



Cycling and Mountain Biking in Forests

Results from All Forests Survey 2 - 2013



The All Forests Survey 2 (AFS2) was conducted by Forestry Commission Scotland with fieldwork from November 2012 to October 2013.

During this period visitors were counted and interviewed in forests across Scotland's National Forest Estate. Data was also collected by automatic vehicle and trail counters positioned at key forest entrances.

A total of **1,964** visitors were interviewed including **166** visitors who were taking part in cycling or mountain biking.

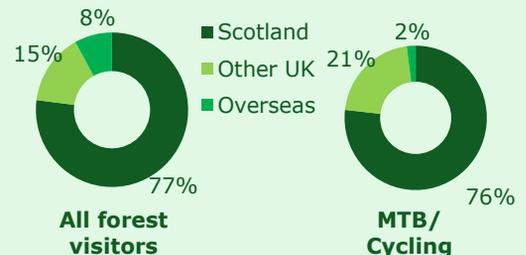
This factsheet provides the key results from the survey in relation to forest visitors who take part in cycling and mountain biking. A more detailed national report and further factsheets are available at www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland

Key facts

- **Cycling and mountain biking are undertaken on an estimated 764,000 visits to forests.**
- This represents **8%** of the **9.1 million visits** taken to annually to Scotland's National Forest Estate.
- **32%** of visits which involve cycling or mountain biking are taken by people who are on a holiday or short break while **68%** are on a local or day trip.



- Most visits to forests which involve cycling/mountain biking (**76%**) are taken by residents of Scotland while **21%** are taken by people who live elsewhere in the UK. Compared to the overall profile of visitors to Scotland's National Forest Estate, cyclists are more likely to live in parts of the UK outside of Scotland.



Who takes part in cycling and mountain biking in forests?

Visitor demographics

- Three quarters of visitors to Scotland's National Forest Estate who take part in cycling or mountain biking are male (**76%**). By comparison, there is an equal male/female split amongst the wider sample of all forest visitors.
- The average age of a visitor to a forest who takes part in cycling and mountain biking is **32**, much younger than the all forest visitors average (**46**). This variation reflects the much larger proportion of cyclists and mountain bikers who are aged under **45**.
- 17%** of visitors to forests who take part in cycling or mountain biking have children in their party, the same proportion as recorded across all forest visitors. Average party size is **2.2** compared to **3.1** recorded nationally in AFS2.
- None of the respondents interviewed who were taking part in cycling or mountain biking were in the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Population (BAME). Similarly, a very low proportion was recorded across all Scottish forest visitors (**0.2%**).
- 1%** of visitors taking part in cycling or mountain biking have a long term illness or disability, a lower proportion than recorded nationally in the AFS2 (**6%**).

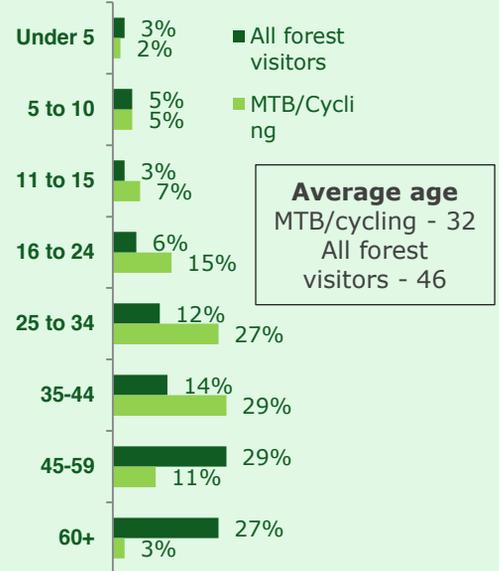
Place of residence and regularity of visits

- Around a third of visitors who take part in cycling or mountain biking are on a holiday or short break (**32%**) and around a quarter live outside of Scotland (**23%**).
- While most visitors who take part in cycling or mountain biking have been to the forest before (**76%**), the largest proportion normally visit less than once a week (**49%**).
- The average distance travelled by cyclists/mountain bikers is **27** miles, further than the national average in AFS2 (**17** miles).

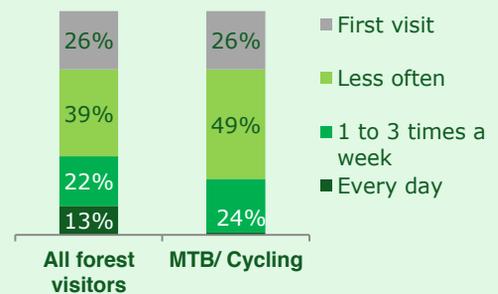
Gender



Age profile



Frequency of visits to forests



Average distance travelled



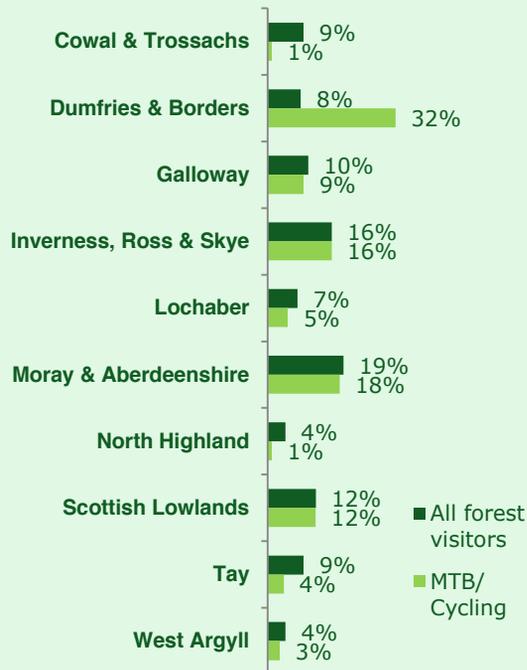
How do visitors who cycle and mountain bike use forests?

- 73% of cyclists and mountain bikers use waymarked trails during their visit.
- Around a third of visits which involve cycling or mountain biking are taken to forests in Dumfries & Borders (32%) while 18% are taken to forests in Moray & Aberdeenshire.
- About 2 in 5 visiting cyclists and mountain bikers spend 3 hours or more in the forest (38%). The average dwell time is 2 hours 20 minutes, significantly longer than the AFS2 national average (1 hour 30 minutes).
- On average forest visitors who take part in cycling and mountain biking spend £26 during their trip, significantly more than the average across Scotland's National Forest Estate as a whole (£18).
- 78% of visitors to forests who take part in cycling or mountain biking travel to the forest by car while 17% cycle to the forest.

Cyclists and mountain bikers visiting forests during a holiday or short break

- Around a third of visitors to forests who take part in cycling or mountain biking are on a holiday or short break away from home (32%).
- These visitors spend an average of 6.2 nights away from home (compared to an average of 9.4 nights nationally in the AFS2).
- The most used types of accommodation amongst cyclists and mountain bikers are tent/caravan/cabin, hotels and guest house/B&B.
- Cyclists and mountain bikers go to an average of 3 forests during their holiday or short break.

Districts visited



Length of time spend in forest



Average dwell time:

Scotland

1hr:30 mins

MTB/Cycling

2hrs:20 mins

Visit expenditure

(excluding overnight accommodation)

£18



Scotland

£26



MTB/cycling

To obtain more results from the All Forests Survey 2 or further information on the survey methods see

<http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/managing/work-on-scotlands-national-forest-estate/tourism-and-recreation/profile-of-forest-visitors>