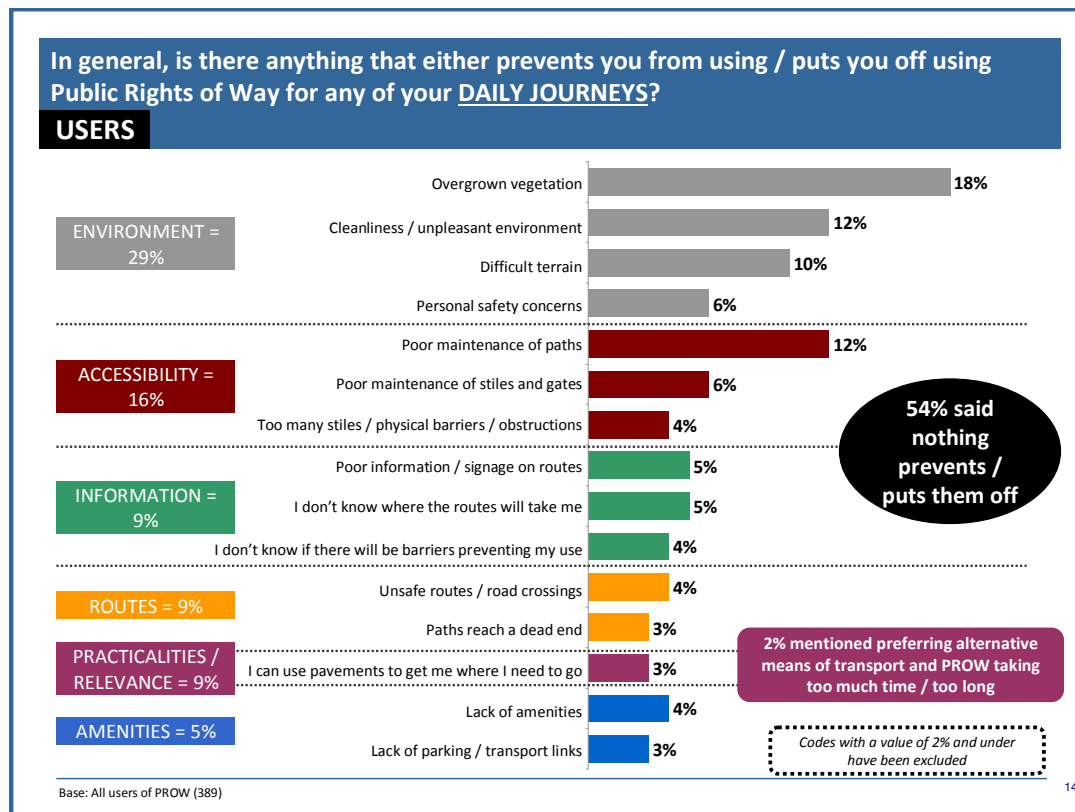
‘Users’ were then asked whether there was anything that **prevents them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for any of their daily journeys** (e.g. work / school / local shops / doctors), and presented with a list of 25 prompted responses.

6 wider themes represent the 25 prompted responses available to ‘users’ to select: Environment, Accessibility, Information, Routes, Practicalities / Relevance and Amenities. The chart overleaf summaries the percentage of responses that fall within each of the wider themes as well as the individual percentages for the prompted response codes whereby 3% or more of ‘users’ selected them.

54% of ‘users’ indicated that nothing would prevent them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way. The environment and accessibility were the two most common themes identified in terms of barriers, at 29% and 16% respectively. Within the environment theme, the most common responses selected are ‘overgrown vegetation’ (18% of ‘users’), ‘cleanliness / unpleasant environment’ (12%) and ‘difficult terrain e.g. muddy, slippery paths’ (10%). Within the accessibility theme, the dominant response selected is ‘poor maintenance of paths’ (12% of ‘users’).

9% selected a response within the information, routes and practicalities / relevance themes; although any one sub response within these themes was at 5% of ‘users’ maximum –

suggesting that these factors are not likely to be mainstream barriers to using Public Rights of Way for daily journeys.



### SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:

There are significant differences in response to the themes that prevent 'users' from using / puts 'users' off using Public Rights of Way for daily journeys by age:

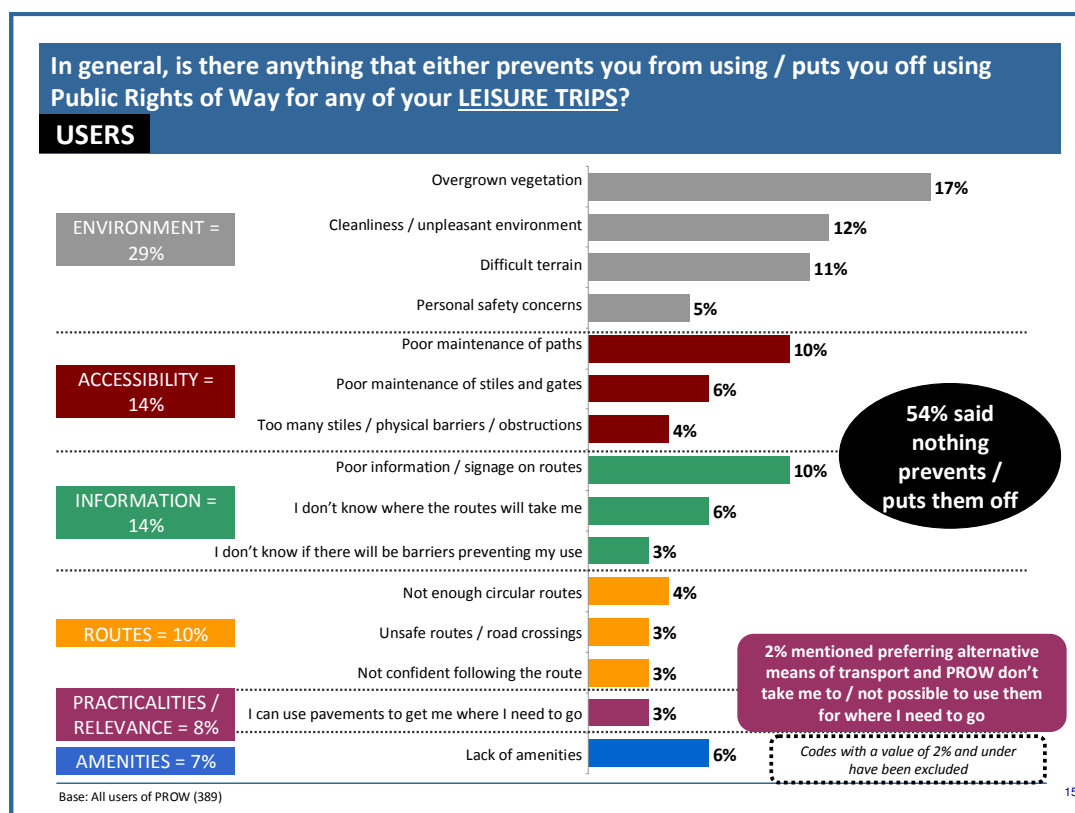
- The environment is more of a barrier to 'users' aged 55 and over – with 20% of 'users' aged 16-34 selecting, 27% of 'users' aged 35-54 selecting and 38% of 'users' aged 55 and over selecting the environment as a barrier. 'Overgrown vegetation' and 'difficult terrain (e.g. muddy / slippery paths)' are the most common responses selected by those aged 55 and over.
- Information is more of a barrier to 'users' aged 16-34 – with 17% of 'users' aged 16-34 selecting, 9% of 'users' aged 35-54 selecting and 9% of 'users' aged 55 and over selecting information as a barrier.

## BARRIERS TO USE – LEISURE TRIPS

'Users' were then asked whether there was anything that **prevents them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for leisure trips**, and presented with the same list of 25 prompted responses and the same 6 wider themes. The chart below is in a consistent format to daily journeys responses.

54% of 'users' indicated that nothing would prevent them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way. Consistent with response to daily journeys barriers, the environment and accessibility were the two most common themes identified in terms of barriers, at 29% and 14% respectively. Within the environment theme, the most common responses selected are 'overgrown vegetation' (17% of 'users'), 'cleanliness / unpleasant environment' (12%) and 'difficult terrain e.g. muddy, slippery paths' (11%). Within the accessibility theme, the dominant response selected is 'poor maintenance of paths' (10% of 'users').

Whilst relatively marginal, information is identified as more of a barrier for leisure trips at (14% compared to 9% for daily journeys) – the most common response selected is 'poor information / signage on routes' (10%). Response to the route, practicalities / relevance and amenities themes is broadly consistent as observed for daily journeys.



### **SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:**

There are significant differences in response to the themes that prevent 'users' from using / puts 'users' off using Public Rights of Way for leisure trips by age:

- Consistent with the response observed for daily journeys, the environment is more of a barrier to 'users' aged 55 and over – with 22% of 'users' aged 16-34 selecting, 27% of 'users' aged 35-54 selecting and 35% of 'users' aged 55 and over selecting the environment as a barrier. 'Overgrown vegetation' and 'difficult terrain (e.g. muddy / slippery paths)' are the most common responses selected by those aged 55 and over.
  - Consistent with the response observed for daily journeys, information is more of a barrier to 'users' aged 16-34 – with 21% of 'users' aged 16-34 selecting, 10% of 'users' aged 35-54 selecting and 13% of 'users' aged 55 and over selecting information as a barrier.
  - Accessibility is also more of a barrier to 'users' aged 55 and over - with 12% of 'users' aged 16-34 selecting, 9% of 'users' aged 35-54 selecting and 20% of 'users' aged 55 and over selecting accessibility as a barrier. 'Poor maintenance of path surfaces' and 'poor maintenance of stiles and gates' are the most common responses selected by those aged 55 and over.
-

## SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

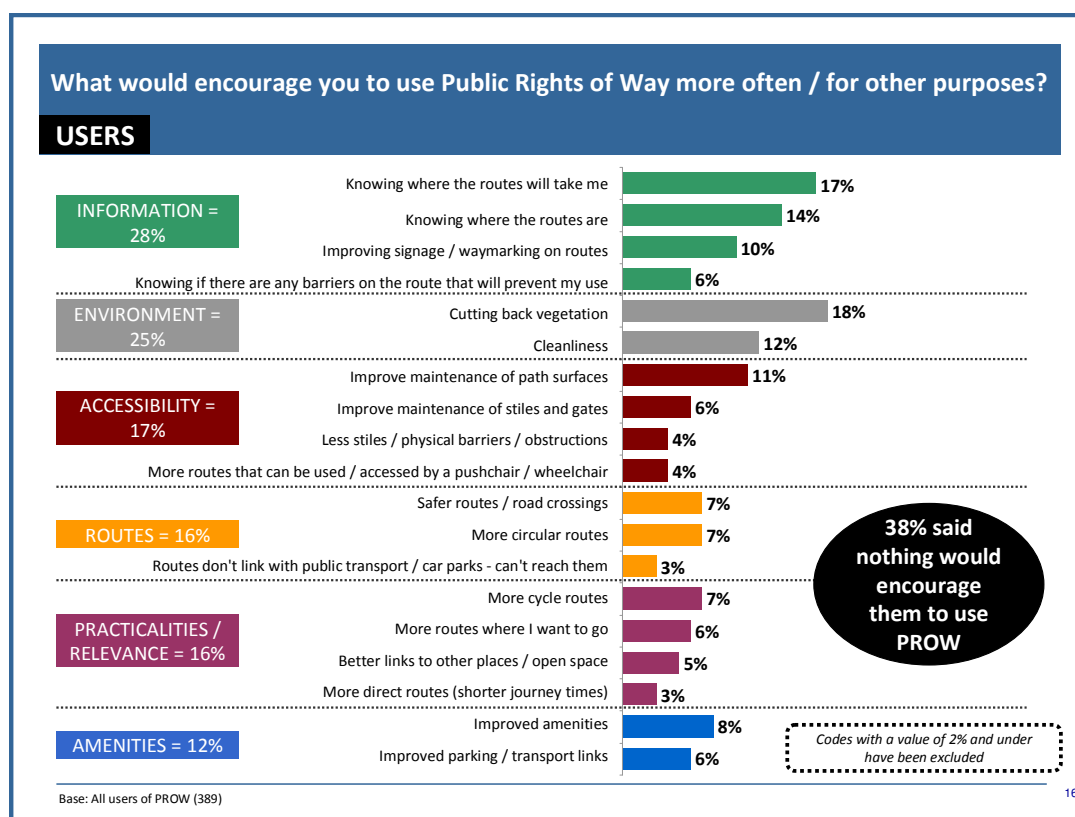
'Users' were then asked whether there was anything that **would encourage them to use Public Rights of Way more often / for other purposes**.

6 wider themes represent the 22 prompted responses available to 'users' to select: Environment, Accessibility, Information, Routes, Practicalities / Relevance and Amenities. The chart below summaries the percentage of responses that fall within each of the wider themes as well as the individual percentages for the prompted response codes whereby 2% or more of 'users' selected them.

38% of 'users' indicated that nothing would encourage them to use Public Rights of Way more often / for other purposes.

Information and the environment were the two most common themes identified in terms of improvements, at 28% and 25% respectively. Within the information theme, the most common responses selected are 'knowing where the routes will take them' (17%) and 'knowing where the routes are' (14%). Within the environment theme, both 'cutting back vegetation' and 'cleanliness (e.g. removal of litter / animal fouling / graffiti)' represent opportunities for improving with 18% and 12% selecting respectively.

The 'improvement of path surface maintenance' could also be considered as a worthwhile improvement, referenced by 11% of 'users'.



### **SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:**

A significantly higher proportion of 16-34 year old 'users' selected information as an area that would encourage them to use Public Rights of Way more often / for other purposes (38%) – compared to 27% of 'users' aged 35-54 selecting and 23% of 'users' aged 55 and over selecting information. This is consistent with the pattern observed for barriers to use.

There are also significant differences when comparing response by males and females:

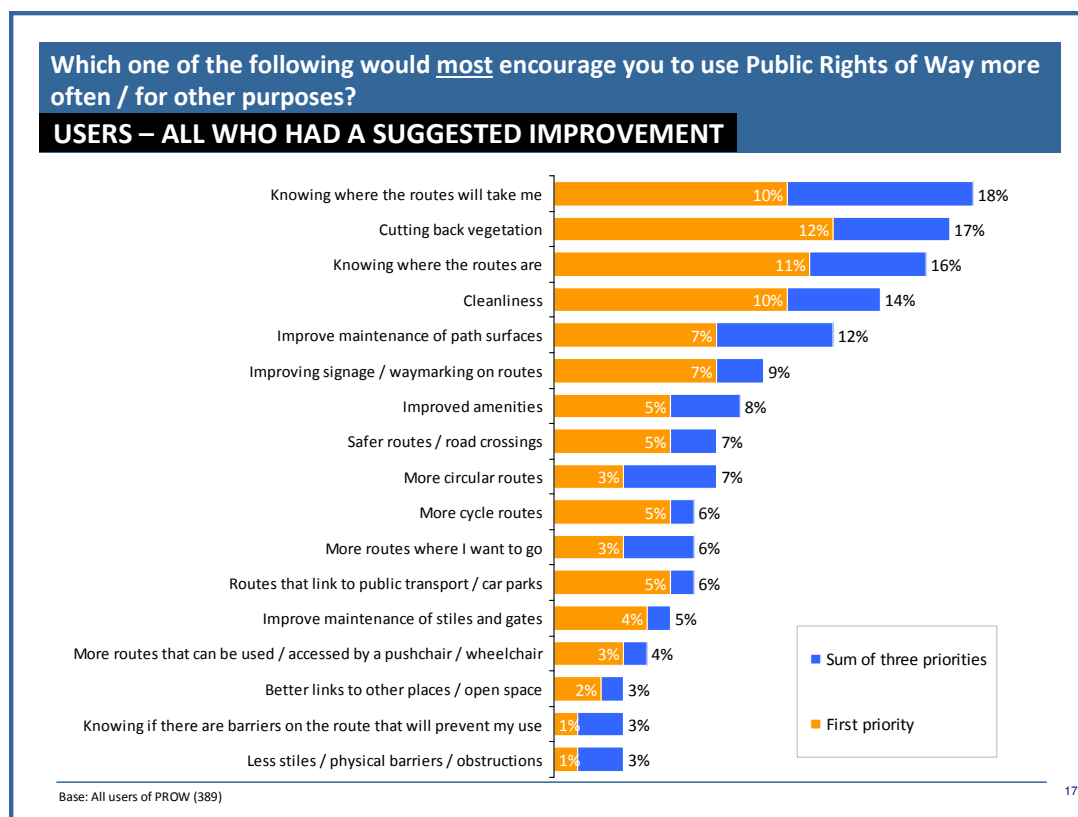
- Information would encourage a higher proportion of female 'users' - with 22% of male 'users' selecting and 34% of female 'users' selecting. 'Knowing where the routes will take them' is the most common response selected by female 'users' (23%).
  - Route improvements would encourage a higher proportion of female 'users' - with 10% of male 'users' selecting and 21% of female 'users' selecting. 'Safer routes / crossings' is the most common response selected by female 'users' (11%).
-

## SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENT – TOP 3 RANKING

All 'users' who selected at least one area that would encourage them to use Public Rights of Way more often / for more purposes was asked to rank them in terms of their first, second and third priority (where applicable). The chart below is based on only those who had selected one area for improvement (so excludes the 38% of 'users' who indicated nothing would encourage them).

Of all the areas identified, the following are ranked as the top five across the 3 rankings:

- 'Knowing where the routes will take me' – 18%
- 'Cutting back vegetation' – 17%
- 'Knowing where the routes are' – 16%
- 'Cleanliness' – 14%
- 'Improve maintenance of path surfaces' – 12%

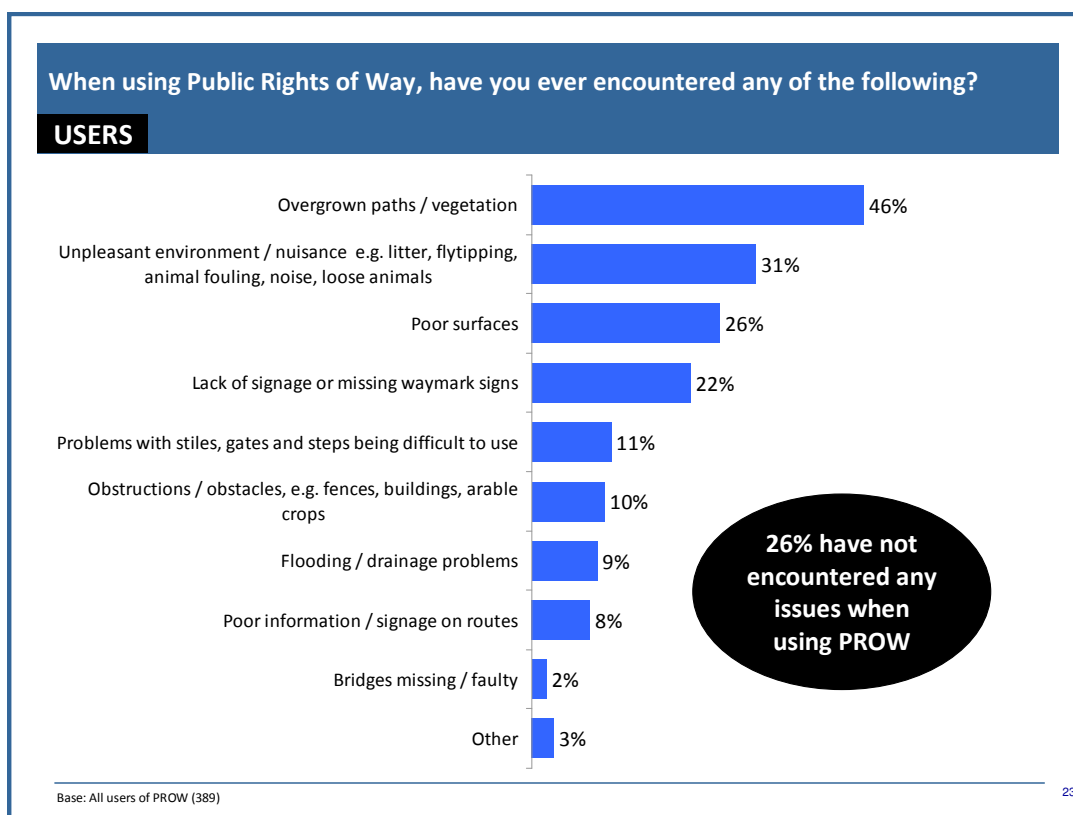


## ISSUES ENCOUNTERED

'Users' were then asked **whether they had encountered any issues when using Public Rights of Way** via a series of prompted responses and the option to reference a free text answer for an area not covered by the responses.

26% of 'users' indicated that they have not encountered any issues when using Public Rights of Way. Of those who have encountered an issue, the most common echoes previous responses in terms of usage barriers – 'overgrown paths / vegetation' (46%), 'unpleasant environment / nuisance' (31%) and 'poor surfaces' (26%).

There is only one significant difference in terms of subgroup response – a significantly higher proportion of 'users' aged 55 and over selected poor surfaces (35%).

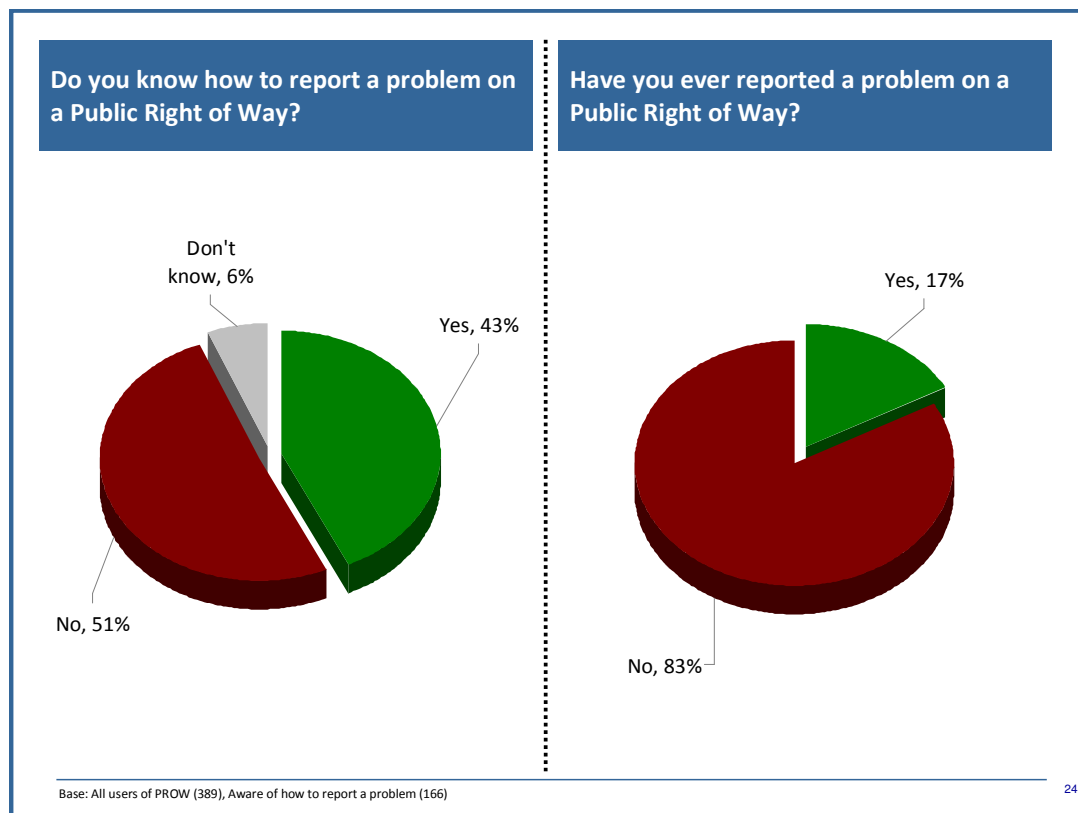




## AWARENESS & USE OF ISSUE NOTIFICATION

'Users' were asked to indicate whether they were **aware of how to report a problem on a Public Right of Way**, and for all those aware **whether they have ever reported a problem on a Public Right of Way**.

43% of 'users' indicated they knew how to report a problem on a Public Right of Way. Of those aware of how to report a problem, 17% of 'users' have ever reported a problem on a Public Right of Way.



### SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:

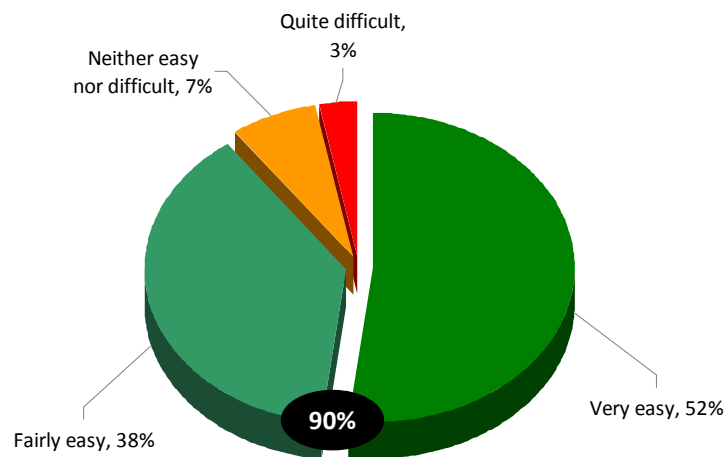
There are significant differences observed by age, with a significantly higher proportion of 'users' aged 55 and over indicating they know how to report a problem at 50%.

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## EXPERIENCE OF ISSUE NOTIFICATION

For all 'users' that indicated they had ever reported a problem with a Public Right of Way, they were asked to assess **how easy it was to report the problem, their satisfaction with the service they received and by what means they reported the problem**. The vast majority indicated that it was easy at 90% (either very – 52% or fairly – 38%). Only 3% indicated that it was difficult.

From what you have experienced, how easy was it to report the problem?

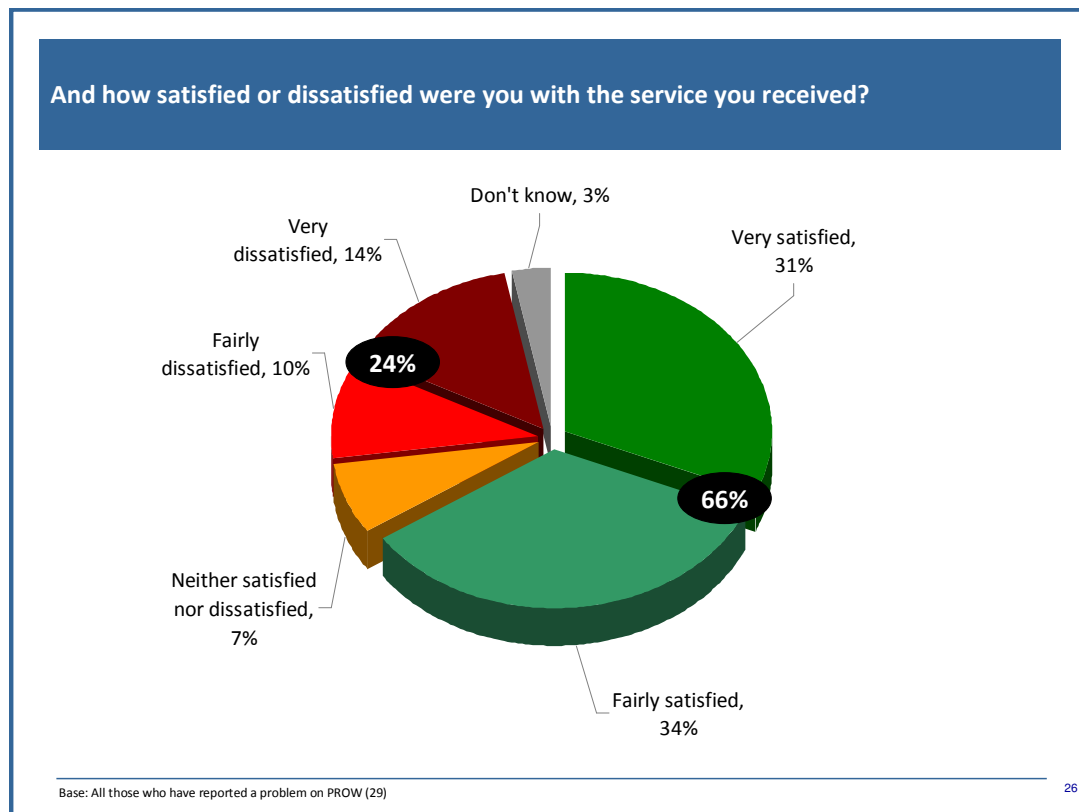


Base: All those who have reported a problem on PROW (29)

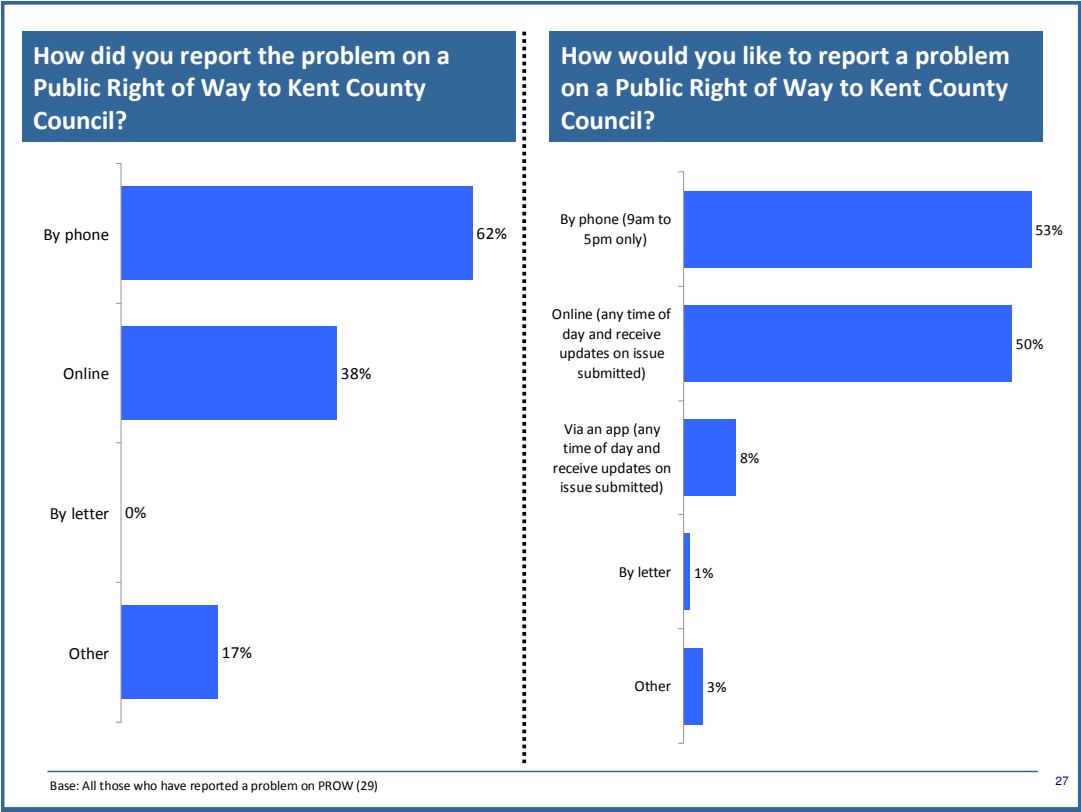
25

Two third of 'users' indicated they were satisfied with the service they received at 66% (either very – 31% or fairly – 34%). Just under a quarter (24%) indicated they were dissatisfied with the service they received.

Please note that although this question was phrased to evaluate the service element of the issue notification, it is likely that the outcome of the notification in terms of resolution influenced 'users' responses to this question.



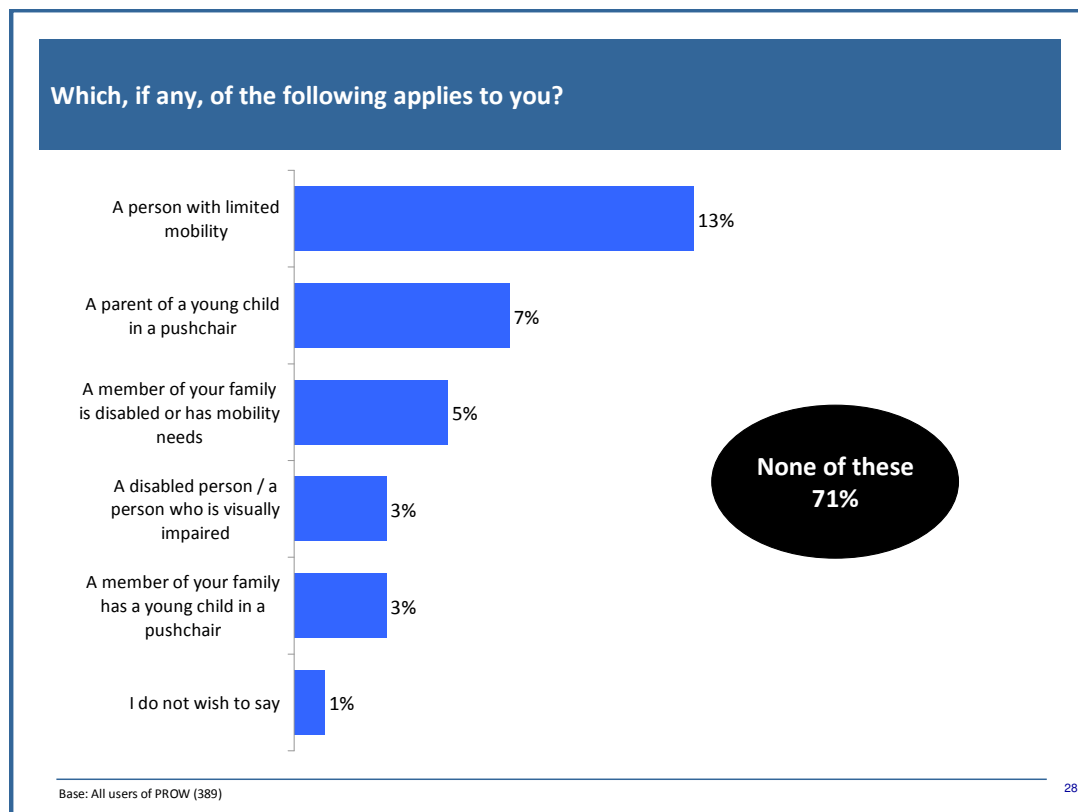
Two thirds of ‘users’ who had ever reported a problem with a Public Right of Way did so by telephone (66%). 38% of these users reported a problem online. However when set in the context of all users being asked to indicate **how they would like to report a problem on a Public Right of Way to Kent County Council**, a more equal split was observed in terms of preference for telephone or online (with updates on issue submitted). As a result of these percentages, we hypothesise that the means of reporting the issue is likely to be made based on the type and pertinence of the notification being made.



## ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

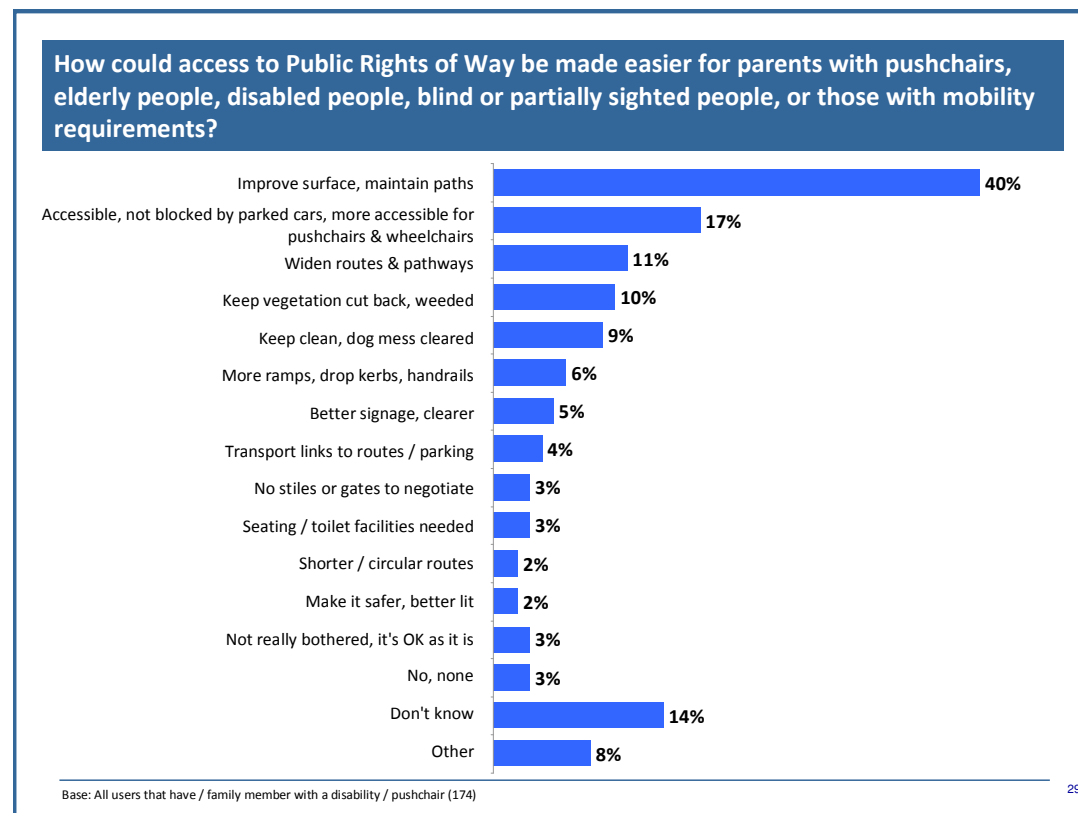
'Users' were also asked to indicate whether they or a member of their family were of limited mobility, a disabled person / a person who is visually impaired or a parent of a young child in pushchair. This question was included to ascertain whether there were any issues / concerns with regards to accessing Public Rights of Way that need to be taken into account for the future.

71% of 'users' indicated that none of these factors applied to them. 13% indicated they have limited mobility and 3% indicated they are a disabled person / visually impaired. 7% indicated they are a parent of a young child in a pushchair.



‘Users’ who indicated that any of the access factors applied to them were asked to **how access to Public Rights of Way be made easier for parents with pushchairs, elderly people, disabled people, blind or partially sighted people, or those with mobility requirements in their own words, as a verbatim comment**. Lake Market Research have reviewed the comments and developed a codeframe to group together common themes, in order to quantify the feedback received.

The most common response would be to ‘improve the surface / maintain paths’, i.e. smoother surfaces that easy to navigate, at 40%. This is followed by making them ‘accessible / not blocked by parked cars / more accessible for pushchairs and wheelchairs’ at 17%, ‘widen routes and pathways’ at 11% and ‘keeping vegetation cut back / weeded’ at 10%.



## VIEWS OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY - ‘NON USERS’

All Public Rights of Way ‘non users’ were asked a similar set of metrics to ‘users’ in terms of barriers and factors that would encourage them to use Public Rights of Way. Whilst the questions were referenced with a slightly different introduction, reflecting the fact they are ‘non users’ the response lists were consistent with those given to ‘users’. They were asked to identify:

- Any barriers that prevent them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for any of their daily journeys (e.g. work / school / local shops / doctors)
- Any barriers that prevent them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for any of their leisure trips
- Anything that would encourage them to use Public Rights of Way
- Where applicable, rank the top three factors that would most encourage them to use Public Rights of Way
- Interest in the development of a range of additional routes

### BARRIERS TO USE – DAILY JOURNEYS

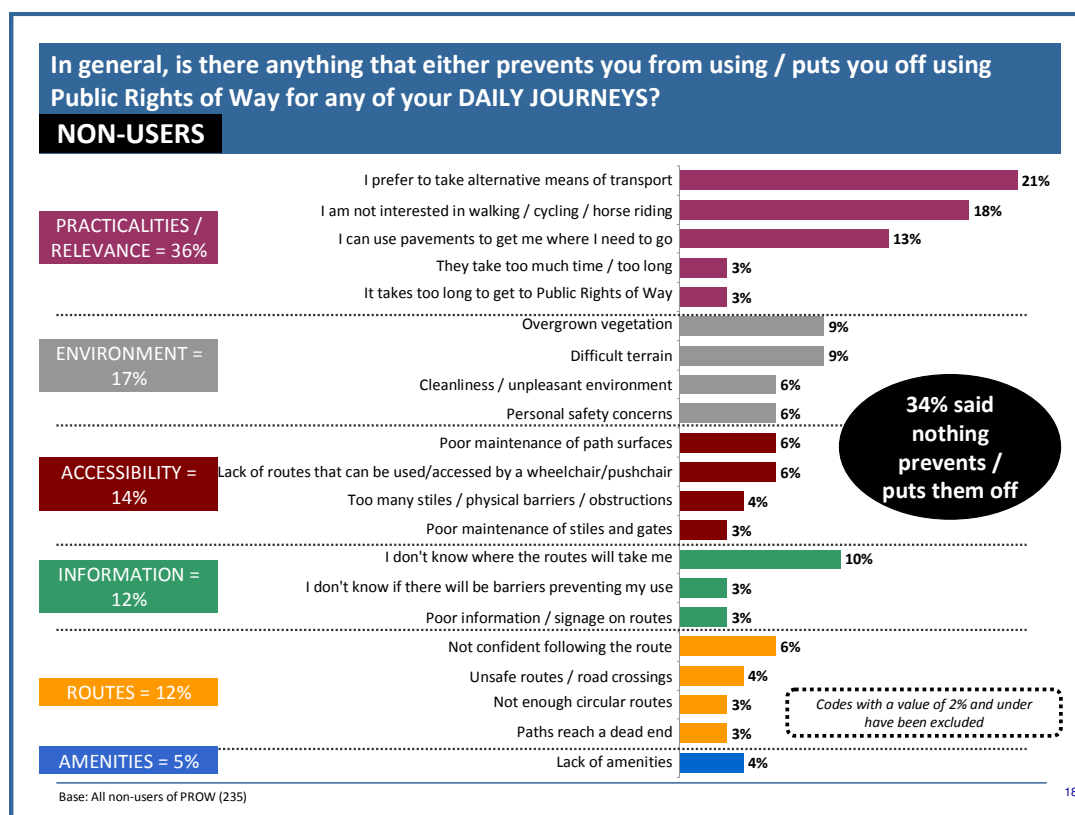
In an identical format to ‘users’, ‘non users’ were asked whether there was anything that **prevents them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for any of their daily journeys** (e.g. work / school / local shops / doctors), and presented with the same list of 25 prompted responses within 6 wider themes.

As expected, a lower proportion of ‘non users’ indicated that indicated that nothing would prevent them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way at 34%.

Practicalities / relevance is the most common theme identified at 36%. Within the practicalities / relevance theme, the most common responses selected are a preference to take alternative means of transport (21%), not being interested in walking / cycling / horse riding (18%) and being able to use pavements to get them where they need to go (13%).

The environment does pose a barrier for some (17% of ‘non users’) but there is not a clear factor that is driving this percentage, with broadly equal proportions selecting overgrown vegetation and difficult terrain (e.g. muddy / slippery paths) (9%) and 6% selecting cleanliness / unpleasant environment and/or personal safety concerns. A broadly consistent response is observed for the accessibility theme and its sub responses.

There could be an opportunity to convert a small proportion of ‘non users’ through the provision of information concerning where the routes will take them (referenced as a barrier by 10% of ‘non users’) – likewise 6% of ‘non users’ referenced they are not confident where routes will take them.



### SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:

There are significant differences in response to the themes that prevent 'non users' from using / puts 'non users' off using Public Rights of Way for daily journeys by age:

- Practicalities / relevance is also more of a barrier to 'users' aged 16-34 - with 51% of 'users' aged 16-34 selecting, 45% of 'users' aged 35-54 selecting and 24% of 'users' aged 55 and over selecting. Preference for taking alternative means of transport and not being interested in walking / cycling / horse riding being the most commonly selected responses by those aged 16-34.
- The environment is more of a barrier to 'users' aged 55 and over – with 11% of 'users' aged 16-34 selecting, 11% of 'users' aged 35-54 selecting and 23% of 'users' aged 55 and over selecting. Difficult terrain (e.g. muddy / slippery paths) is the most commonly selected response by those aged 55 and over.
- Accessibility is also more of a barrier to 'users' aged 55 and over - with 4% of 'users' aged 16-34 selecting, 6% of 'users' aged 35-54 selecting and 23% of 'users' aged 55 and over selecting. Poor maintenance of path surfaces and lack of routes that can be used / accessed by a wheelchair or pushchair being the most commonly selected responses by those aged 55 and over.



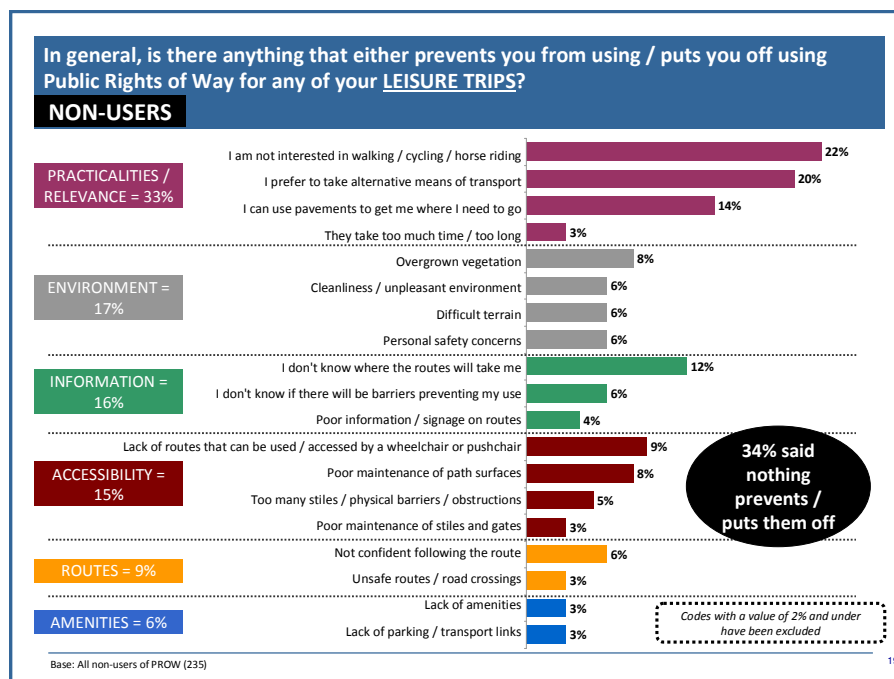
## BARRIERS TO USE – LEISURE TRIPS

'Non users' were then asked whether there was anything that prevents them from using / puts them off using Public Rights of Way for leisure trips, and presented with the same list of 25 prompted responses and the same 6 wider themes. The chart below is in a consistent format to daily journeys responses.

Consistent with 'non user' response to daily barriers, practicalities / relevance is the most common barrier identified. Within the practicalities / relevance theme, the most common responses selected are a preference to take alternative means of transport (22%), not being interested in walking / cycling / horse riding (20%), and not being interested in walking / cycling / horse riding (20%).

Consistent with 'non user' response to daily barriers, the environment does pose a barrier for some (17% of 'non users') but there is not a clear factor that is driving this percentage, with broadly equal proportions selecting all sub responses. A broadly consistent response is observed for the accessibility theme and its sub responses.

There could be an opportunity to convert a small proportion of 'non users' through the provision of information concerning where the routes will take them (referenced as a barrier by 12% of 'non users') – likewise 6% of 'non users' referenced they are not confident where routes will take them.



## SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:

There are significant differences in response to the themes that prevent 'non users' from using / puts 'non users' off using Public Rights of Way for leisure trips by age:

- Practicalities / relevance is also more of a barrier to 'non users' aged 16-34 - with 53% of 'non users' aged 16-34 selecting, 37% of 'non users' aged 35-54 selecting and

23% of 'non users' aged 55 and over selecting. Preference for taking alternative means of transport and not being interested in walking / cycling / horse riding being the most commonly selected responses by those aged 16-34 and 35-54.

- Accessibility is also more of a barrier to 'users' aged 55 and over - with 4% of 'non users' aged 16-34 selecting, 7% of 'non users' aged 35-54 selecting and 24% of 'non users' aged 55 and over selecting. Poor maintenance of path surfaces and lack of routes that can be used / accessed by a wheelchair or pushchair being the most commonly selected responses by those aged 55 and over.

There are also significant differences comparing those who indicated they are disabled and not disabled:

- Practicalities / relevance is more of a barrier to those who indicated they are disabled - with 20% of 'non users' who are disabled selecting and 36% of 'non users' who are not disabled selecting.
  - Conversely, accessibility is also more of a barrier to those who indicated they are disabled - with 32% of 'non users' who are disabled selecting and 11% of 'non users' who are not disabled selecting.
-

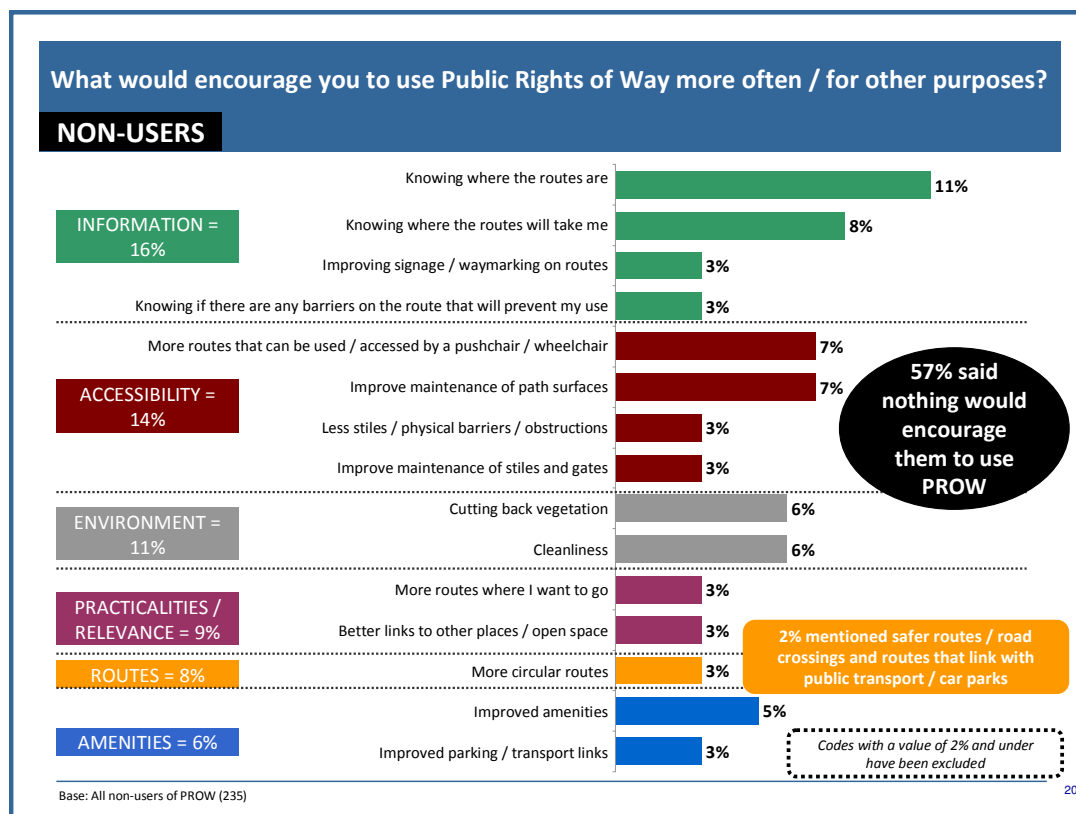
## SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

In an identical format to 'users', 'non users' were asked whether there was anything that **would encourage them to use Public Rights of Way more often / for other purposes**, and presented with the same list of prompted responses within 6 wider themes.

As expected, a higher proportion of 'non users' indicated that indicated that nothing would encourage them to use Public Rights of Way at 57%.

There is less of a hierarchy in terms of the proportions selecting each theme compared to 'users'. Broadly equal proportions selected information, accessibility and the environment (16%, 14% and 11% respectively).

Within information, the most common response selected is knowing where the routes are (11%), followed by knowing where the routes take me (8%). Within accessibility, the most common responses selected are more routes that can be accessed / used by a pushchair / wheelchair and improve maintenance of path surfaces (both at 7%).



## SUBGROUP SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:

There are significant differences in response to the themes that would encourage 'non users' to use Public Rights of Way by age:

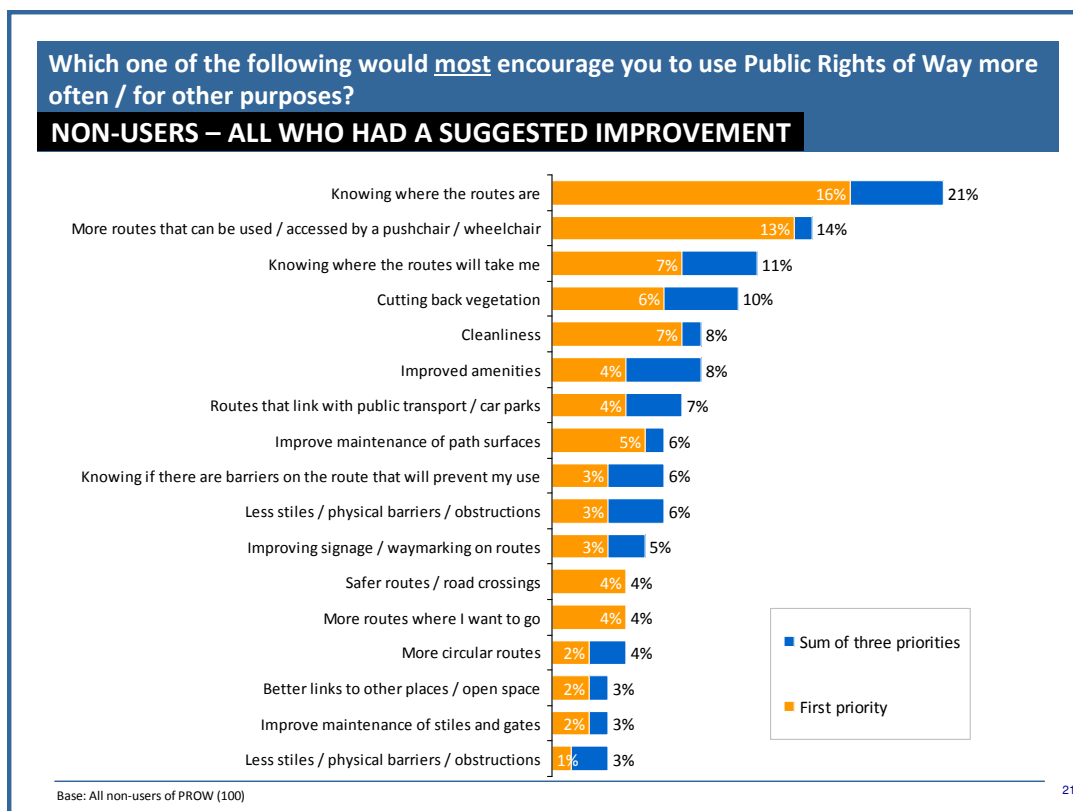
- Practicalities / relevance for 'non users' aged 16-34 - with 20% of 'non users' aged 16-34 selecting, 4% of 'non users' aged 35-54 selecting and 8% of 'non users' aged 55 and over selecting.

- Accessibility for 'users' aged 55 and over - with 9% of 'non users' aged 16-34 selecting, 4% of 'non users' aged 35-54 selecting and 23% of 'non users' aged 55 and over selecting.

### SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENT – TOP 3 RANKING

All 'non users' who selected at least one area that would encourage them to use Public Rights of Way was asked to rank them in terms of their first, second and third priority (where applicable); consistent with 'users'. The chart below is based on only those who had selected one area for improvement (so excludes the 57% of 'non users' who indicated nothing would encourage them). Of all the areas identified, the following were ranked at 10% or above across the 3 rankings:

- Knowing where the routes are – 21%
- More routes that can be accessed / used by a pushchair / wheelchair – 14%
- Knowing where the routes will take me – 11%
- Cutting back vegetation – 10%



## APPENDIX 1 – RESIDENTS USE OF OPEN SPACES

Which of the following types of landscape / places do you prefer to visit?

	Total	Users	Non-users
Coastal	59%	64%	51%
Woodland / forests	54%	65%	34%
Historic places	40%	44%	34%
Nature reserves	37%	44%	35%
Riverside	35%	43%	23%
Viewpoints / features / attractions	34%	37%	29%
Urban	15%	20%	8%
None of these	8%	3%	16%

Base: All answering (624)

30

Do you ever use or visit open spaces in Kent?

	Total	Users	Non-users
Yes	69%	86%	42%
No	31%	14%	58%

Do you ever use paths to walk / cycle / ride a horse beyond the confines of the open space(s) you use / visit?

	Total	Users	Non-users
Yes	76%	90%	29%
No	23%	9%	70%

Base: All answering (624)

What would encourage you to go further afield?

	Total	Users	Non-users
If I knew the terrain	22%	19%	23%
If I knew where it led to	19%	32%	13%
If I knew it was safe	16%	10%	19%
If I knew it was a circular route	14%	10%	16%
If I knew it was public land	10%	6%	12%
Nothing	41%	29%	46%
Other	18%	26%	14%

Base: All those going beyond the confines of open spaces (100)

31