

Evaluation of Post- Agreement Higher Level Stewardship Permissive Access Provision

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Summary of Project

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Glossary

Unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions used within this report have the following meanings (to be interpreted in the singular or plural as the context requires):

| Term/Abbreviation | Meaning |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Countryside Stewardship | A UK agricultural support scheme that offers financial incentives to farmers and land managers for implementing conservation practices and sustainable land management techniques. It aims to improve biodiversity, protect water quality, preserve cultural heritage, and promote sustainable farming practices for the benefit of the countryside and rural communities. |
| Mid-Tier Stewardship | A voluntary agri-environment scheme in UK agriculture providing financial support for farmers to implement sustainable land management practices, focusing on wildlife conservation, habitat management, and water quality improvement, with smaller-scale actions suitable for modest environmental improvements. |
| Higher Level Stewardship | A voluntary agri-environment scheme in UK agriculture offering financial incentives to farmers for implementing significant and ambitious environmental commitments, aiming for wider-ranging benefits like priority habitat restoration, rare species conservation, landscape preservation, and cultural heritage enhancement, involving larger-scale actions and higher management intensity. |
| HLS | Higher Level Stewardship |
| Environmental Land Management Scheme | A post-Brexit agricultural policy framework that aims to provide financial incentives to farmers and land managers for delivering environmental benefits, such as biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and sustainable land management, while promoting sustainable farming practices. |
| ELMS | Environmental Land Management Scheme |
| RPA | Rural Payments Agency |

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Public Goods | Public goods in UK agriculture refer to non-excludable and non-rivalrous benefits that contribute to the broader society, such as wildlife conservation, flood prevention, and landscape preservation, which are not adequately provided by the market and require public intervention and support. |
| NE | Natural England |
| Defra | Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs |

Executive Summary

This research investigated the attitudes of farmers and landowners around the provision of funded permissive access options that were offered as part of Higher Level Stewardship up until 2010.

England Marketing was commissioned to investigate approximately how many landowners and farmers had continued the scheme since the cessation of funding, and what their reasons were for continuing or withdrawing voluntary permissive access provision. This would be used to help inform the development of future funding options within the public goods element of the Environmental Land Management scheme.

Data was gathered from a sample of 227 respondents from a database of 1,200 contacts supplied by the Rural Payments Agency. Data gathering took place via telephone interviews, achieving a sample of 201 completed interviews, and email distribution of an online survey, achieving a sample of 26 completed surveys.

The results of the research determined that, from the sample of 227 completed responses, 57% of the permissive access routes provided by these respondents as part of the Higher-Level Stewardship scheme are still in existence. This provides us with a large enough sample to give a robust indication that this is a trend that is likely to be repeated across the wider sample of 1,200 providers of permissive access. This is in line with the predictions of a previous evaluation conducted in 2011-2012 following the cessation of funding for these options.

Of the 57%, 34% of these are still maintained, 21% are offered but not maintained, and 2% of the routes have been modified. Generally speaking, those who have chosen to continue offering the routes voluntarily until this point are unlikely to discontinue them now, with just 2% stating that they were extremely unlikely to offer the routes over the next 5 years. Experiences of offering permissive access and respondents' opinions on the administrative burden of offering such access were key in their decisions on whether to continue to do so after agreement expiry or not. Generally, where respondents had had good experiences offering permissive access, had found the administrative burden to be manageable, and found communication with Defra/Natural England to be good, they had decided to continue offering the routes following funding cessation.

Of the routes that are no longer offered, 38% were closed once funding stopped, and 5% were offered on a voluntary basis for a time but have subsequently had access revoked.

When it comes to reinstatement of permissive access, 55% of the 43% in total who have ceased to offer permissive access would be happy to consider reinstating their routes. This is comprised of 53% who would only be willing to reinstate permissive access on a funded basis and 2% who would consider reinstating their routes in a modified format. The remaining 45% of the 43% who have ceased to offer permissive access would not be willing to reinstate permissive access for any reason.

Building on this picture, when previous agreement holders were asked what might encourage them to offer permissive access on their land again or to continue with the permissive access they already offer, financial input was once again very important. 92% of respondents selected that they would be encouraged by grants and funding schemes in exchange for offering permissive access.

Maintenance and management were generally conducted on an 'as needed' basis, with gates and boundary fencing proving to be the largest financial output for the majority. Given that many respondents stated that they had chosen to offer and continue permissive access in order to give them more control over the public's use of their land, it is not unexpected that gates and boundary fencing were the highest outlay for many of those who responded, as these further serve to define routes for the public to use and prevent them from accessing other areas of land without permission.

Walkers, both dog walkers and ramblers, were the most frequent users of routes, with over three-quarters of respondents listing these groups as the primary users of their permissive access. Dog walkers were also a key cause for concern amongst landlords and farmers, with multiple comments regarding livestock worrying, dogs off-lead disturbing wildlife and threatening the biodiversity of the farm, and issues with fouling and litter. These issues are especially pertinent and concerning for livestock farmers, and difficulties with members of the public are, aside from the cessation of funding, a primary factor in respondents' decisions to close their permissive access.

Some misuse of the routes was detected, with a small proportion of respondents (1%) identifying that their permissive access had been utilised by vehicles, including one respondent who identified the primary users of their route as being people on motorbikes.

The majority of agreement holders did not have extremely positive or negative experiences in any aspect, including their overall experiences or the administrative process of obtaining and maintaining funding. However, some agreement holders expressed disappointment regarding the lack of communication and clear information regarding the discontinuation of permissive access options. This became particularly problematic when they needed to revoke access to an established route. Overall, there was a general belief that offering permissive access as part of the scheme, with defined boundaries, resulted in higher respect from the public and addressed concerns about potential claims for permanent Rights of Way.

The results show that appetite for providing permissive access is high, with the data indicating that around half of those who originally signed up to the scheme are prepared to offer permissive access on a voluntary basis without payment.

With regards to the consideration of new funding provision for permissive access, even those who have ceased offering the routes are likely to consider reinstating them should funding and ongoing financial support with the maintenance of such routes be offered, provided the funding available is truly reflective of their incurred costs.

Background

Permissive access options offering financial incentives to farmers/landowners in exchange for offering permissive access to their land for public recreational use formed an element of agri-environment schemes until late 2010, after which funding was withdrawn and no new agreements were put in place. Live agreements did continue to run, with the last of these ending in 2020/2021.

Whilst farmers/landowners were asked to consider continuing the permissive access scheme on a voluntary basis, there had been no research undertaken to provide any significant indication of how many chose to do this. It was presumed, based on anecdotal feedback including reports from members of the public of route closures, that many have stopped providing access.

With the Environmental Land Management Scheme projected to come into full use in 2028, and aspects such as the provision of public goods such as access potentially forming a basis for some payment options, Defra and Natural England wished to determine how many permissive access routes remained open following the termination of HLS agreements.

The insights and output from this research are intended to inform the consideration of options for access provision payments as part of ELMS in order to ensure that value for money is achieved and that the openness of farmers and land managers to provide public access is understood.

Objectives

The objectives of the research were:

- To determine how much voluntary permissive access provision is in place following the end of HLS permissive access agreements and understand the reasons for landowners/managers either continuing or discontinuing permissive access provision.
- To use the above data to help inform opinions regarding the value for money of public access provision to help inform ELMS options development.

Methodology

England Marketing developed a survey in collaboration with the Project Steering Group nominated by Defra and Natural England. The survey was hosted on our industry-leading survey experience management software and included questions around:

- The status of the permissive access routes respondents offered as part of the scheme, and whether they are still in use and/or being maintained.
- Any barriers or drivers for respondents in continuing to offer the routes established as part of the scheme, or potentially offering them in the future.
- Whether there is any appetite to continue/reinstate permissive access routes on their land on a voluntary basis.

- Respondents' experiences of being HLS agreement holders and offering permissive access across their land.
- How respondents feel about permissive access on their land, and the importance they place on it compared to, or in relation to, other "public goods" such as soil and water quality, biodiversity etc.
- Their attitudes and opinions regarding the previous HLS permissive access options and the levels of support that they offered.

We routed the survey according to responses in order to probe particularly positive or negative feelings to gather more valuable and in-depth data on these aspects. This included follow-up questions displayed only to respondents who had demonstrated particularly positive or negative feelings in response to specific questions, i.e., those who stated they would not consider reinstating permissive access for any reason, providing open text boxes asking them to elaborate on their answers and give their reasons for their response. Additionally, we provided an optional open text box at the culmination of the survey for respondents to give any additional thoughts on any aspects that they felt they had not covered during the survey in order to capture additional data.

Data was gathered via CATI (computer-assisted telephone interviews) and online email distribution of the same questionnaire, designed by England Marketing, to a database of c. 1,200 HLS contacts supplied by Defra and Natural England from the Rural Payments Agency. The sample of respondents was randomly selected from this database, with a total of 805 calls being made and 423 emails distributed to those on the database who had email addresses and had not been previously contacted via telephone. These figures also account for 120 of those on the database only being contactable by post, which was not a method of distribution utilised for this research, and some duplicate records on the supplied database, which were removed prior to the commencement of the project.

The survey comprised 32 questions in total, with a mean average completion time of 21.3 minutes for the telephone interviews. The question formats included within the survey, and the types of data they facilitated gathering, are included below:

| Question Type | Data Type |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Yes/No | Nominal |
| Multiple Choice (Multiple Answers) | Nominal |
| Multiple Choice (Single Answers) | Nominal |
| Likert Scale | Scale |
| Scale Questions | Scale |
| Ranking Questions | Ranking |
| Free Text | Qualitative Free Text |

The full survey can be found in Appendix 1. During telephone interviews, researchers used the free text boxes to collect respondents' comments on specific questions, recording their exact responses. When further clarification was required, interviewers asked follow-up questions to gather additional context and information.

Participation in the survey was optional and respondents were not incentivised to respond. This research was conducted in accordance with the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct and in line with the principles of informed consent. Respondents were selected randomly from a database which did not provide information that would allow interviewers to profile respondents, ensuring fair representation. The email survey was distributed via an anonymous link, and all responses were anonymised, with any identifying information removed, prior to submission to Defra and Natural England.

Defra and Natural England outlined 200 responses as being the desired minimum number of completed responses in order to achieve a statistically significant and robust sample. In total, we achieved 226 responses, with 201 of these being gathered via telephone and 25 gathered for the online survey, which was distributed via email. This gave us a whole sample that was significant to a 95% confidence level (+/- 6%).

In terms of the analysis of the data obtained from the survey, a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical methods was employed. An overview of the analytical methodology can be found below:

Descriptive Statistics:

- Frequency distributions and percentages were calculated for each survey question to summarise the responses and identify overall trends.
- Graphical representations, such as bar charts and pie charts, were used to visualise the distribution of responses and highlight key patterns in the data.
- Word clouds were generated to illustrate the most frequently mentioned terms or phrases in the open-ended survey questions, providing a visual representation of the key themes and topics emerging from the respondents' answers.

Inferential Statistics:

- Inferential statistical analyses were performed to assess the relationships between a range of variables, such as the factors influencing respondents' willingness to offer permissive access routes and their experiences with HLS agreements.
- Techniques such as chi-square tests, t-tests, and regression analyses were utilised to determine the significance of observed relationships and to identify potential predictors of attitudes and behaviours related to permissive access.
- The results of the inferential analyses provided insights into the underlying factors driving respondents' decisions, preferences, and attitudes, as well as any potential differences between various subgroups within the sample.

Qualitative Analysis:

- An inductive coding approach was used to examine respondents' comments in open text boxes to determine common themes and their frequency.
- Sentiment analysis was utilised to determine the emotional tone of open-text responses using Natural Language Processing (NLP) software to detect the polarity (positive, negative, neutral) of their comments.

Together, these analytical methods enabled a comprehensive evaluation of the survey data, allowing for a better understanding of respondents' experiences with offering permissive access and their attitudes towards permissive access and other public goods. The findings from the descriptive and inferential analyses were integrated to provide a robust and in-depth understanding of the key drivers, barriers, and attitudes related to permissive access routes on respondents' land, with a view that these findings would be used to assist with informing future policy direction and recommendations regarding any future provision of funding in exchange for offering permissive access.

Prior to launching the survey, we also undertook a desk-based review of previous survey findings and associated literature to provide context to the insights gathered, which is attached as Annex 1.

Results

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Respondents were located across England, with a greater proportion being situated in the East of England (27%) and the South West (20%) – see Figure 1. The representation reflects the findings from previous research undertaken in 2013 evaluating Higher Level Stewardship permissive access, as the evaluation nodes defined for this previous research represented a higher proportion of those in the East, with Yorkshire and Humberside not being represented.¹

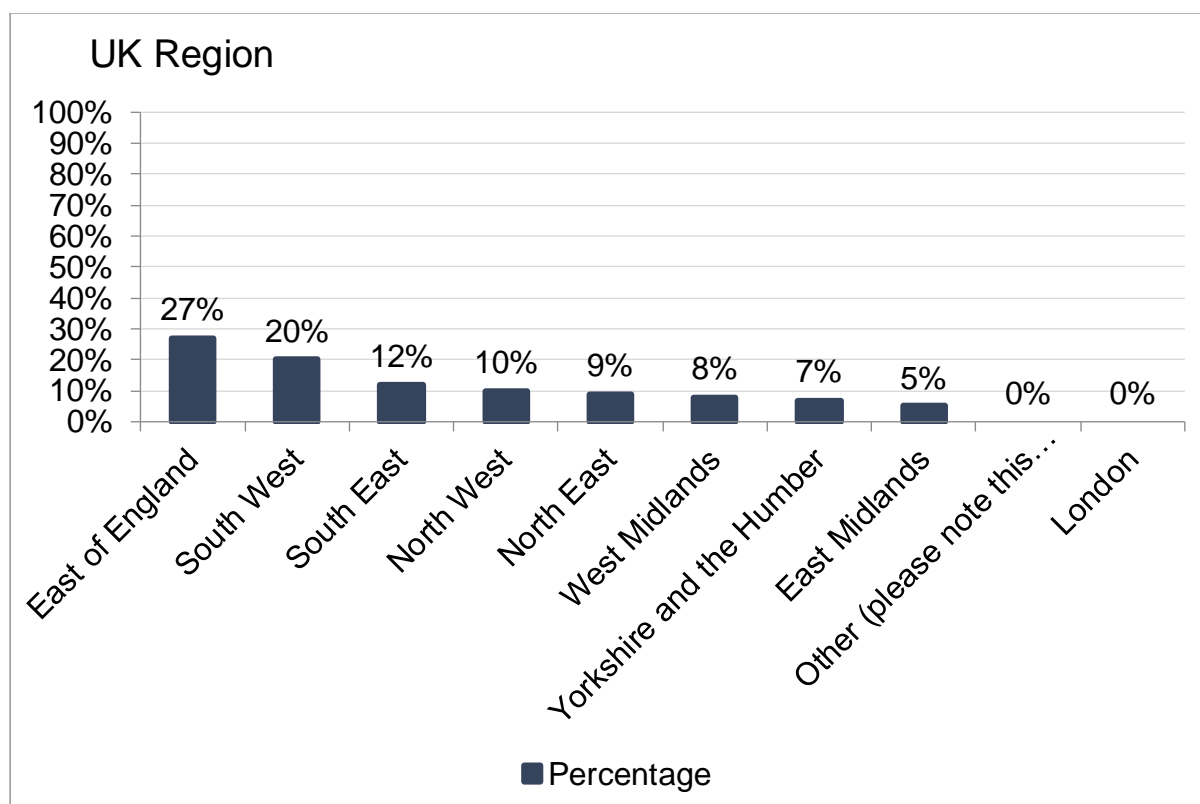


Figure 1 – Breakdown of participants by UK region

¹ 'Higher Level Stewardship Permissive Access Evaluation', p. 18, [11757_LM0405FINALREPORT.pdf](#)

The vast majority (80%) of respondents had been farming for more than 30 years – see Figure 2. In the context of the last permissive access agreements being made a minimum of 13 years ago, as well as the average age of farmers in the UK being 59 as of 2021, these results are not unexpected.

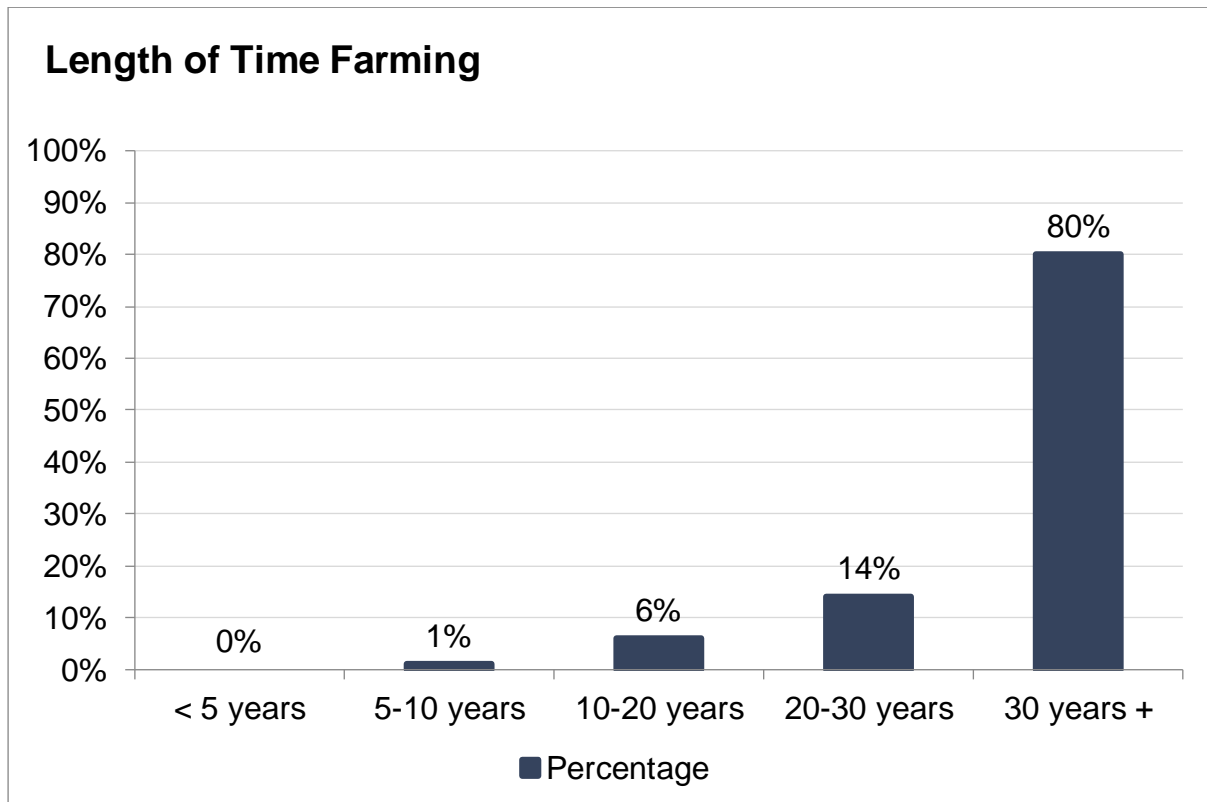


Figure 2 – Breakdown of participants by length of time farming

Sample Composition – Farms

Farms were primarily owned, with some respondents also renting part, or all, of their land. Other arrangements, such as share farming or contract farming only represented 3% of the sample.

See Figure 3 for a visual depiction of these results.

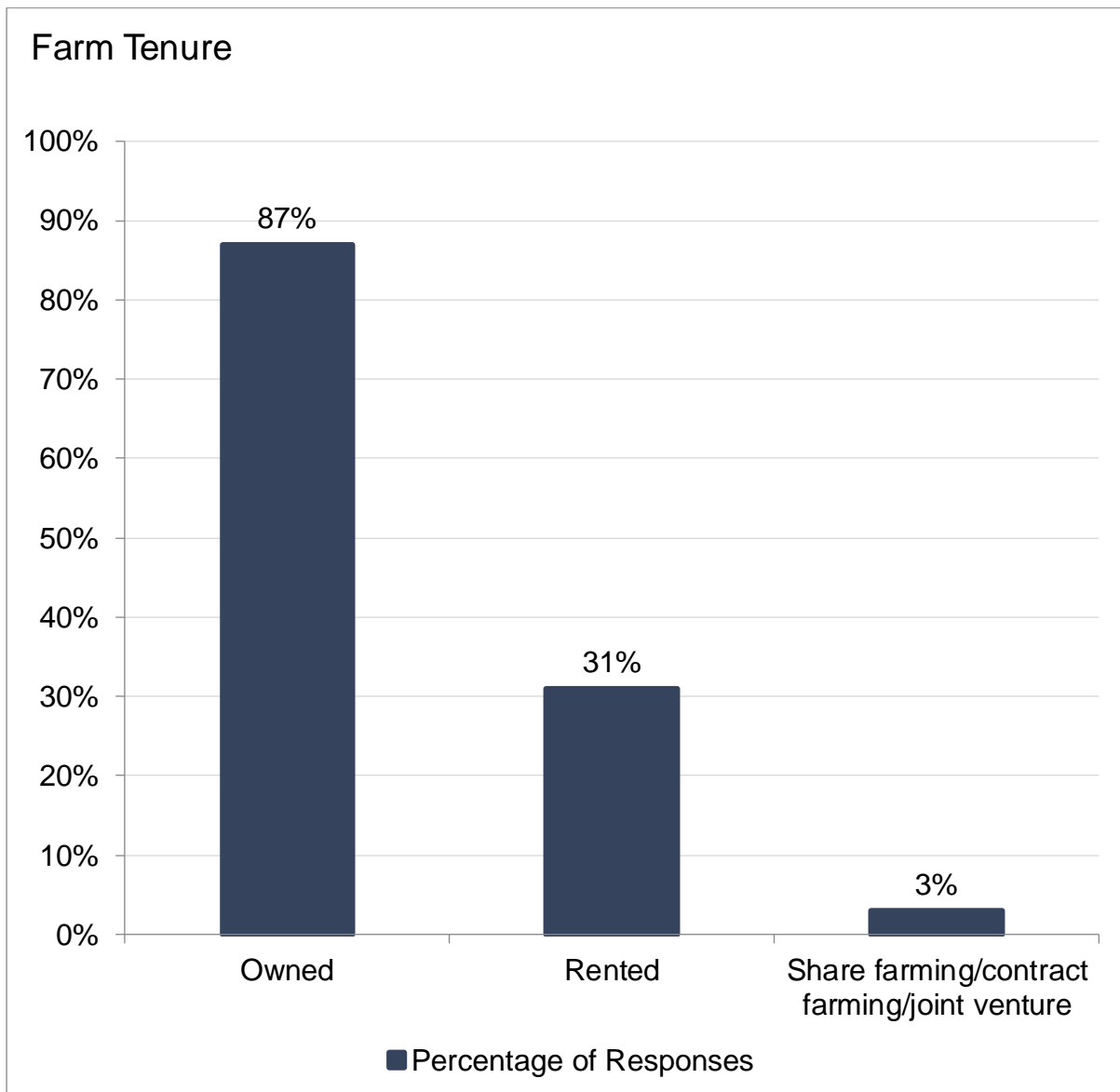


Figure 3 – Breakdown of participants by type of farm tenure

In terms of the sample composition when it comes to the land on which the routes were based, generally there was a spread of farm sizes, although relatively few smaller farming operations were represented, with just 7% of those surveyed farming a total area of below 50 hectares.

See Figure 4 for a visual depiction of these results.

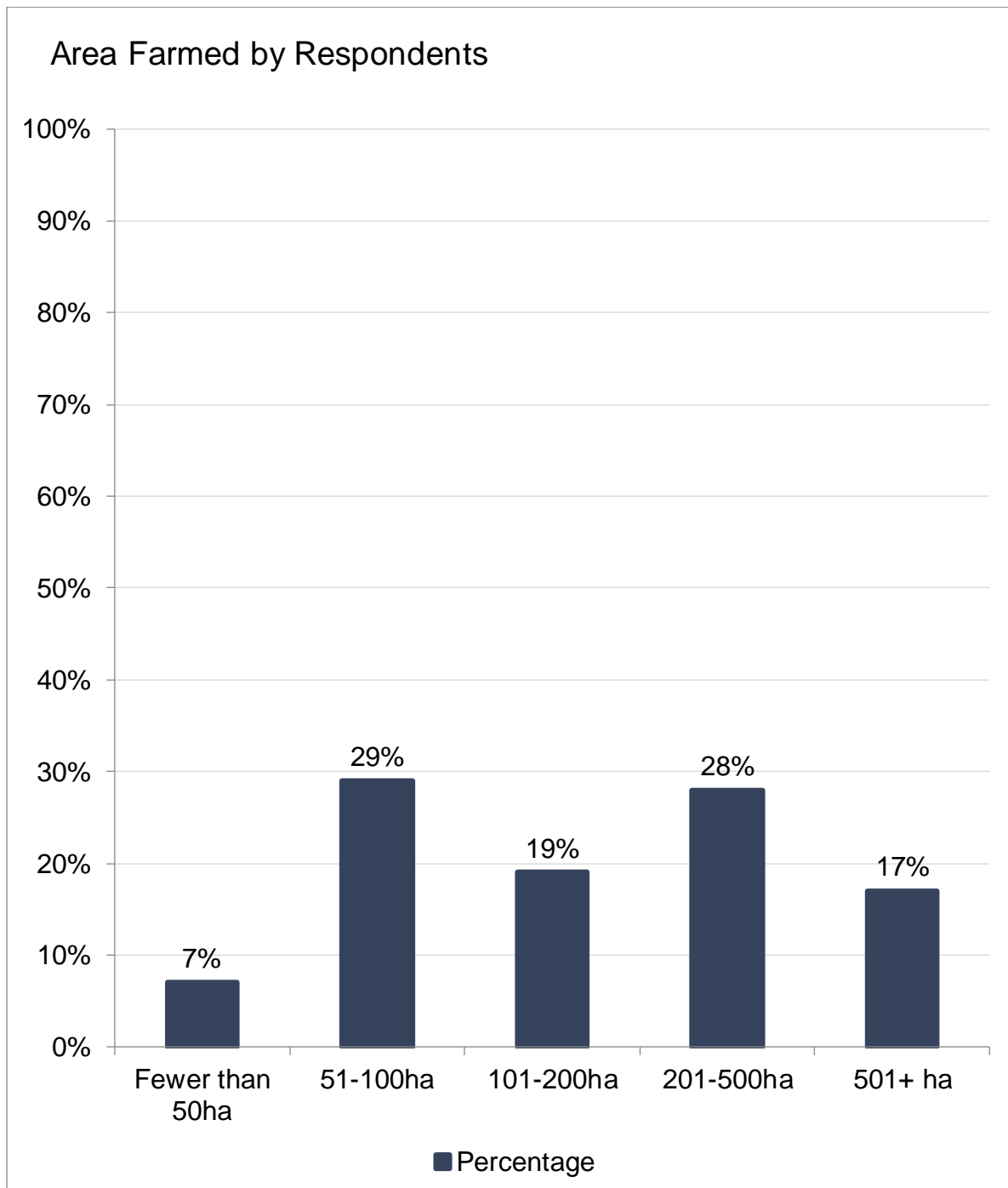


Figure 4 – Breakdown of participants by area farmed

The farms represented in this research were primarily involved in the production of cereal crops and/or lowland grazing livestock. A very low proportion of the farming operations represented were pig or poultry farms. This is likely representative of the layout, land use, and size of these types of operations not lending themselves to the provision of access routes. Of the 16% who selected that they conducted 'Other' operations on their farm, grassland was the most common, and of the 9% who had a non-agricultural aspect to their farming operation, equestrian facilities and tourism opportunities were the two most frequently provided.

See Figure 5 for a visual depiction of these results.

In the chart below, each element represents the percentage of respondents who selected that particular option. Respondents were asked to choose multiple options, so the percentages may add up to more than 100% when viewed collectively. It is important to interpret each element individually as a percentage of the total sample, not as a whole.

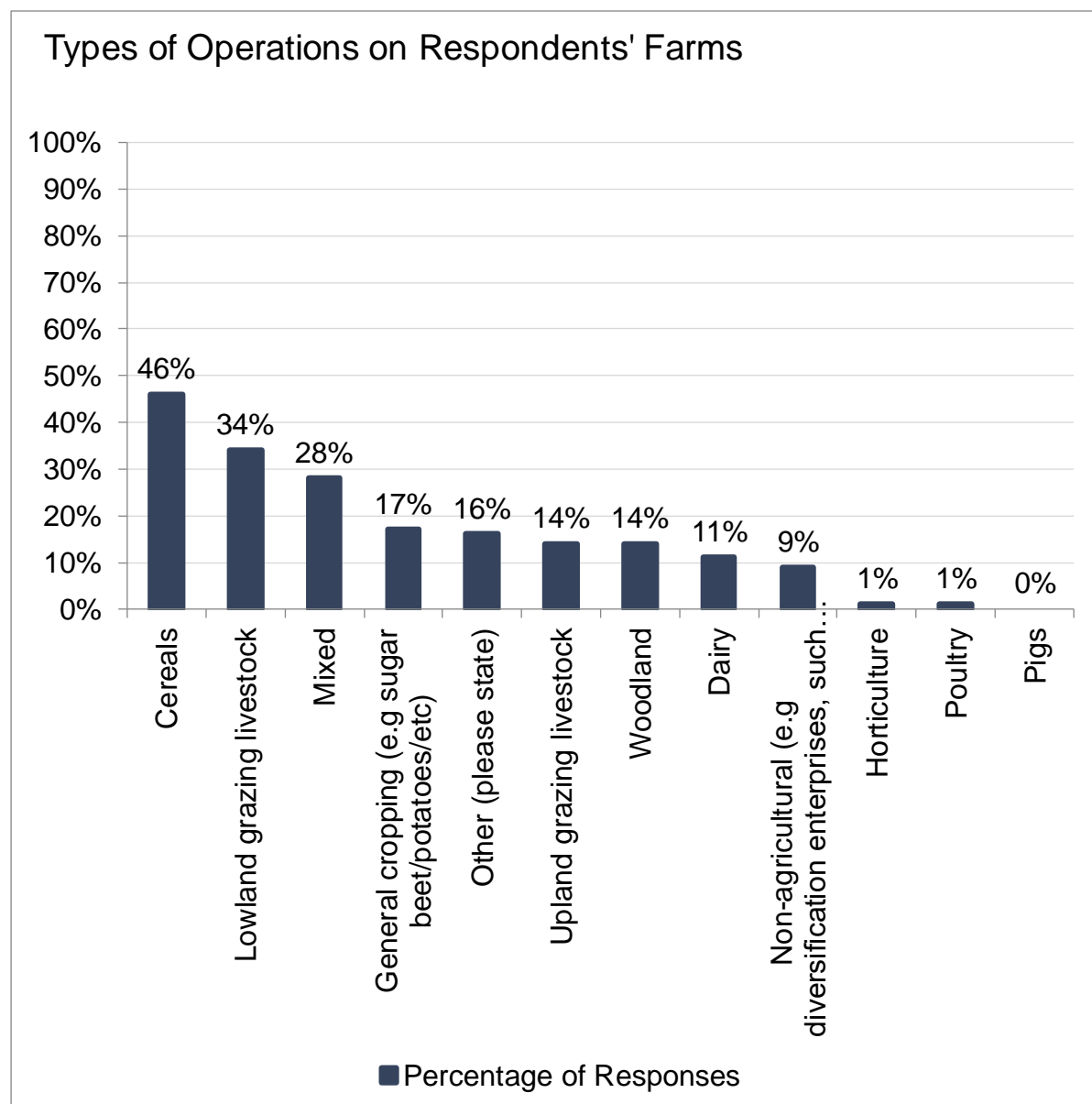


Figure 5 – Breakdown of participants by type of farming operation

The majority of respondents (63%) were currently engaged in agri-environment schemes – Mid-Tier, Higher-Level Stewardship, and Countryside Stewardship.

See Figure 6 for a visual depiction of these results.

A breakdown of these can be found in Appendix 3.

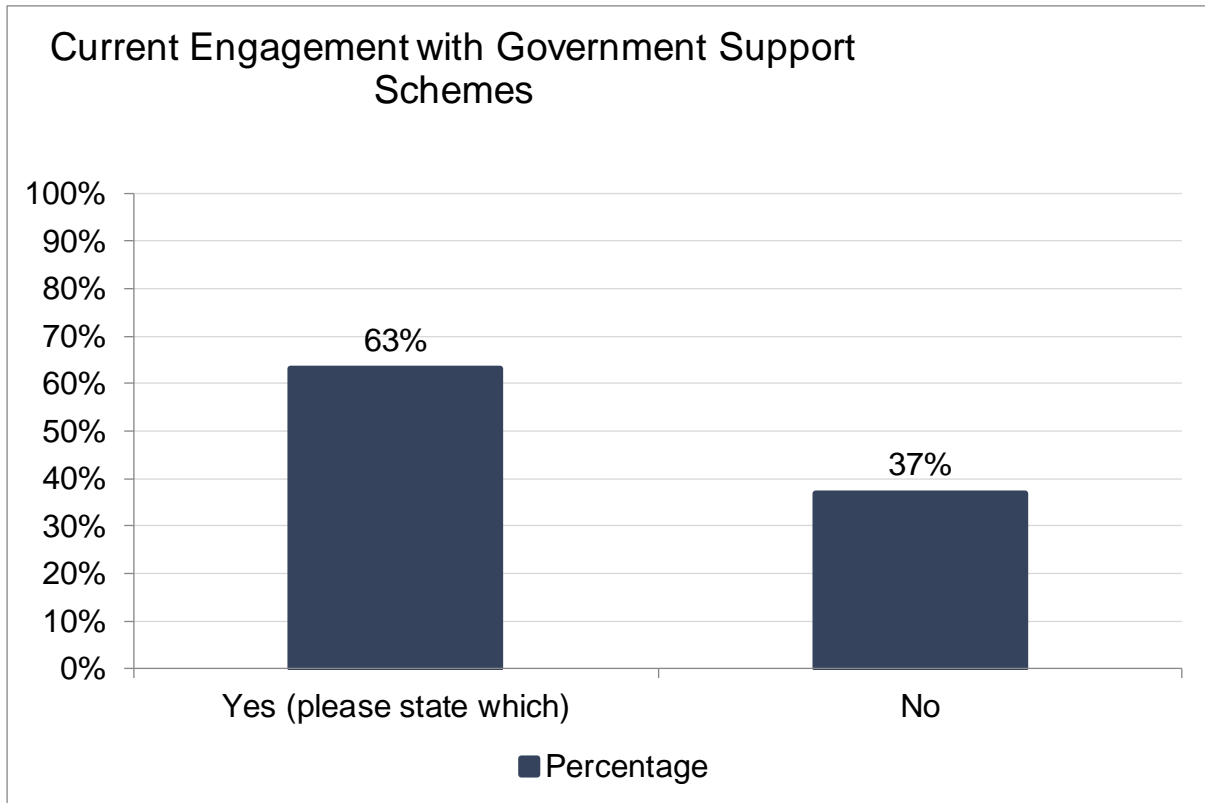


Figure 6 – Participants' current engagement with agri-environment schemes

Futureproofing and Succession Planning

Respondents were asked to provide information on their plans for the future and the status of succession planning for their farming operations in order to give a rounded holistic picture of the type and status of farming operations of those who responded to this survey.

Just under half of respondents (49%) already have a succession plan in place.

See Figure 7 for a visual depiction of these results.

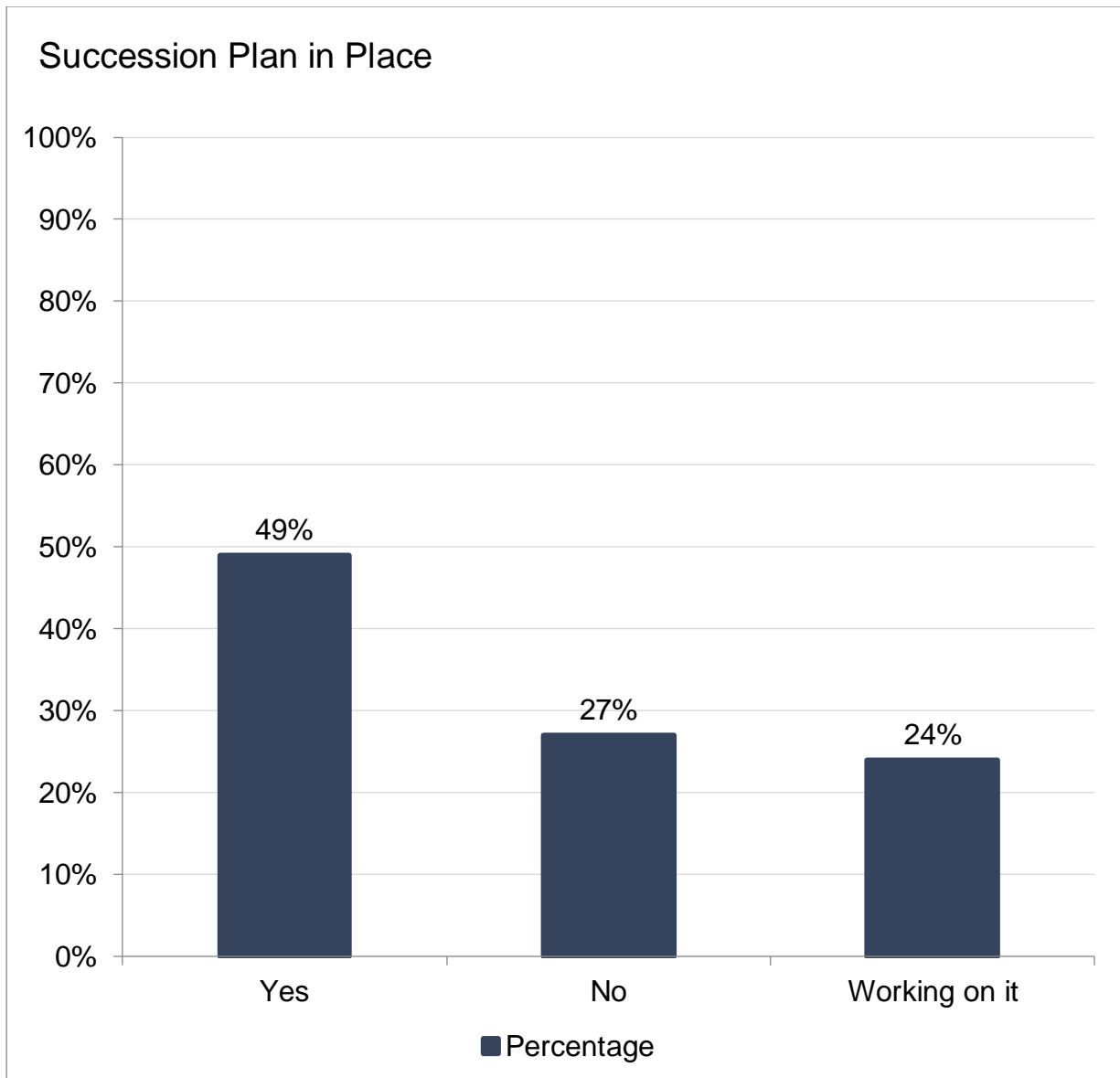


Figure 7 – Status of participants' succession planning

In terms of planning for the future of their farming operations, consolidating the business was priority for 41% of respondents, whilst around a quarter planned to increase productivity.

See Figure 8 for a visual depiction of these results.

In the chart below, each element represents the percentage of respondents who selected that particular option. Respondents were asked to choose multiple options, so the percentages may add up to more than 100% when viewed collectively. It is important to interpret each element individually as a percentage of the total sample, not as a whole.

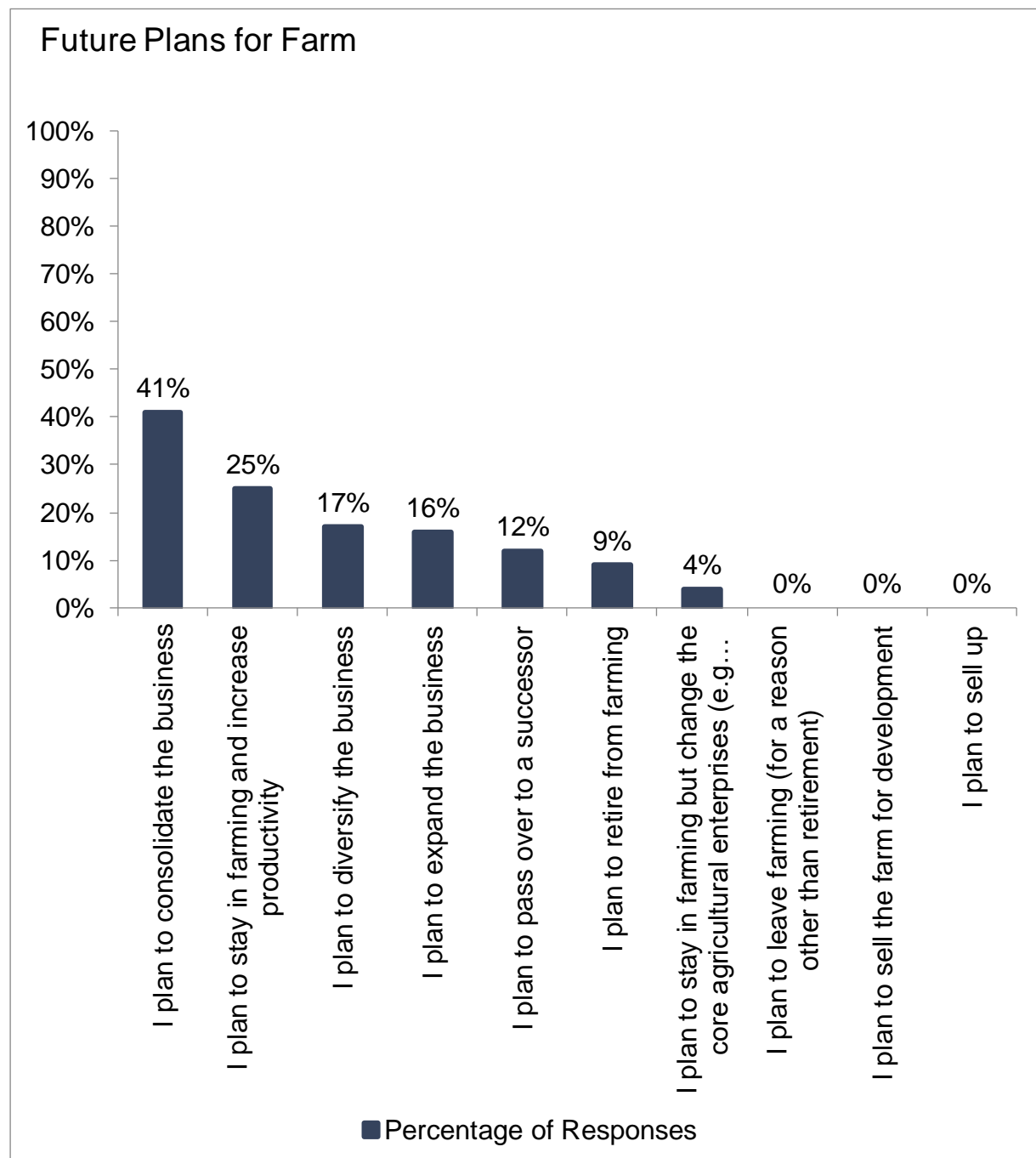


Figure 8 – Participants' future plans for their farms

Farming Operations and “Public Goods”

Respondents were asked to select from a given list the top three public goods that they felt their farming operations produce or contribute to. The overwhelming majority (86%) believed that their farming operations contributed to food security, whilst 64% stated that improved soil health was a public good that their farming operation contributed to. Nature recovery was third, with 48% of respondents selecting this as a factor.

Please see Figure 9 for a visual breakdown of the results.

Public access and education were not significant factors for many, with just 11% of those surveyed stating that this was a public good that their farming operation provided.

In the chart below, each element represents the percentage of respondents who selected that particular option. Respondents were asked to choose multiple options, so the percentages may add up to more than 100% when viewed collectively. It is important to interpret each element individually as a percentage of the total sample, not as a whole.

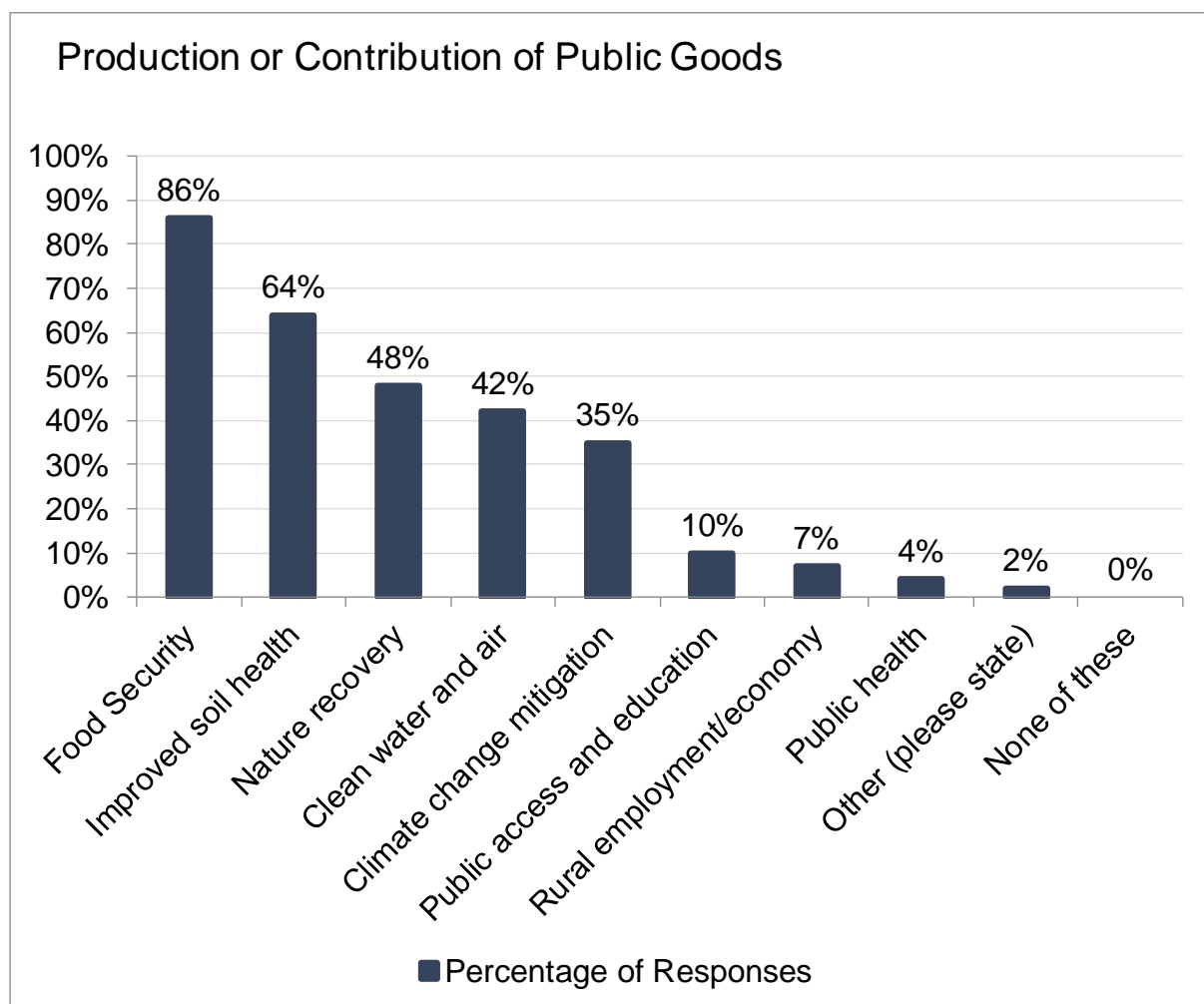


Figure 9 – Respondents’ selections of the top three public goods that their farming operations produce/directly contribute to

These results were reflected in the responses to the following question asking farmers to rank the aspects listed above according to their importance for them and their land, with 1 being the most important.

The primary factor in this instance was the ability to make a good living, which ranked most highly out of any of the factors listed. Once again, public access and public health were ranked lowest by respondents. See Figure 10 for a visual depiction of the results. A full breakdown can be found in Appendix 4.

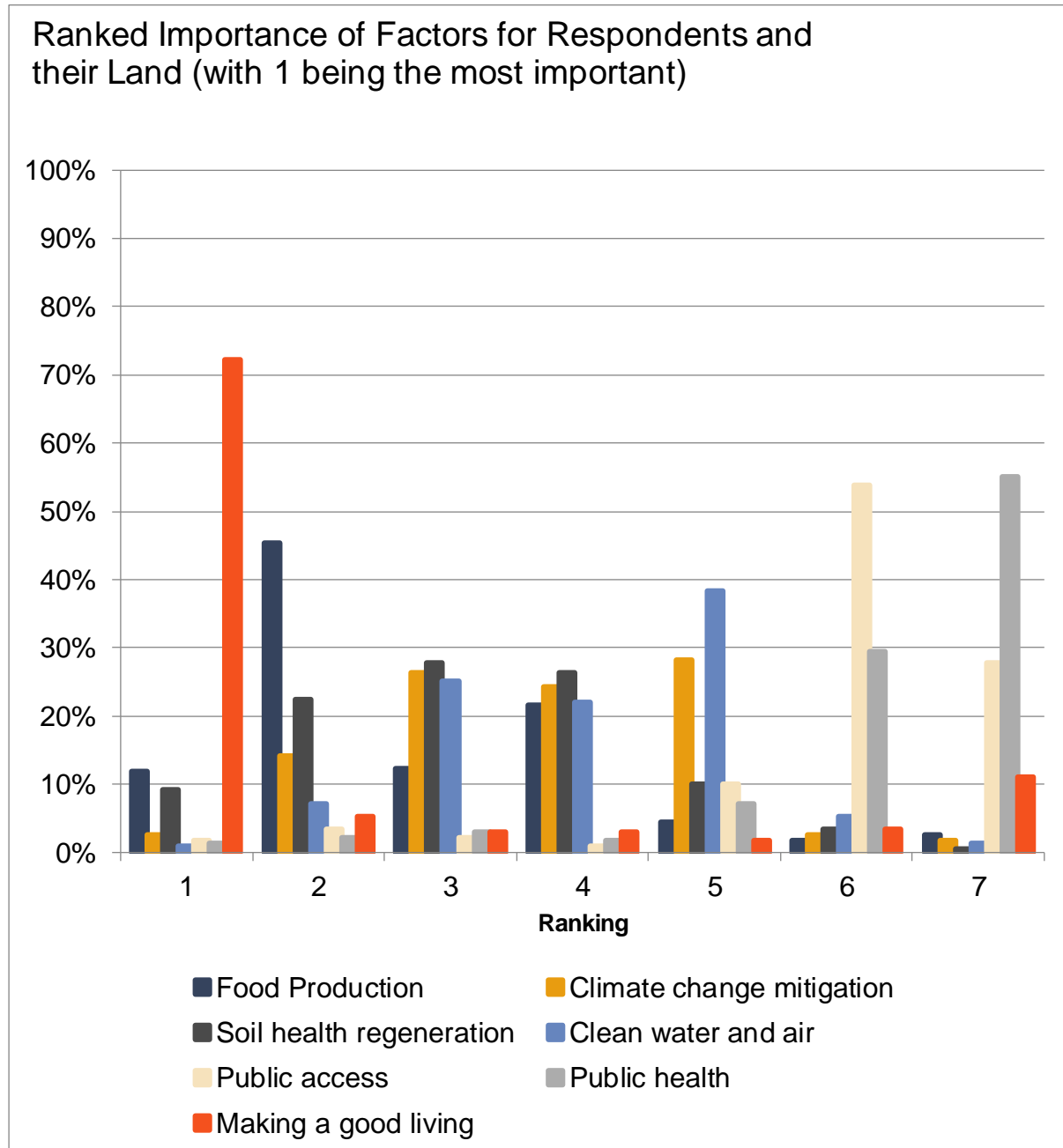


Figure 10 – Ranking of factors in terms of their importance to respondents and their land/farming operations

Permissive Access Profile

Entry into Permissive Access Schemes

91% of respondents had entered Permissive Access schemes between 2006-2010. Representation from those who had participated prior to 2006 was low, with just 9% of those who responded falling into these groups. This is likely due to changes in telephone numbers, email addresses, and other contact details which made it more difficult for England Marketing to get in touch with these respondents. Additionally, this survey was telephone and online based and for some agreement holders we only had home addresses through which to contact them. We would assume that the majority of these were earlier agreement holders, prior to when email became more prevalent as a method of communication.

Please see Figure 11 for a visual depiction of these results.

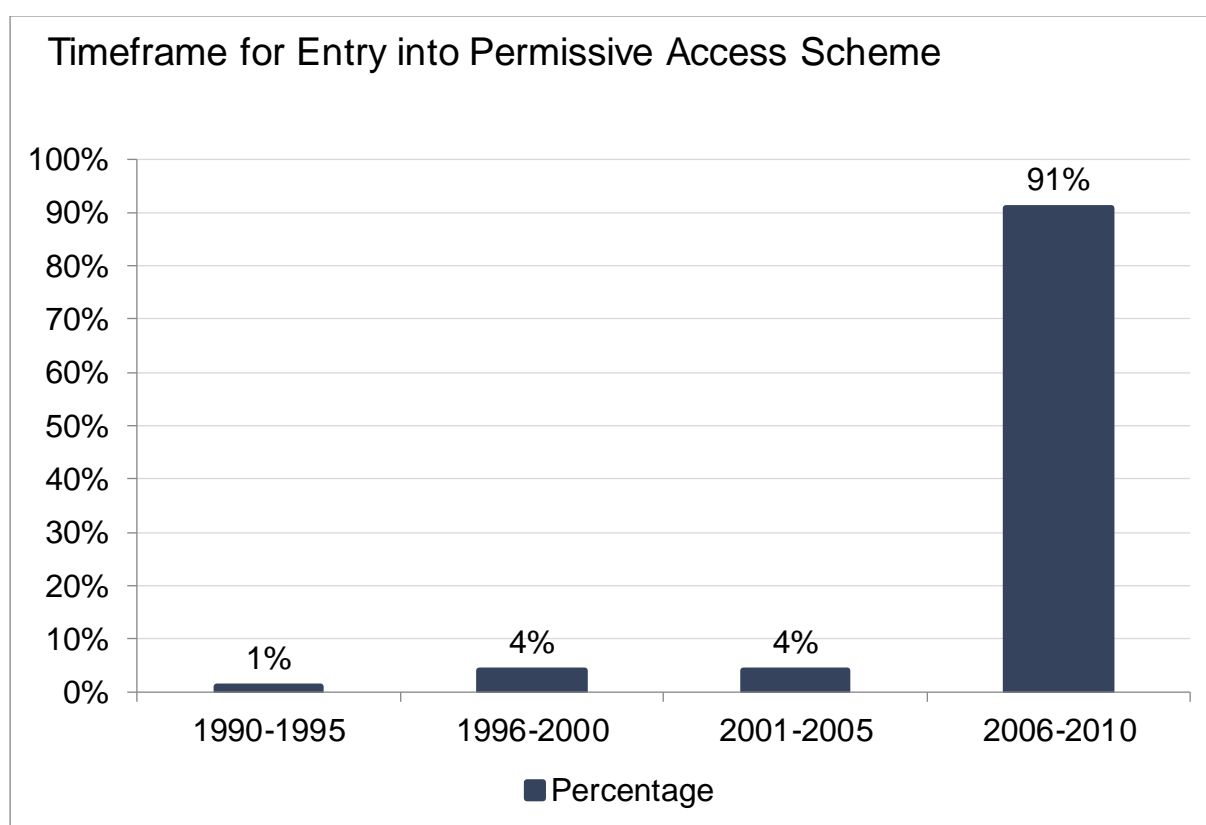


Figure 11 – Timeframe respondents entered into permissive access

Agreement Expiry

Reflective of the commencement period for many of those who responded to the survey, and the factors mentioned above, the majority of the agreements for those who participated expired more recently, with over half expiring in 2019 and 2020 (17% and 37%, respectively) – Figure 12.

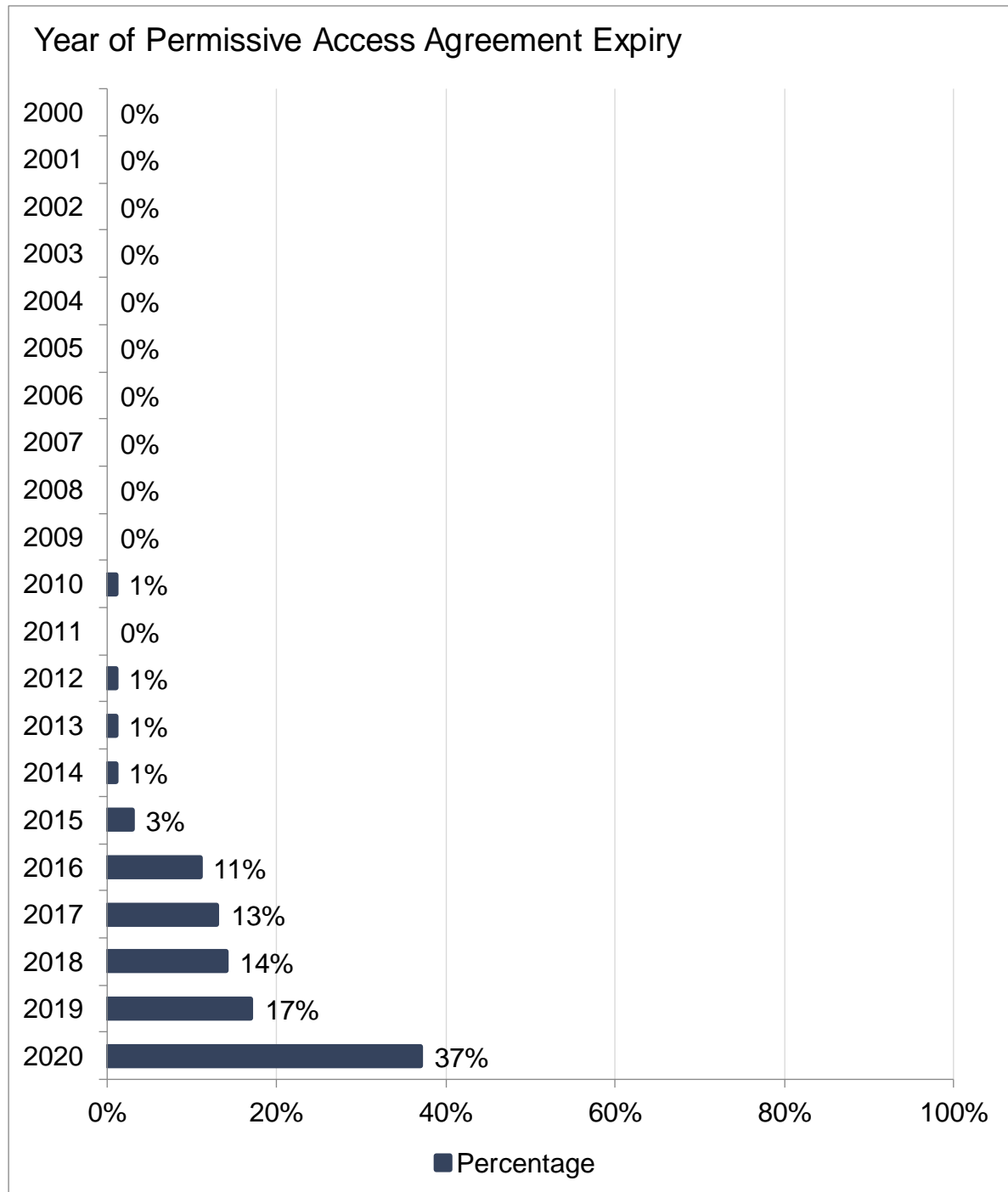


Figure 12 – Year respondents' permissive access agreements expired

Routes Provided

The majority of respondents (79%) offered footpaths for their permissive access routes, and a fifth (20%) offered permissive bridleways.

Permissive cycle paths and accessible routes for people with reduced mobility were least commonly offered, with just 4% offering permissive cycle paths, and just 2% offering routes accessible to those with reduced mobility.

Some respondents offered several different types of permissive access.

Please see Figure 13 for a visual depiction of these results.

In the chart below, each element represents the percentage of respondents who selected that particular option. Respondents were asked to choose multiple options, so the percentages may add up to more than 100% when viewed collectively. It is important to interpret each element individually as a percentage of the total sample, not as a whole.

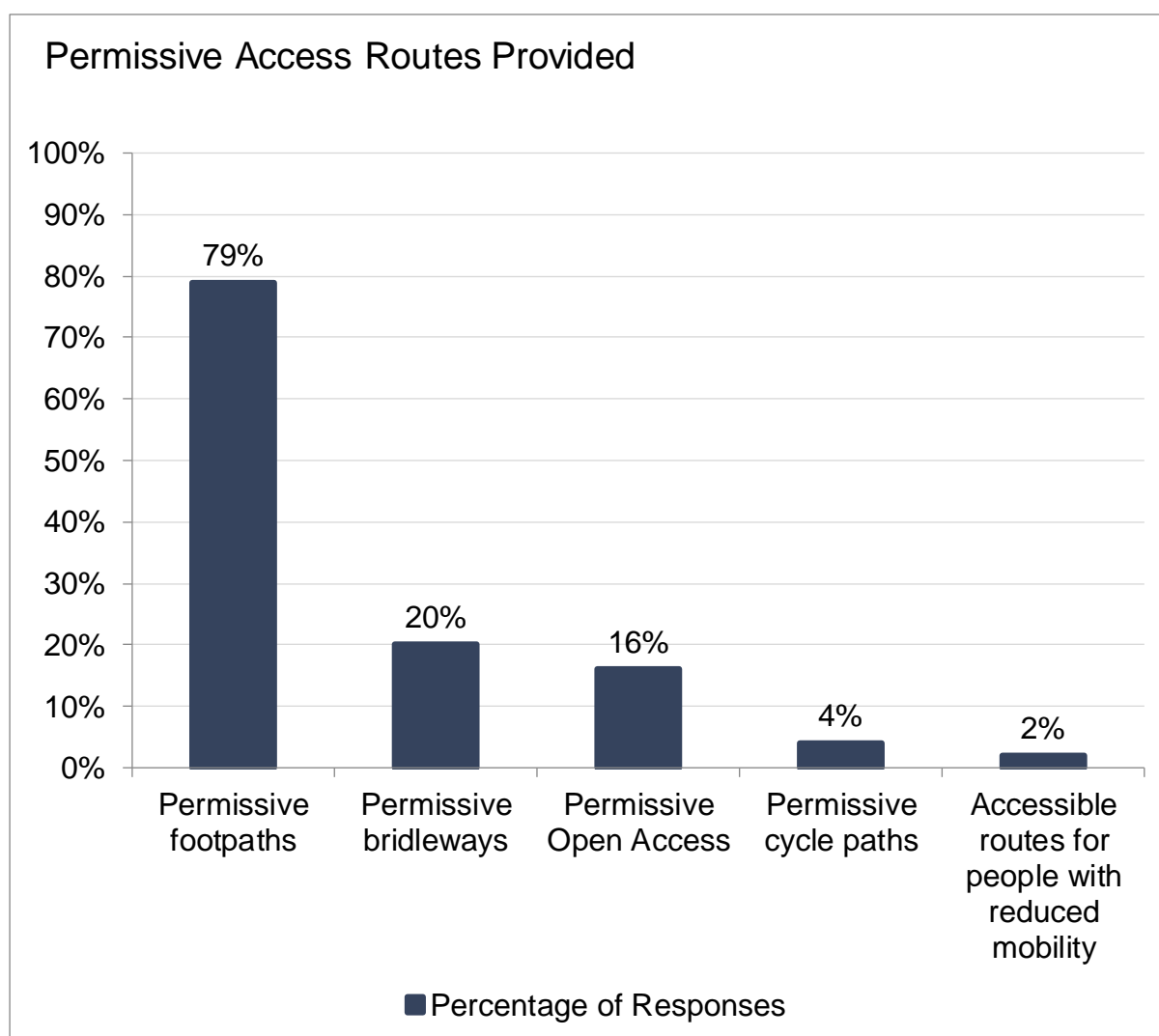


Figure 13 – Type of permissive access route(s) provided

Provision of Additional Public Access

Respondents were asked whether they were involved in providing any other public access routes over their land, excluding Public Rights of Way. The vast majority (90%) did not provide any other public access.

Please see Figure 14 for a visual depiction of these results.

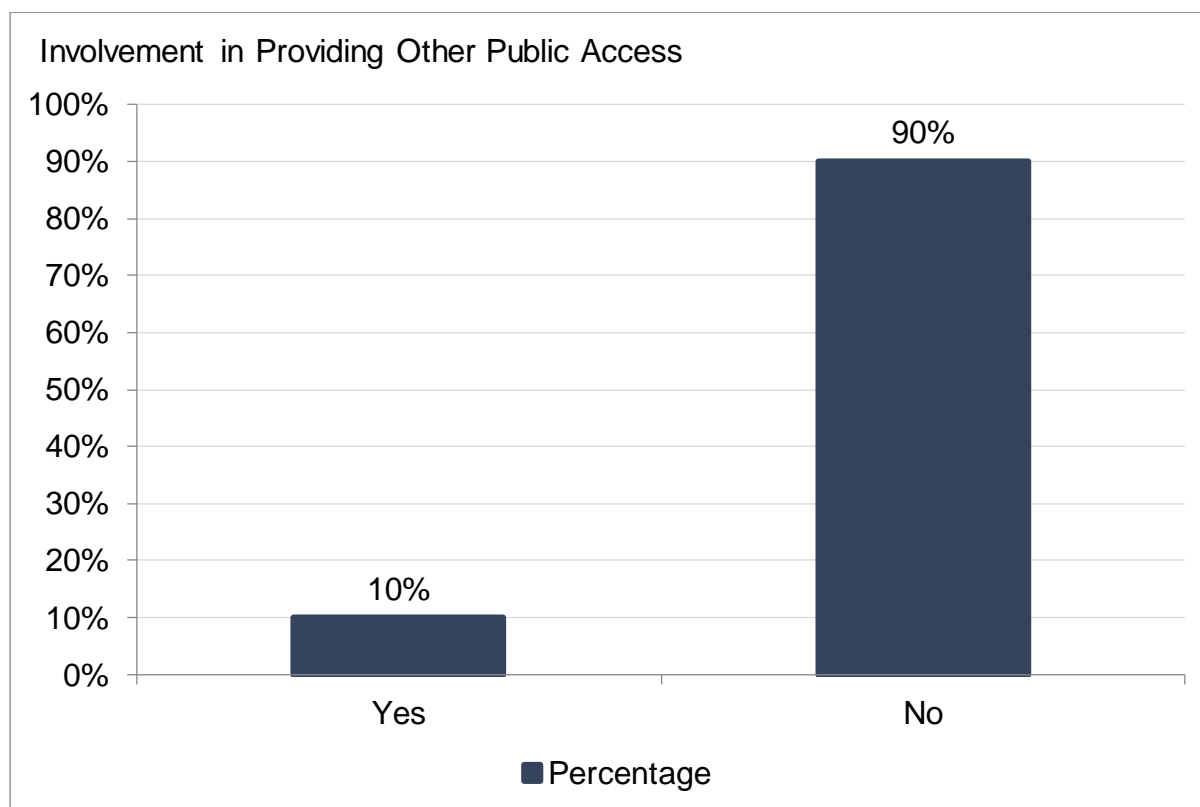


Figure 14 – Respondents' involvement in providing other public access

Of the 10% who did provide additional public access separately to permissive access, the types of access they provided are included below as a table of comments.

| |
|--|
| Yes, Permissive Access as before on voluntary basis. Hoping the old scheme will be reinstated under ELMS. |
| Both bridle and footpath. |
| Yes. Just installing a cycle path on a permissive agreement with Norfolk County Council. |
| We have a farm trail. |
| We charge people a fee of £20 per year each to walk through a certain set of permissive paths. We supply them with a lanyard and give the money earned to charity. |
| None, but the public still walk through the grass margins regardless. |
| The old access agreement has been renegotiated with local parishes. |

| |
|---|
| Higher-level stewardship scheme. |
| Farm visits |
| Educational Access for 20 years through old CSS then HLS. |
| No |
| We allow informal access - a couple of foot paths, and access to birdwatchers, trail hunting, occasional fishing, and educational access. |
| Locals go where they want. |
| An area of open access to a quarter of the farm. |
| Certain permitted access, |
| Public Right of Way |
| Educational |
| School funding activity on site on the farm. |
| District National Park - in conjunction with Farming in Protected Landscapes opened an extra walkway over some old sandpits. |
| Yes - campsite |
| CROW access |
| Holiday let business |
| Access on tracks to public only. |

Car Parking Provision

The majority of those who offered permissive access on their land did not provide car parking for users of the routes, with just 7% stating that they have a designated parking area (Figure 15).

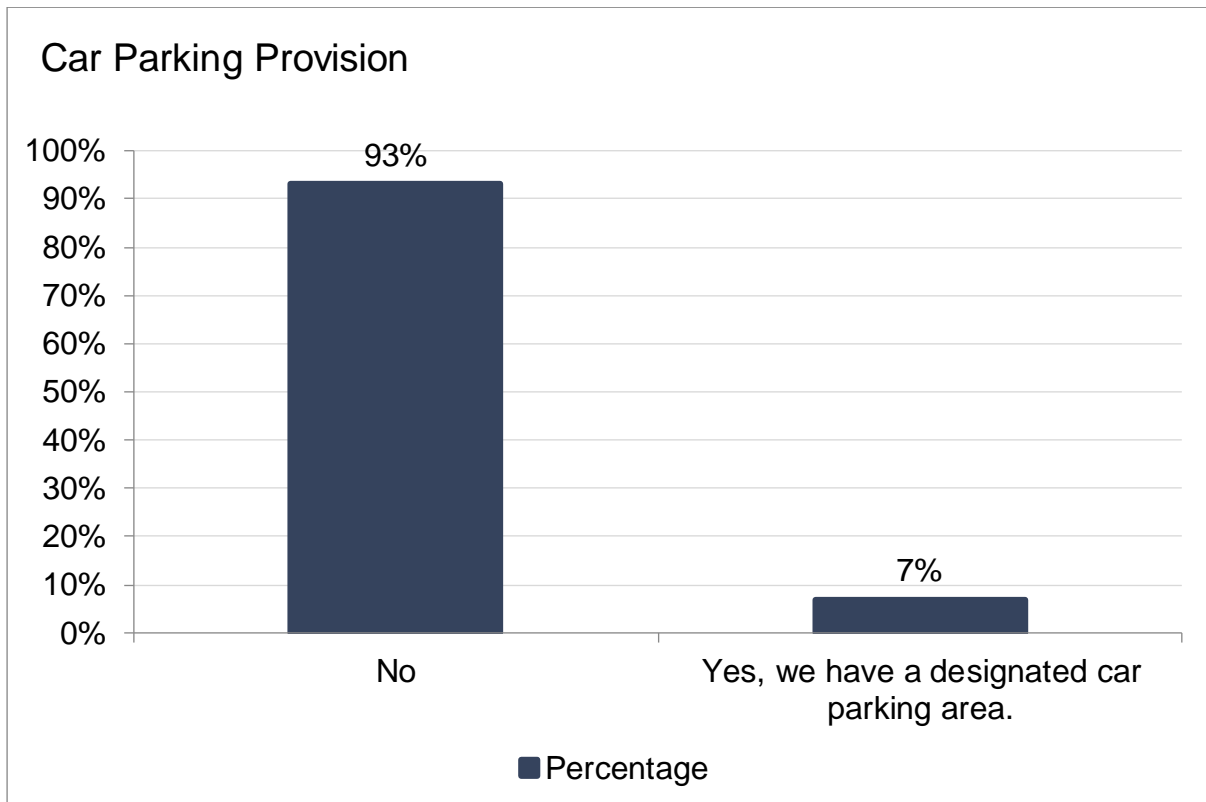


Figure 15 – Car parking provision alongside permissive access

Current Status of Permissive Access Routes

Decisions to Offer and Maintain Routes after Agreement Expiry

The status of routes after the expiry of agreements is dependent on the individual agreement holders, although the majority continue, with 57% of respondents stating that they have continued to offer them, albeit 21% no longer maintain them, and 2% have modified the routes in some way.

38% of respondents did not continue offering the routes after the agreement expired, and 5% continued to offer them for a time but subsequently ceased to do so

Please see Figure 16 for a visual depiction of these results.

Anecdotally, it was noted during telephone interviews with respondents that several stated that they were “not allowed” to continue to offer the routes and that they would have done so if they have been allowed to. Efforts had been made by Defra and Natural England to communicate with agreement holders and encourage them to continue offering the routes after their agreement expired, however, it’s clear from this feedback that the communication may not have provided enough clarity or reached all agreement holders.

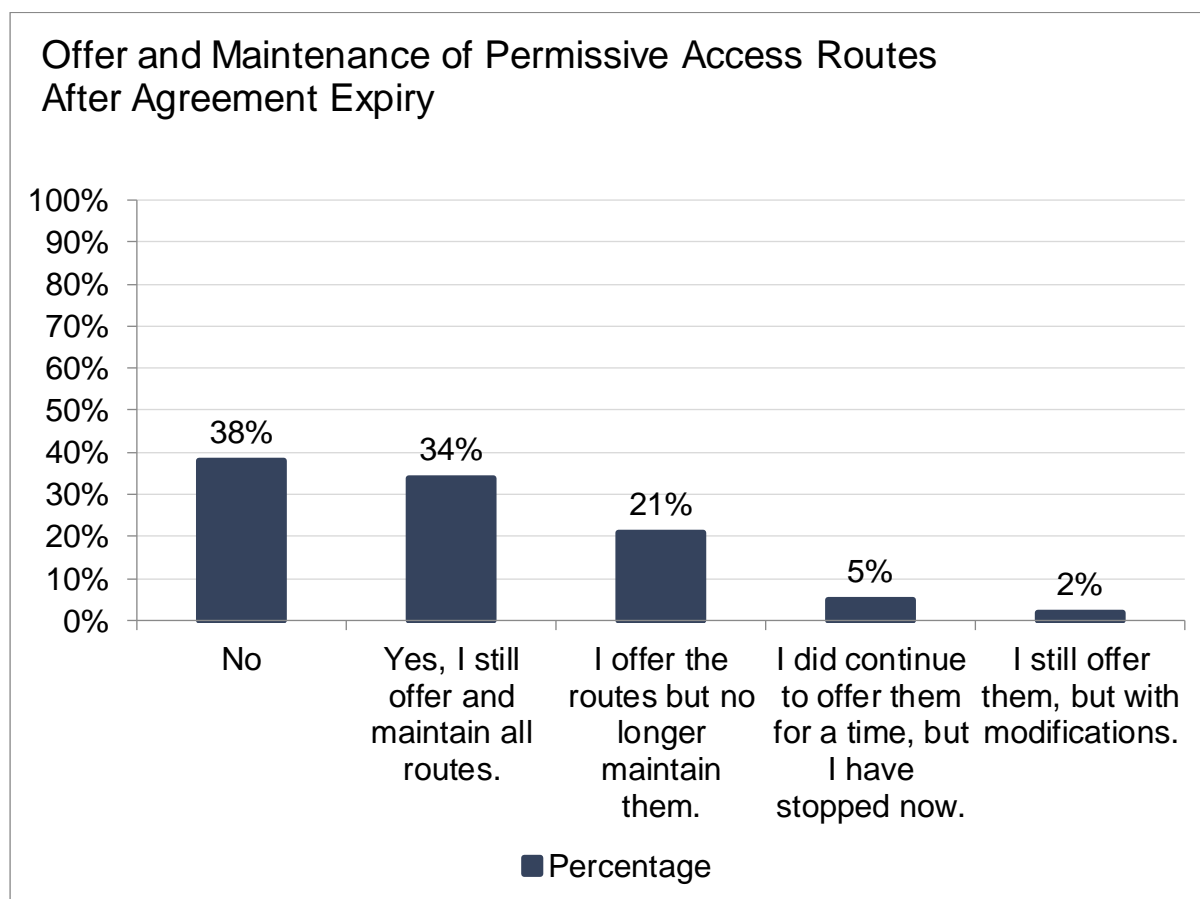


Figure 16 – Decisions to offer and maintain permissive access routes after agreement expiry

Of the 5% who did continue to offer the routes for a time but then stopped, the years in which they did so, and some of their comments as to why they chose to stop, can be found below.

| |
|---|
| 2016 |
| I offer some routes and not others, some we charge for. |
| 2021 |
| 2021 |
| 2023 |
| 2021 |
| 2020 |
| 2020 |
| The agreement ran out a year after the land was sold. |
| August 2020 and not encouraging people but don't stop them. |

Notable Demographic Trends Around Decisions to Offer and Maintain Routes after Agreement Expiry

Some notable trends were observed among individual groups based on their responses as to whether they still offered and/or maintained their permissive access routes. These are detailed below, grouped by response.

Yes, I still offer and maintain all routes (34.4% of respondents):

- Most common in the South West (41.3%) and the East of England (30.6%).
- More common among farmers with 30+ years of experience (36.7%) and those with 20-30 years of experience (25.8%).
- More prevalent among farmers with mixed farming operations (39.7%) and those with woodland (48.6%).
- Most common among farmers with owned land (33.2%) and rented land (31.0%).

I offer the routes but no longer maintain them (20.7% of respondents):

- Most common in the North East (30%) and the North West (30.4%).
- More common among farmers with 10-20 years of experience (38.5%) and those with 20-30 years of experience (25.8%).
- More prevalent among farmers with upland grazing livestock (28.6%) and lowland grazing livestock (28%).
- Most common among farmers with rented land (25.4%).

I still offer them but with modifications (1.8% of respondents):

- More common among farmers in the East Midlands (8.3%).
- More common among farmers with 30+ years of experience (2.2%).
- More prevalent among farmers with upland grazing livestock (3.9%).
- Most common among farmers with owned land (2.0%).

I did continue to offer them for a time, but I have stopped now (4.8% of respondents):

- More common among farmers in the East Midlands (25%) and the East of England (8.1%).
- More common among farmers with 20-30 years of experience (9.7%).
- More prevalent among farmers with cereals (5.8%), general cropping (7.7%), and lowland grazing livestock (5.2%).
- Most common among farmers with owned land (5.6%).

No (38.3% of respondents):

- Most common in the North East (55%) and the North West (47.8%).
- More common among farmers with less than 5 years of experience (100%) and those with 5-10 years of experience (38.5%).
- More prevalent among farmers with cereals (41.3%) and general cropping (41%).
- Most common among farmers with owned land (37.2%) and rented land (38.0%).

Whilst trends have been identified, analysis using SPSS revealed no statistically significant relationships between decisions around the continuation of offering and maintaining permissive access routes and the demographic profile of respondents and their land. However, the identified trends, whilst not statistically significant, indicate distinctions in the approach to permissive access routes among different groups of farmers based on their experience and the type of farming operations they manage.

Offering and maintaining permissive access routes after the agreement has expired is a trend observed among more experienced farmers, particularly those with 20-30 years and 30+ years of experience. Furthermore, farmers with mixed farming operations and woodland show a higher inclination towards continuing to offer and maintain their permissive access routes.

On the other hand, not continuing to offer and maintain permissive access routes is a more prevalent trend among farmers with less experience, such as those with less than 5 years or 5-10 years of experience. Additionally, farmers focused on cereal or general cropping operations tend to discontinue offering and maintaining permissive

access routes more frequently than those with other types of farming operations. This might be due to concerns over potential disruptions to their crop production, or the perception that these routes are less compatible with the nature of their agricultural activities.

Voluntary Permissive Access Cessation in Relation to the End of the Agreement Period

A breakdown of the year respondents ceased to offer voluntary permissive access compared to the year their agreement expired, and funding ceased, can be found below.

The time taken to stop permissive access after the agreement expired varies for each case. It ranges from a few months to several years, depending on the circumstances and the landowner's preferences.

Time taken to stop permissive access after the agreement expired:

1. Agreement expired in 2016: Continued for 1 year (stopped in 2017) as the land was sold.
2. Agreement expired in 2020: Continued for a few months until August 2020.
3. Agreement expired in 2013: Continued for 7 years (stopped in 2020).
4. Agreement expired in 2017: Continued for 3 years (stopped in 2020).
5. Agreement expired in 2020: Continued for 1 year (stopped in 2021).
6. Agreement expired in 2020: Continued for 3 years (stopped in 2023).
7. Agreement expired in 2016: Continued for 5 years (stopped in 2021).
8. Agreement expired in 2020: Continued for 1 year (stopped in 2021).
9. Agreement expired in 2020: Still offers some routes and charges for others.
10. Agreement expired in 2015: Continued for 1 year (stopped in 2016).
11. Agreement expired in 2015: Continued for 3 years (stopped in 2018).

To summarise, the average (mean) time taken to stop permissive access after the agreement expired is approximately 2.8 years. The median time taken is 3 years, and the range of the time taken is 6 years.

Decisions to Offer and Maintain Routes After Agreement Expiry by Type of Route Provided

No statistically significant differences were identified with regards to the type of routes that respondents offered and their decisions to continue offering and/or maintaining their routes after agreement expiry, some trends can be identified.

Generally, across all the routes offered, the tendency to continue offering and maintaining them sits between 30-40%, with a slightly higher tendency of those who offer permissive cycleways to continue offering their routes, at 44% (Figure 19). Only those who offer permissive footpaths and/or permissive bridleways had modified the routes they offer (Figures 17 and 18). A slightly higher proportion, 21% and 24%, respectively, of those who offer permissive footpaths (Figure 18) or permissive open access (Figure 21) have continued to offer the routes but no longer maintain them compared to other types of routes.

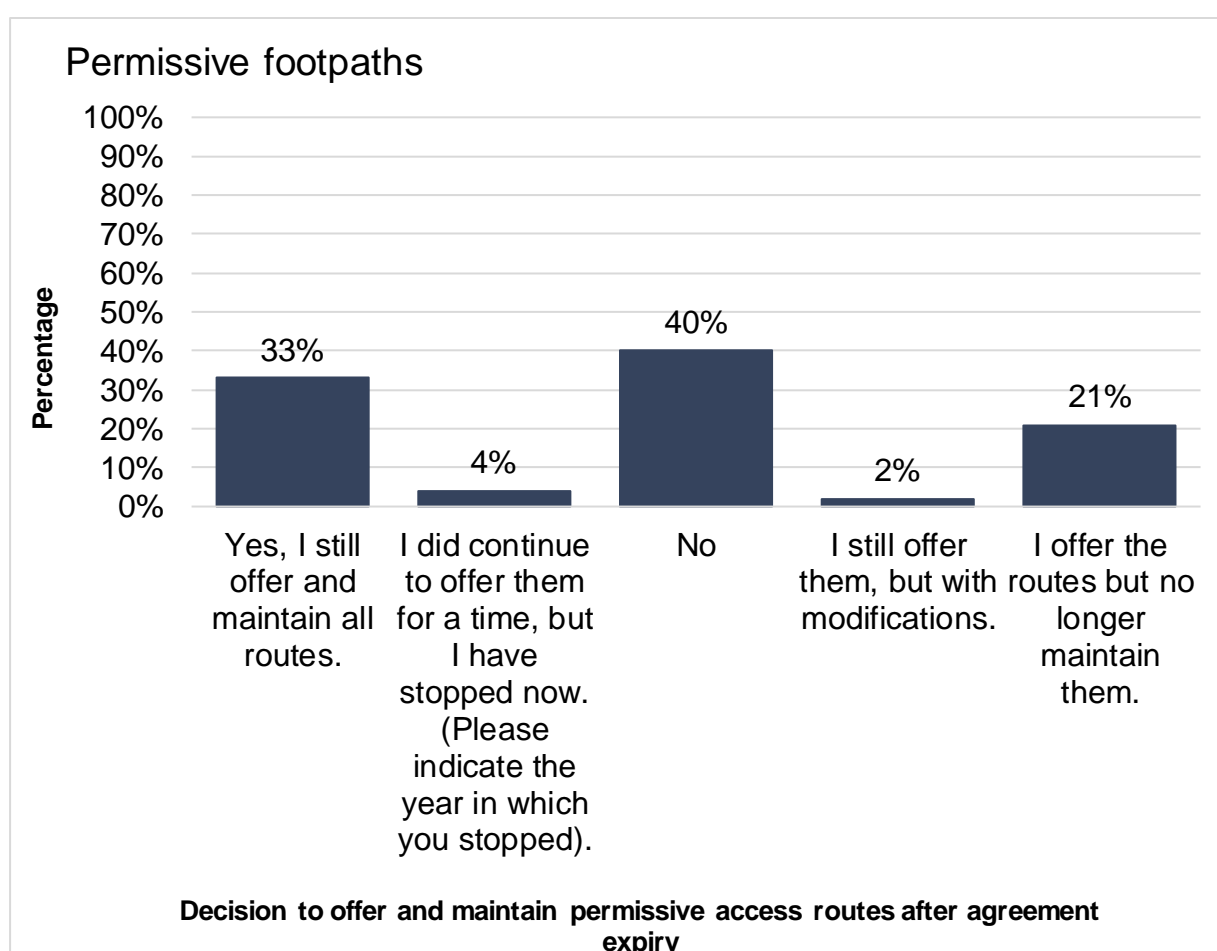


Figure 17 – Current status of Permissive Footpaths

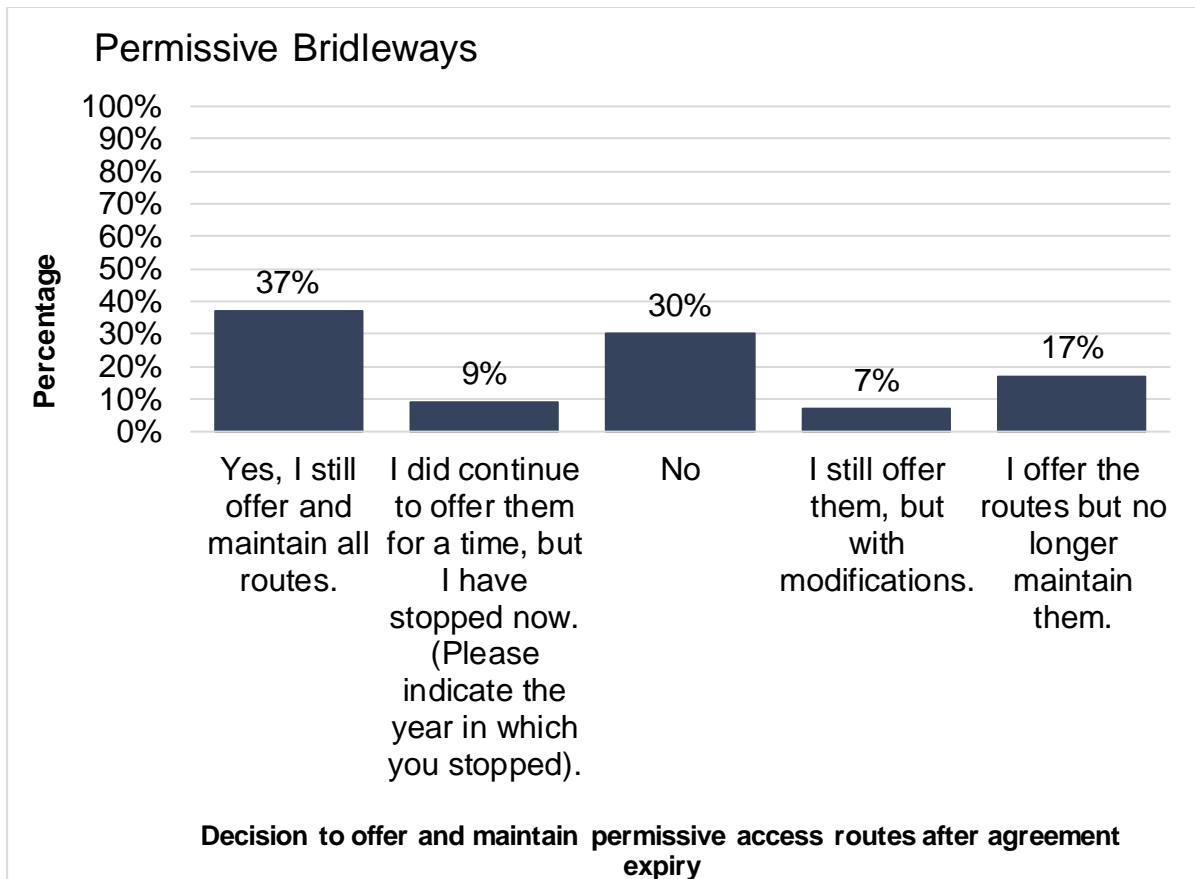


Figure 18 – Current status of Permissive Bridleways

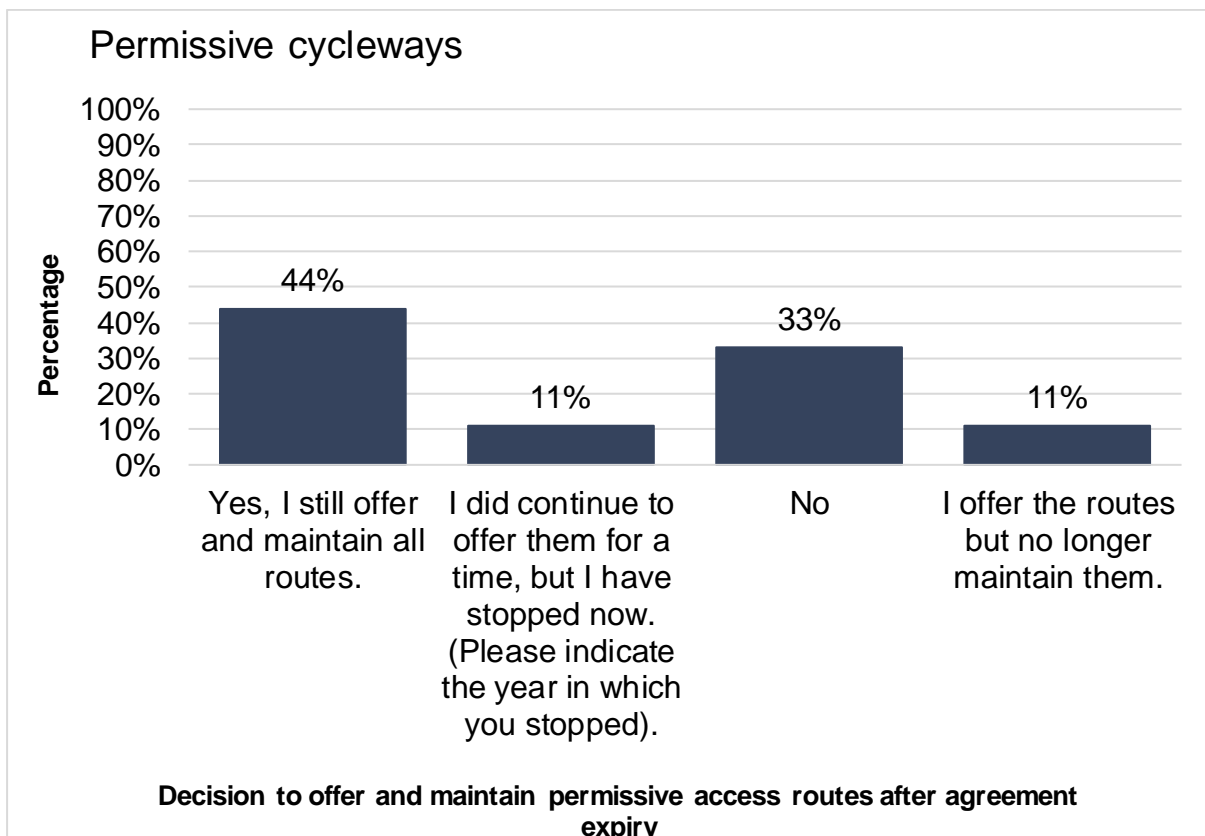


Figure 19 – Current status of Permissive Cycleways

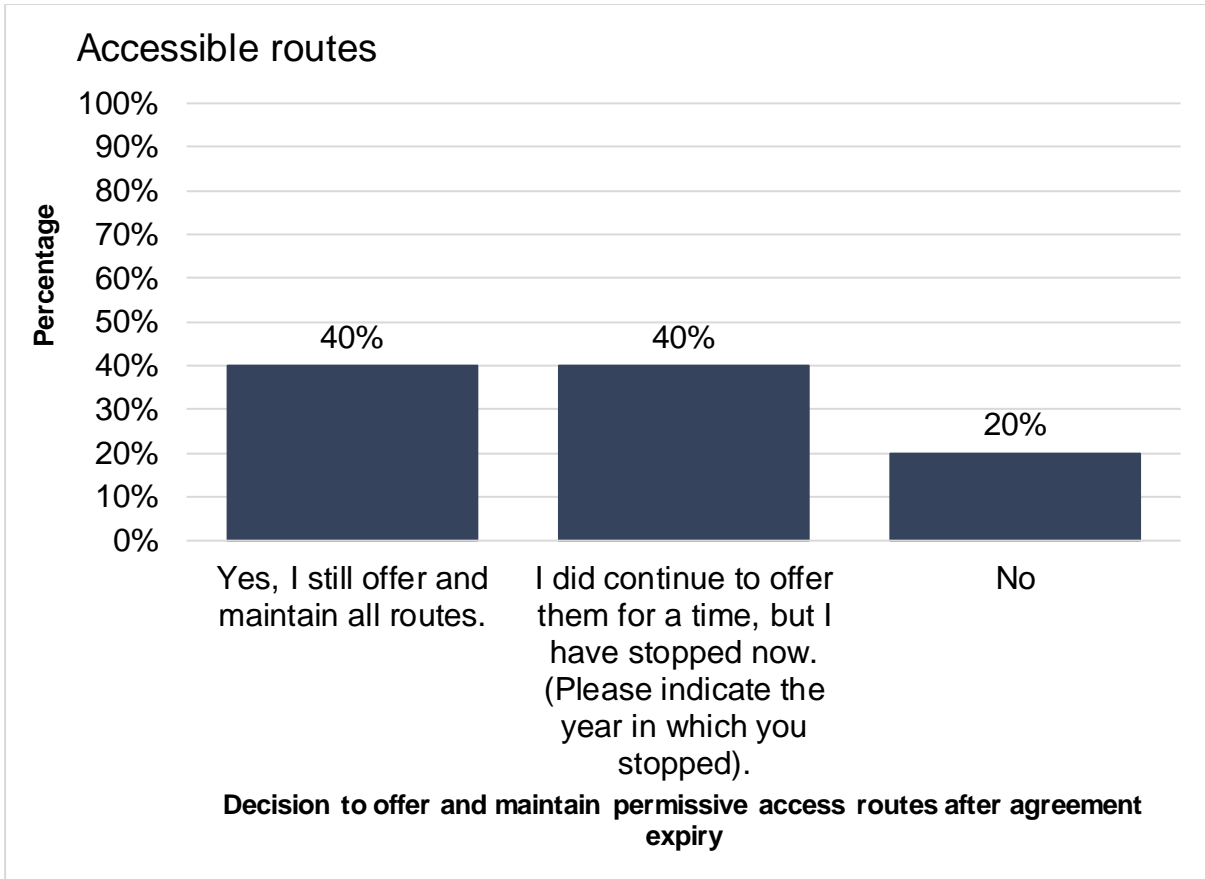


Figure 20 – Current status of Accessible Routes

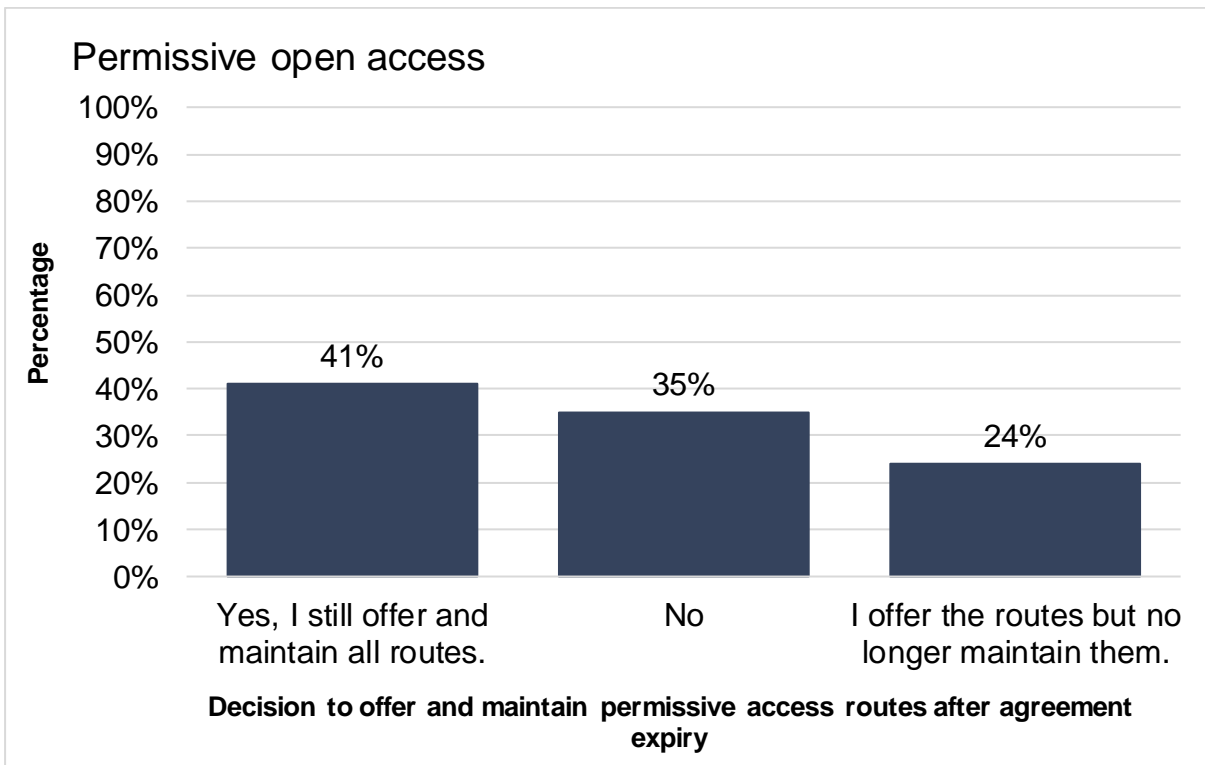


Figure 21 – Current status of Permissive Open Access

Modifications to Routes

Of the 2% who have modified the routes that they offer, there was an equal split between those who have closed parts of the routes, altered the layout of the routes, who have sold some of the land that the routes were on, who now use funding from the local Parish Council, and other reasons not specified within the question (Figure 22).

The respondent who selected 'Other' stated that they no longer allow horses on the route anymore, whereas they had done so previously.

In the chart below, each element represents the percentage of respondents who selected that particular option. Respondents were asked to choose multiple options, so the percentages may add up to more than 100% when viewed collectively. It is important to interpret each element individually as a percentage of the total sample, not as a whole.

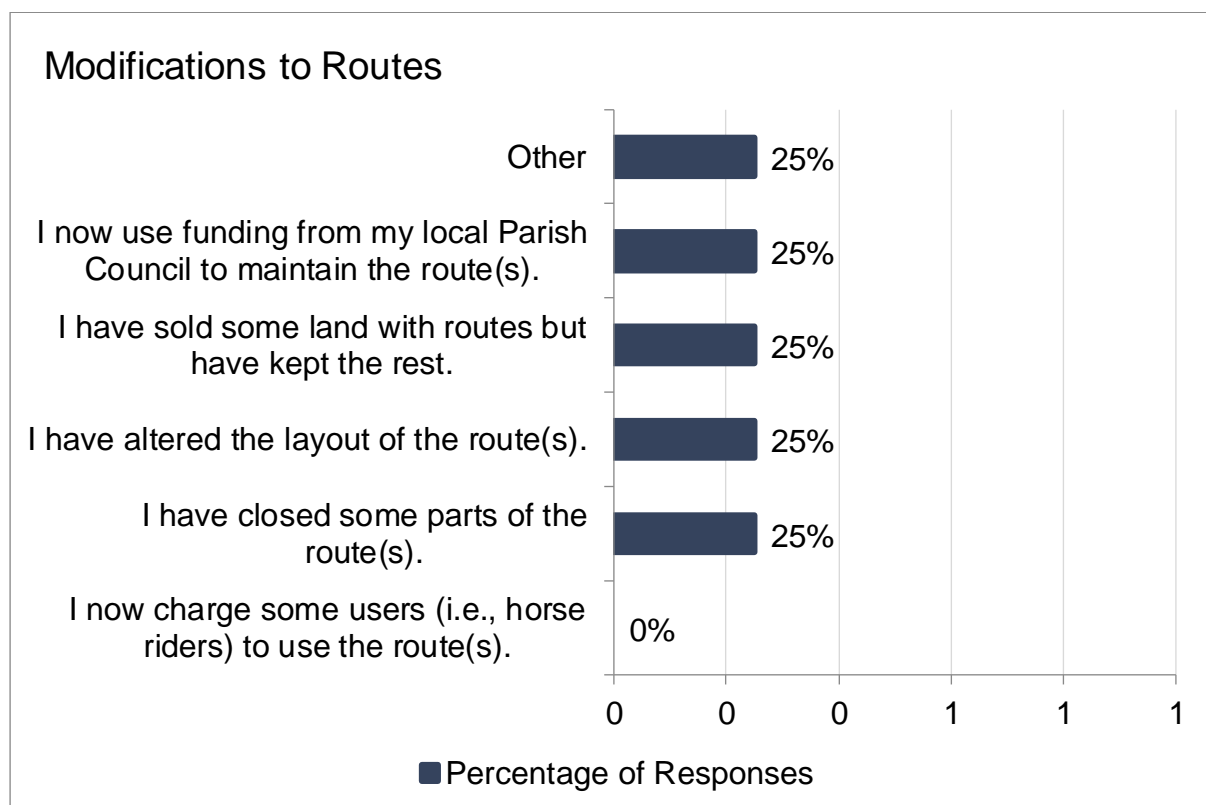


Figure 22 – Types of modifications that respondents had made to routes

Reasons for Discontinuing Route(s)

The 38% who no longer offer the routes were asked to elaborate as to their reasons for ceasing to do so. The most common factor, selected by 73% of these respondents, was simply that their agreement had expired, and they did not wish to continue offering the route(s) after this.

20% of people stated that they had had bad experiences with offering permissive access routes and/or attributed other reasons to their decision not to continue. 19% stated “Other” reasons for not continuing.

Please see Figure 23 for a visual depiction of these results.

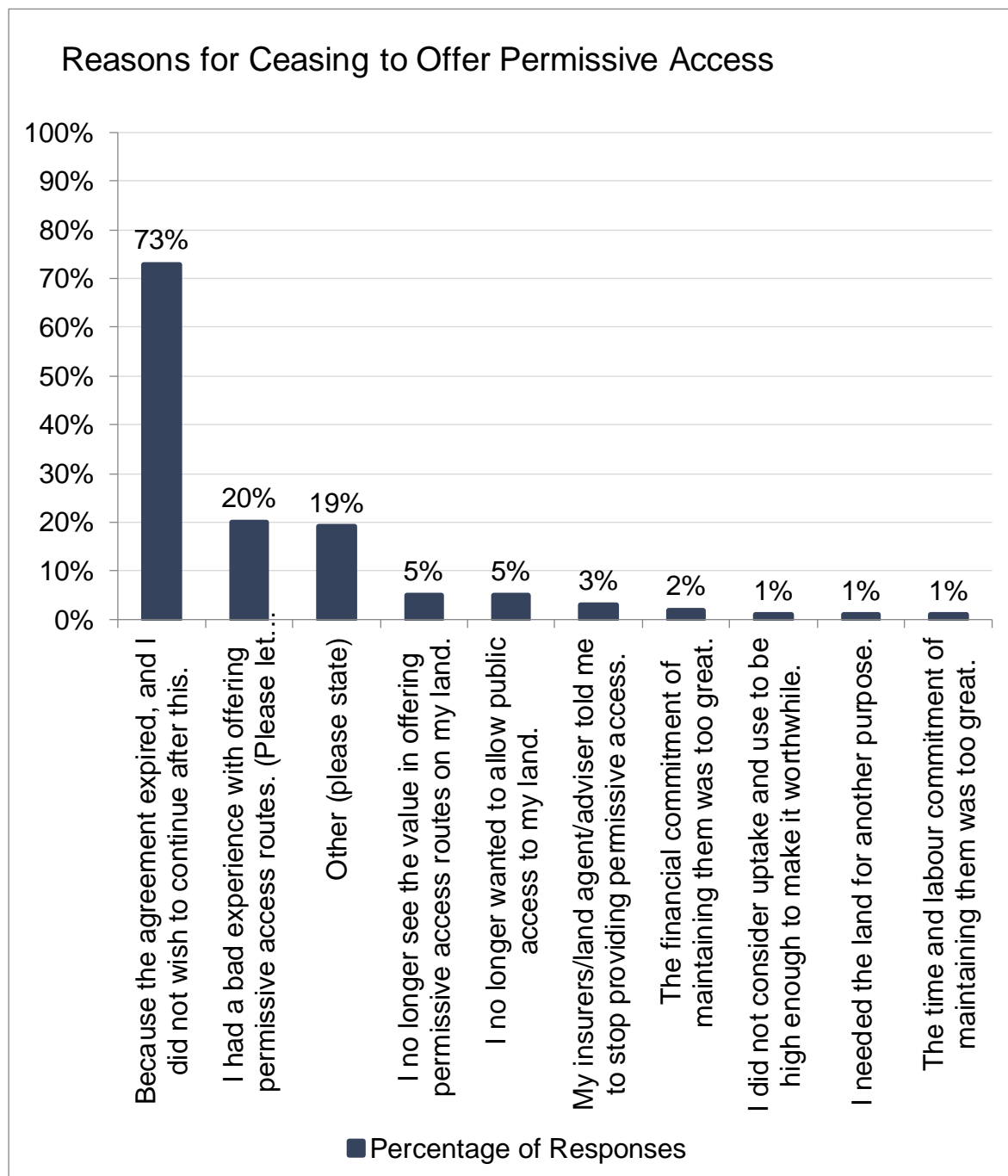


Figure 23 – Respondents’ reasons for ceasing to offer permissive access

Reasons for Ceasing to Offer Permissive Access by Route Type

Whilst any differences in reasons for ceasing to offer permissive access between those who offered different types of routes were not statistically significant, comparison of the variance in frequency for each reason has identified some trends.

Generally, respondents stopped offering their routes because their agreements had expired, and they did not wish to continue without funding provision. However, for those who offered accessible routes, negative experiences were the most common reason behind their decisions to close their routes (Figure 27). Additionally, advice from insurers or land agents against continuing to offer the routes tended to be slightly more common amongst those who offered permissive cycle paths (Figure 26).

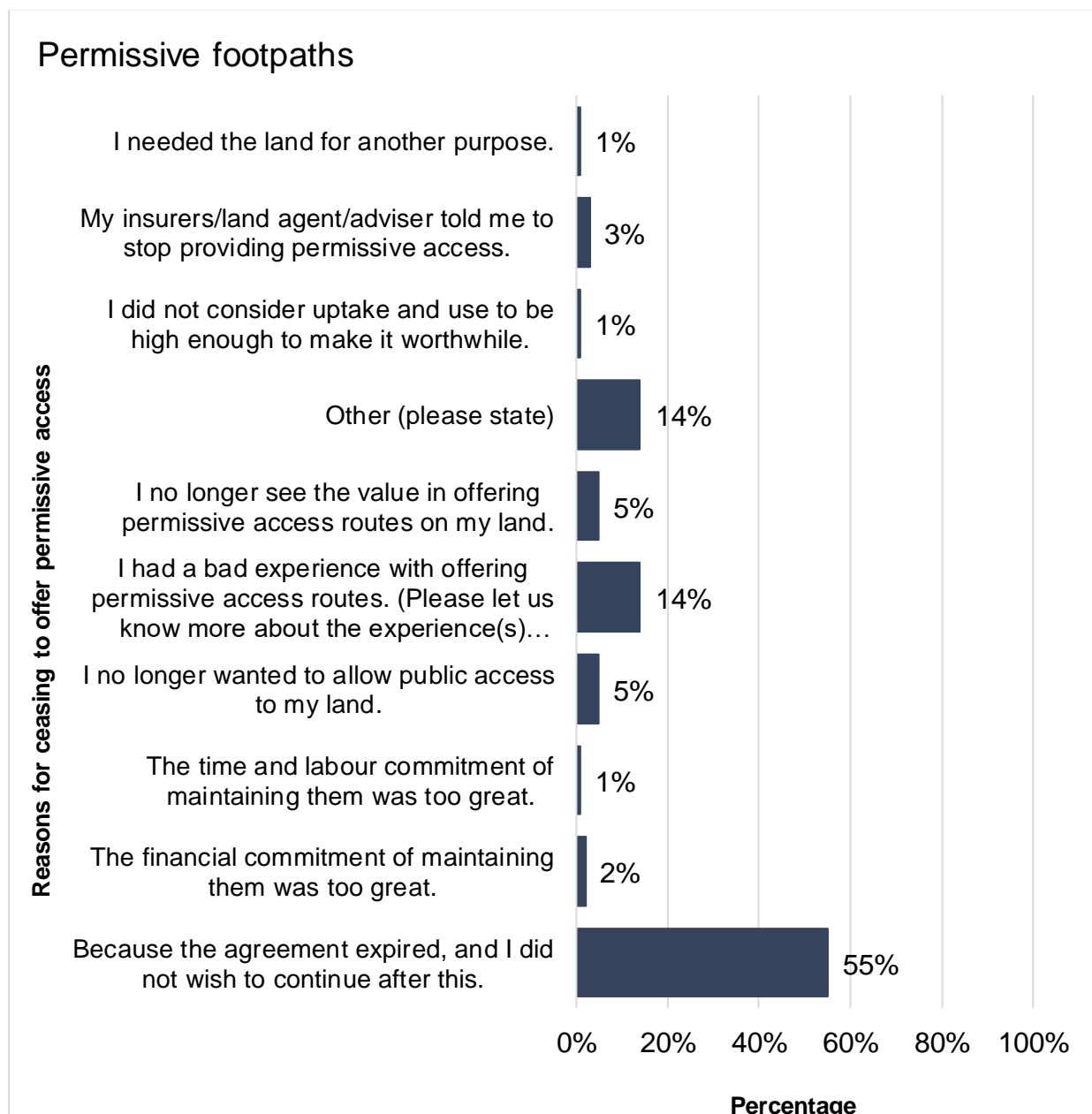


Figure 24 – Reasons for ceasing to offer Permissive Footpaths

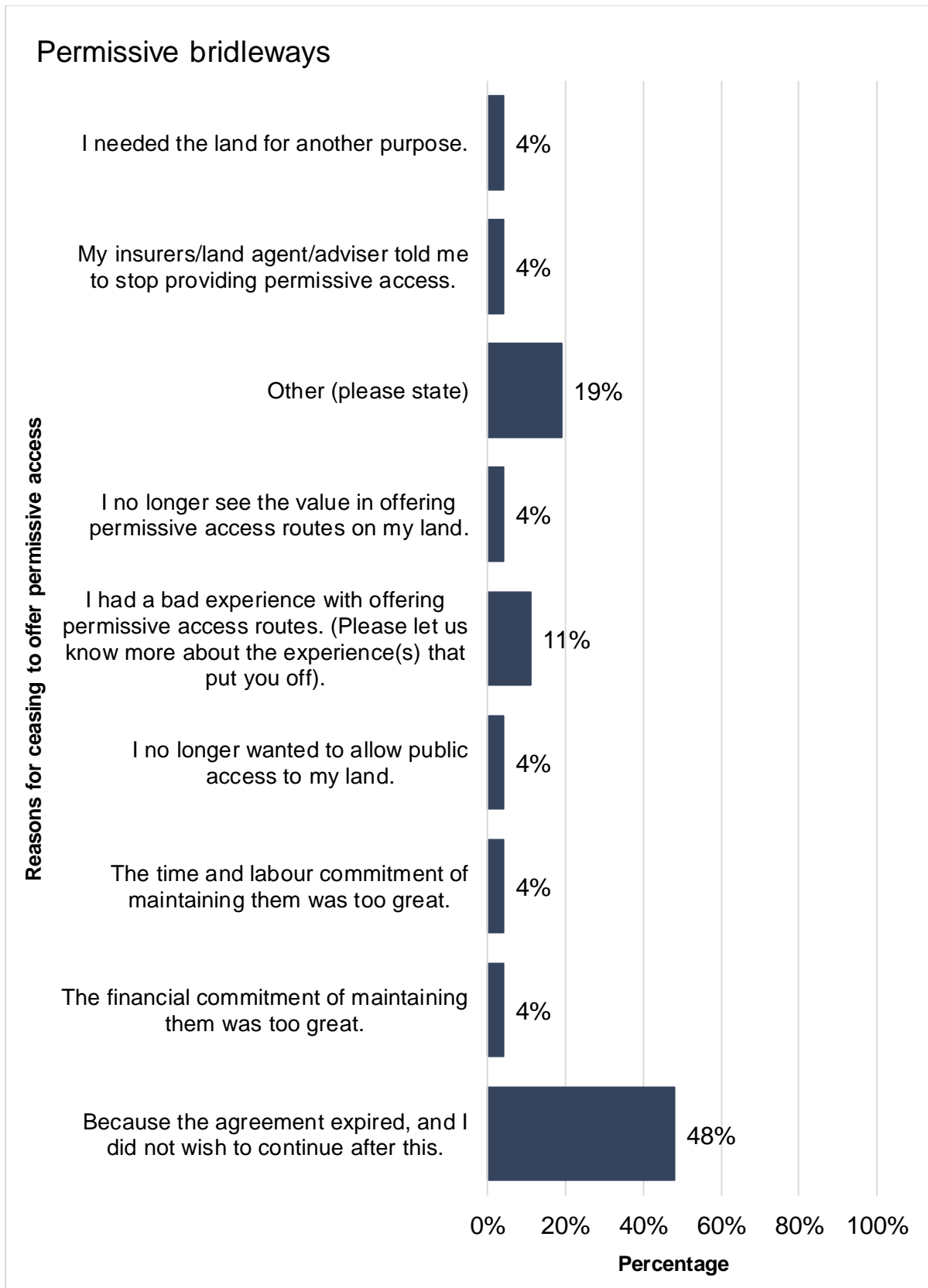


Figure 25 – Reasons for ceasing to offer Permissive Bridleways

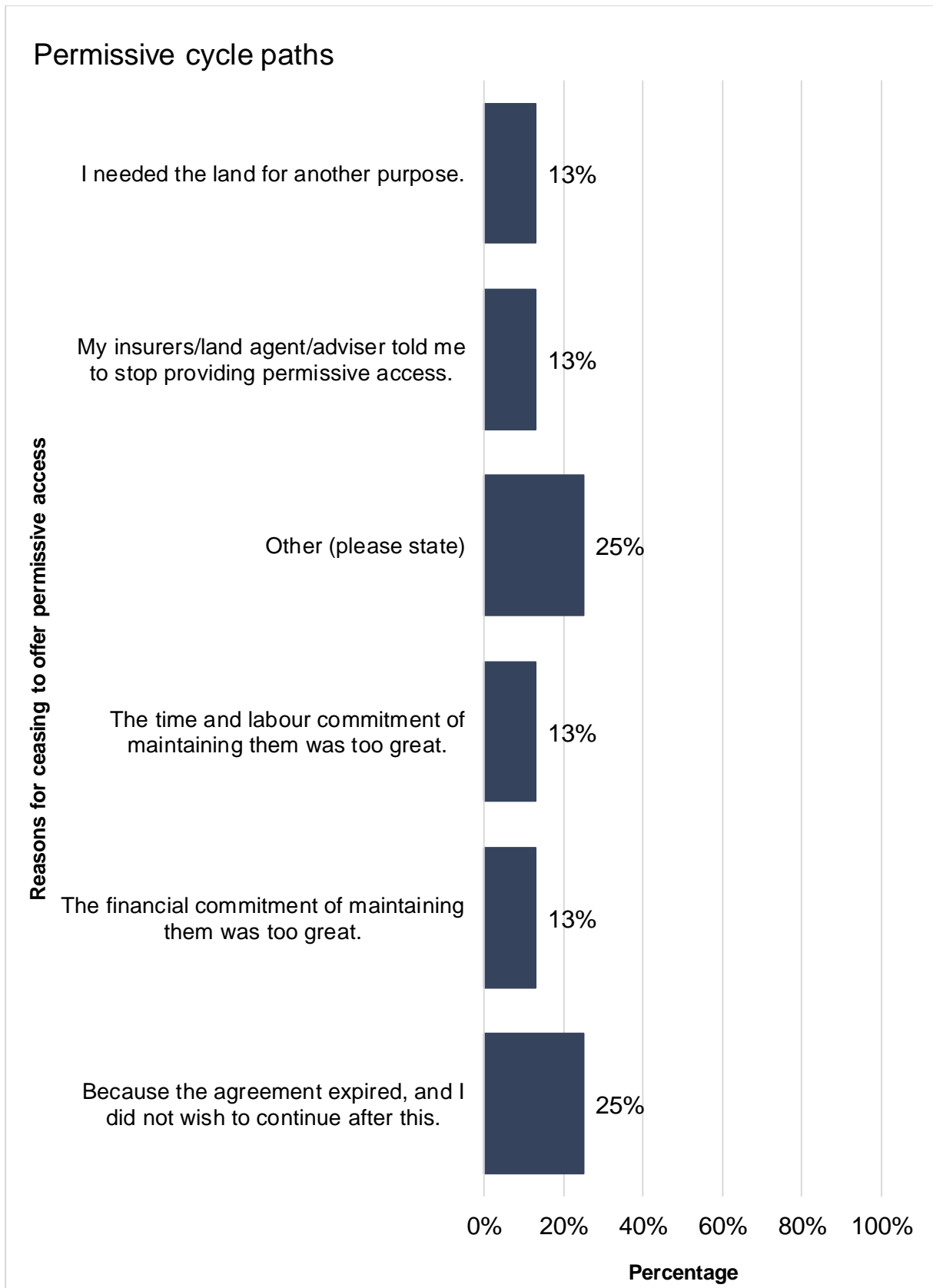


Figure 26 – Reasons for ceasing to offer Permissive Cycleways

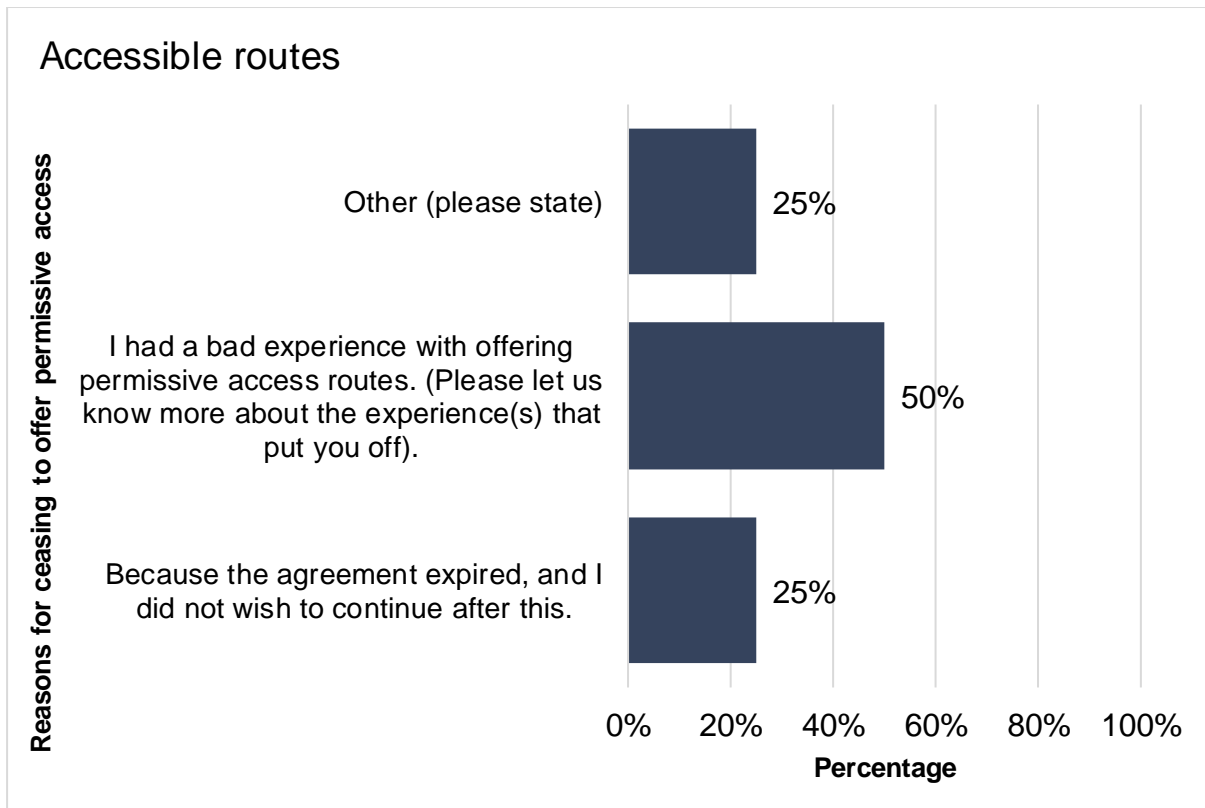


Figure 27 – Reasons for ceasing to offer Accessible Routes

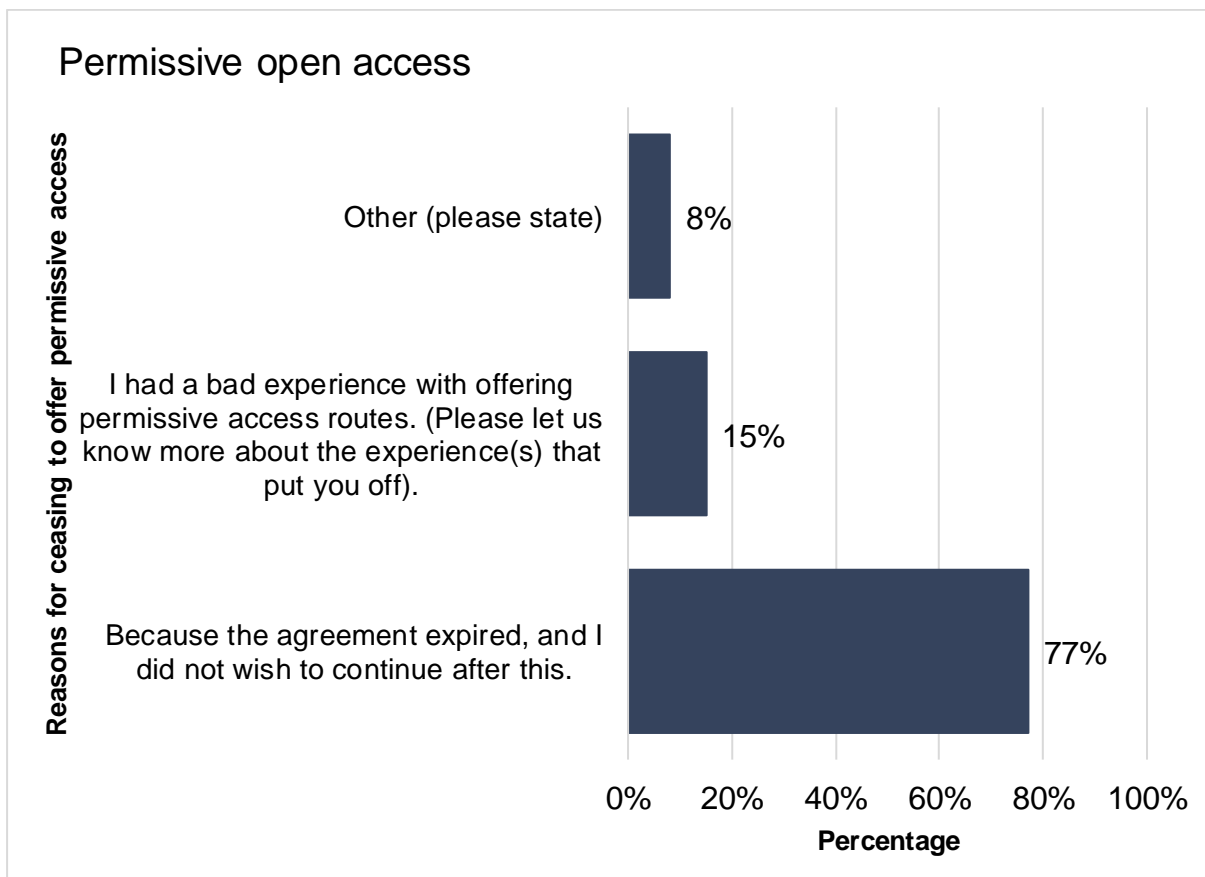


Figure 28 – Reasons for ceasing to offer Permissive Open Access

Respondents' Commentary on Decisions to Cease Offering Permissive Access

Those who stated that they had other reasons for ceasing to offer the routes were asked to expand upon these reasons, and their comments can be found below. A primary concern for many was the risk that the route could be designated as a permanent Right of Way if they allowed the usage to continue. It is also evident from these comments that there was some confusion amongst agreement holders regarding the withdrawal of funding and whether they were allowed to continue offering access, as well as some discrepancies between other schemes they have entered and their ability to provide access within these.

| |
|--|
| Sold the land and was concerned about a permanent right of way. |
| My current agreement does not allow for cutting an access strip. |
| We should be paid for this access. It creates extra worry, litter etc. The access links onto an existing PROW and keeps people off a busy road with no pavements but is only 700m from the local town so was highly used and very beneficial. |
| Defra stopped paying for the access. It is no longer funded so there is no option to continue. |
| The permissive access was ok until Covid. It linked with close proximity to a parish common and the paths were on six metre margins. After Covid the visitors - mainly dog walkers - went from 15 a day to 200. They would not keep to the permissible paths and were everywhere, so we took signs and kissing gates away. |
| We sold the land. |
| It wasn't offered to us again - no further information about the scheme. |
| Not allowed to roll O(organic)HLS agreement over and left feeling that the organic sector was discriminated against in 2020. I did talk to George Eustice but am concerned about liability if I offer permissive access, which has put me off. I would need someone else to take responsibility for this. |
| Nobody uses it. |
| Covid caused loads of issues. |
| Landlord sold the land for building and development. |
| We moved to another farm. |
| Landlord would not permit it as he didn't want it to be permanent. |
| It is very difficult to give a specific route when you have cattle and caused more complications than it was worth. |
| Agreement ended and other options were not financially viable. |
| Sold farm. |
| Agreement expired and landlord would not allow me to renew as they would not benefit from the funding and did not want people walking on their land. |
| Not allowed to under Countryside Stewardship. |
| DEFRA stopped the permissions, which I did not agree to. Do not offer the access anymore as some people claiming historic rights of way - permissive path under DEFRA scheme was evident with signs etc. |

Thematic Analysis:

Based on the responses provided, the main themes identified for stopping the offering of permissive access routes are:

- Agreement and Regulatory Issues:

- a. Expiration of the agreement.
- b. Countryside stewardship restrictions.
- c. DEFRA stopping the permissions.
 - Landlord and Land Ownership:
 - a. Landlord not allowing renewal or imposing restrictions.
 - b. Sale of the land.
 - COVID-19 Impact:
 - a. Increased visitor numbers.
 - b. Straying off designated paths.
 - Financial Concerns:
 - a. Lack of funding or payment for access.
 - b. Other options not financially viable.
 - Operational Challenges:
 - a. Difficulty managing access with cattle.
 - b. Liability concerns.
 - c. Misunderstandings about permissive access.

Sentiment Analysis:

The sentiment expressed in the responses is predominantly negative, as respondents highlight the various reasons, they stopped offering permissive access routes. They express concerns and frustrations with regulations, landlord restrictions, increased visitor numbers, and financial and operational challenges.

Semantic Analysis:

The semantic analysis of the responses provided focuses on the meaning of the words and phrases used by the respondents. Key phrases and their meanings are as follows:

- Countryside Stewardship: A grant scheme for farmers, woodland owners, foresters, and land managers to make environmental improvements.
- DEFRA: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, a UK government department.
- Historic rights of way: Legal rights to use certain routes that have been established over time.
- Permissive path: A route that landowners allow the public to use, typically without establishing a legal right of way.

- Organic HLS agreement: An agreement under the Higher-Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme for organic farming practices.
- Liability concerns: Worries about being held responsible for potential accidents, injuries, or other issues related to permissive access.

These key phrases provide insights into the specific concerns and issues faced by landowners who stopped offering permissive access routes following the cessation of funding.

Negative Experiences of Offering Permissive Access

The 19% who reported that they had had unfavourable experiences of offering permissive access over their land were asked to elaborate upon what these experiences were and the difficulties they faced. The primary factors here related to difficulties with members of the public who used the routes, including dogs fouling and the mess not being removed, litter, livestock worrying, a lack of respect for the route boundaries, and abuse from certain users of the routes. Fly tipping on the route was mentioned once.

One user commented that these problems with members of the public were fewer when the routes were being provided as part of the Higher-Level Stewardship scheme and were signposted accordingly, as members of the public tended to be more respectful when they were aware that this was the case and that the route was not a Public Right of Way.

A full list of comments can be found below, with additional qualitative analysis included under the full list of comments.

| |
|--|
| Local damage, rubbish, and vandalism. |
| Walkers abusive to farm staff, damaging our property and leaving dog poo bags in hedges and fields. |
| I was happy offering it when being paid to do so, and people respect the land more and also your rights as the owner. |
| Litter |
| People were straying away from the route. They shut our cows back out of the field leaving them no access to water. They used the area to let their dogs off leads and ripped up all signs asking them to keep dogs on leads. |
| Gates left open. Sheep chased. Lack of respect for the access. People think they have rights to anywhere. |
| Sheep worrying and abuse from a group of users. |
| The permissive access was ok until Covid. It linked with close proximity to a parish common and the paths were on six metre margins. After Covid the visitors - mainly dog walkers - went from 15 a day to 200. They would not keep to the permissible paths and were everywhere, so we took signs and kissing gates away. |
| Users didn't stick to footpaths and walked through corn. As it was close to a housing estate it became a regular dog walking route and not many picked their dog's poo up. This meant that when picking up small bales of straw we would regularly find dog poo on them. |

| |
|---|
| Public nuisance and dogs fouling everywhere. |
| Dogs loose near cattle. |
| Too many fly tippers using the route to tip items, which then cost too much money for us to dispose of. |
| Disturbances during mating season. |
| Quad bikes caused a problem. |
| The public ruined the access route. |
| People going off the tracks and letting their dogs loose, which would cause health issues to the calves. |
| Public and horse riders kept leaving gates open which meant livestock was getting out and ruining arable land. |
| It ended and no further funding was offered. |
| The public were horrendous! Walking everywhere, dogs poo on everything, people walking in the fields, dogs chasing the cattle and sheep, people walking all over the farm, in general aggressive public who think they have a right to be everywhere on the farm. |

In total, there are 19 responses expressing various concerns and reasons for stopping the offering of permissive access routes. These are summarised below:

- Fly-tipping, causing disposal costs - 1 response.
- No further funding offered after the agreement ended - 1 response.
- Public ruining the access route - 1 response.
- Quad bikes causing issues - 1 response.
- People and dogs straying off tracks, causing health issues for livestock - 1 response.
- Disturbances during mating season - 1 response.
- Dogs loose near cattle - 1 response.
- General public issues, such as trespassing, dog waste, and livestock harassment - 1 response.
- Horse riders and public leaving gates open, leading to livestock escaping and damaging arable land - 1 response.
- Public nuisance, dog waste - 1 response.
- Not sticking to footpaths, dog waste issues near housing estate - 1 response.
- Sheep worry and abuse from a group of users - 1 response.
- Gates left open, sheep chased, lack of respect for access - 1 response.
- Straying away from the route, improper handling of livestock, and disregarding signs - 1 response.
- Litter issues - 1 response.
- Loss of payment and respect for landowner rights - 1 response.
- Abusive walkers, property damage, and dog waste - 1 response.
- Local damage, rubbish, vandalism - 1 response.

- Wild camping, litter issues, livestock death, and insurance advice - 1 response.

Thematic Analysis:

Based on the responses provided, the main themes identified for stopping the offering of permissive access routes are:

- Environmental Issues:
 - a. Fly-tipping and litter - causing disposal costs and harm to livestock.
 - b. Damage to access routes and arable land.
- Public Misbehaviour:
 - a. People straying off tracks and not sticking to footpaths.
 - b. Dogs loose near cattle and causing health issues for livestock.
 - c. Disregarding signs and requests by the landowner.
 - d. General trespassing and abusive behaviour.
- Livestock Issues:
 - a. Disturbances during mating season.
 - b. Sheep worry and livestock harassment.
 - c. Gates left open, leading to livestock escaping.
- Financial Reasons:
 - a. No further funding offered after the agreement ended.
 - b. Loss of payment and respect for landowner rights.
- Safety and Legal Concerns:
 - a. Insurance advice.
 - b. Vandalism and property damage.

Semantic Analysis:

The semantic analysis of the responses provided focuses on the meaning of the words and phrases used by the respondents. Key phrases and their meanings are as follows:

- Fly-tippers: Individuals who illegally dump waste or rubbish on private land.
- Quad bikes: Off-road vehicles with four wheels, often used for recreational purposes.
- Sheep worry: Refers to dogs chasing, attacking, or harassing sheep, which can result in injury or death to the livestock.
- Arable land: Land used for growing crops.
- Wild camping: Camping outside designated campgrounds, often without permission.

- Insurance advice: Recommendations provided by an insurance company regarding actions that may affect coverage or liability.

These key phrases provide insights into the specific concerns and issues faced by landowners who had negative experiences of offering permissive access under HLS.

User Profile for Permissive Access Routes

Overall Users of Permissive Access Routes

Landowners were asked to select which groups used the routes they provided, from a list including:

- Dog walkers
- Walkers/ramblers (not including dog walkers)
- Locals
- Horse riders
- Cyclists
- Tourists
- Bird watchers/wildlife enthusiasts
- Those with additional accessibility requirements.
- Horse-drawn carriage drivers
- Other

As the routes were not physically monitored, nor were users of the routes interviewed, it was acknowledged that this information would rely on landowners' knowledge and assumptions, as some user groups may be difficult to tell apart on appearance (i.e., locals and tourists, ramblers and bird watchers) and also that some individuals who use(d) the routes may fall into more than one category.

The routes were reported by the landowners to be used most commonly by dog walkers (90%), ramblers (81%), and members of the local community (60%).

Horse riders were less frequent users of the routes, selected by just under a quarter of respondents (23%), which reflects that 20% of agreements had permissive bridleways.

Reflective of the fact that not many of those who responded to this survey provided accessible routes as part of their permissive access options, just 2% of users had additional accessibility requirements.

Please see Figure 29 for a visual depiction of responses.

Please note, in the chart below respondents were asked to select all options that were relevant to them. As such, each element of the chart should be viewed individually as a percentage of 100% of the sample, not as a whole.

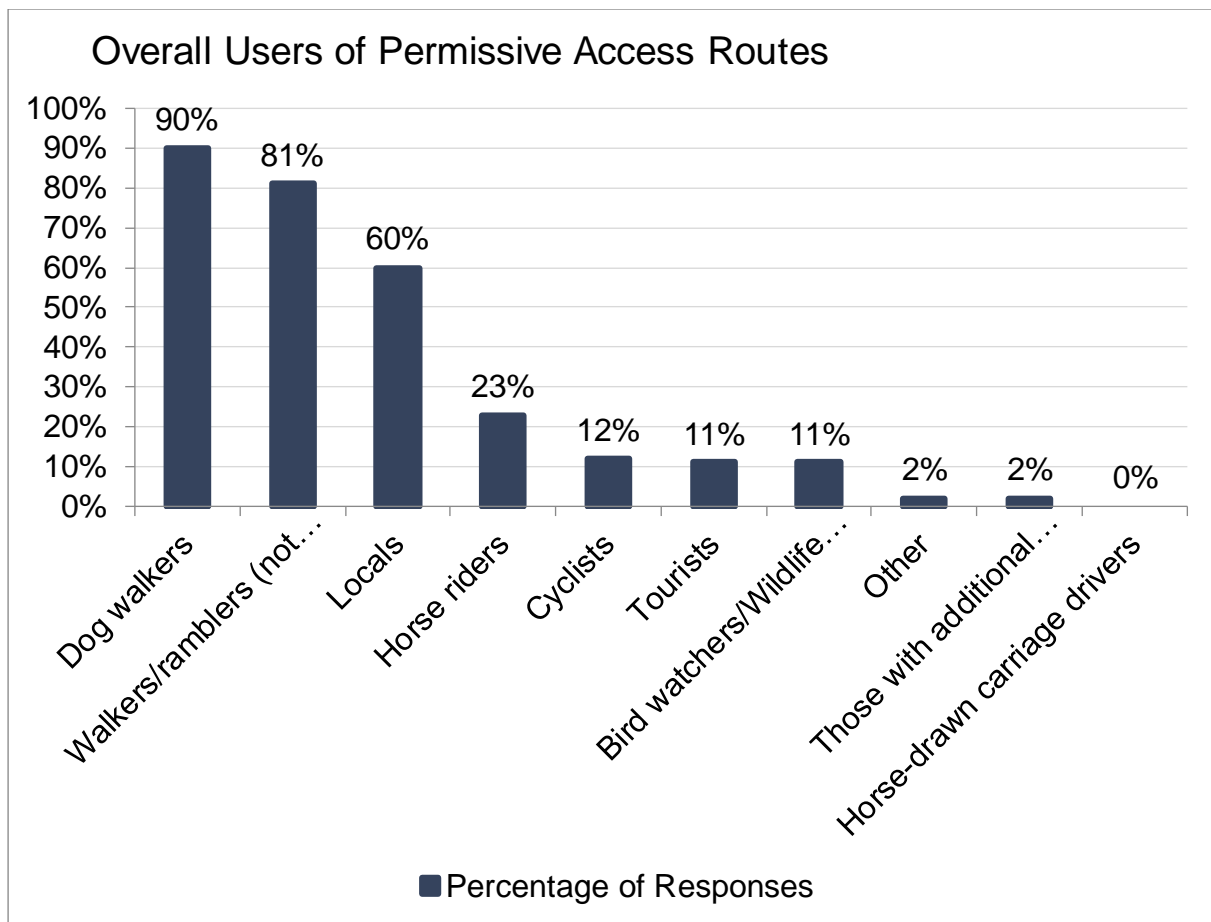


Figure 29 – Overall users of permissive access routes

Of those who selected 'Other', their comments can be found below and include vehicle usage:

| |
|--|
| Horses which are kept at my farm. |
| School children. |
| Van drivers. |
| People who are aware of the local existing Right of Way. |
| Motorbikes |

Primary Users of Permissive Access Routes

Taking into account the above data regarding the types of users of the routes overall, respondents were also asked to elaborate as to who the **primary** users of the routes are/were. As would be expected from the data above, dog walkers were the primary users for over half of respondents (56%), whilst walkers and ramblers who were not walking with dogs were the primary users of the routes supplied by one-fifth of the respondents. For the one person who selected 'Other', motorbikes were the primary users of the permissive access route they offered on their land.

Please see Figure 30 for a visual breakdown of the primary users of permissive access routes.

Again, it should be acknowledged that this information relies on self-reported data from farmers and landowners and is subject to their own assumptions of their primary user groups.

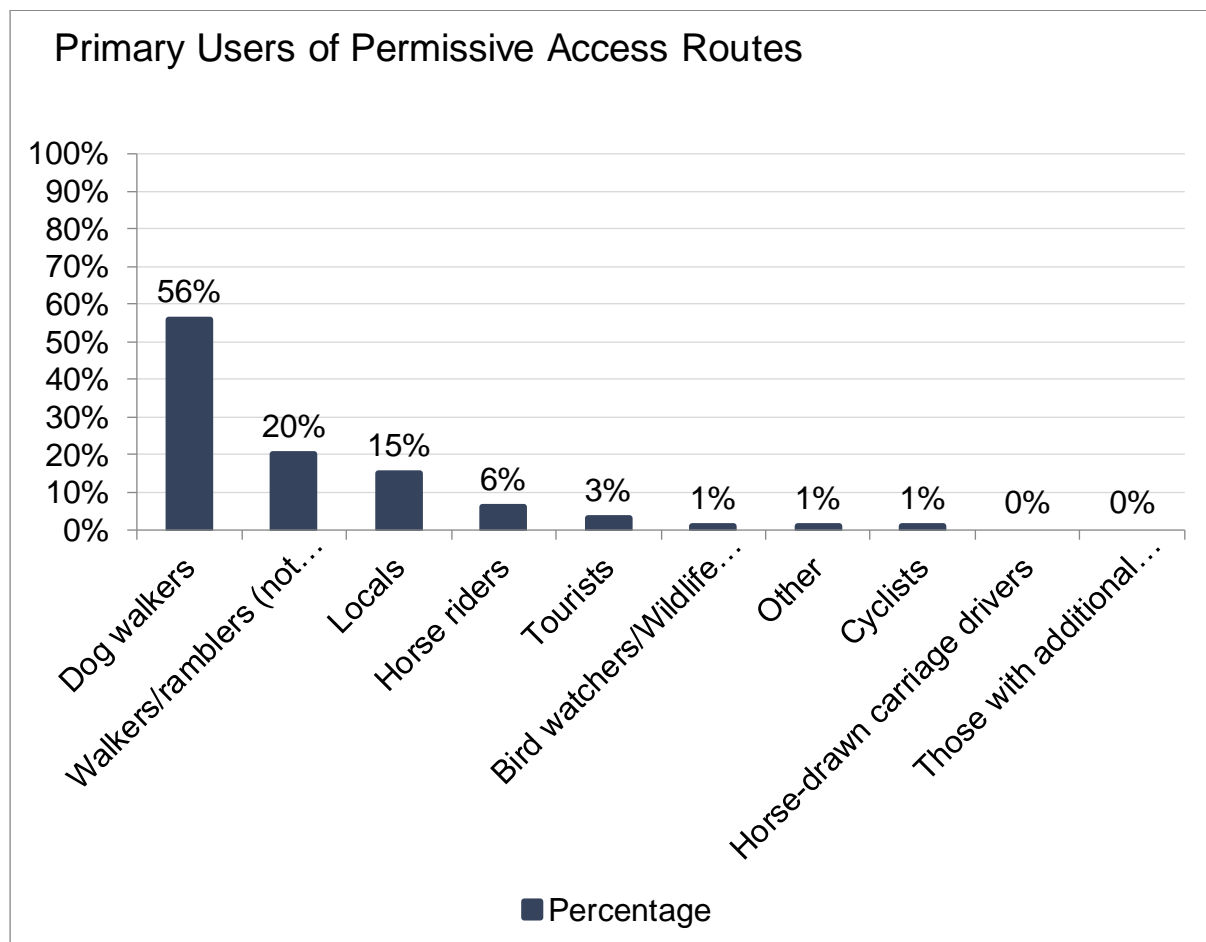


Figure 30 – Primary users of permissive access routes

Experiences of Offering Permissive Access

Reasons for Offering Permissive Access

All respondents were asked to give a score out of 10 according to how much they agreed or disagreed with statements relating to their reasons for offering permissive access, with 1 meaning they completely disagreed and 10 meaning they completely agreed.

The results demonstrate that offering benefit to the local community was a more important factor for many respondents in their decision to offer permissive access routes over environmental considerations or demands placed on them by the Higher-Level Stewardship scheme. An overall mean score of 6.97 out of 10 was attributed to offering access to benefit the local community, compared to 5.41 out of 10 for offering access to gain 'points' for the environmental part of the scheme.

It is also possible to deduce from respondents' comments elsewhere in the survey that having existing informal access on their land was a contributory factor to their decision to offer formalised permissive access as it provided them with an opportunity to create designated routes and limit public access to other areas of their land, as well as receive funding for something they were already providing.

| Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance |
|---|---------|---------|------|---------------|----------|
| I offered access to benefit the groups above and the local community. | 0.00 | 10.00 | 6.97 | 1.70 | 2.91 |
| I offered access to gain 'points' for the environmental part of the scheme to secure the wider agreement. | 0.00 | 10.00 | 5.41 | 1.71 | 2.92 |

Experiences of Offering Permissive Access

Respondents were asked to rate their experiences of offering permissive access as part of the Higher-Level Stewardship scheme by rating a series of statements from 1 to 10 according to how much they agreed or disagreed with them (1 meaning completely disagree and 10 meaning completely agree).

Overall, respondents did not feel especially strongly about any aspects of the scheme, with scores generally sitting between 5-7 out of 10.

The funding offered being adequate to compensate respondents for their time appropriately was the lowest scoring, with a mean of 5.85 out of 10. Despite the complaints of those who had chosen to cease offering permissive access due to issues with members of the public, people being respectful of respondents' land and utilising the routes sensibly and appropriately was the statement that respondents were most in agreement with, with an overall score of 6.72 out of 10.

| Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance |
|---|---------|---------|------|---------------|----------|
| The funding offered was adequate and compensated me appropriately for my time and commitment. | 0.00 | 10.00 | 5.85 | 2.19 | 4.82 |
| In general, members of the public were respectful of my land and utilised the routes sensibly and appropriately. | 0.00 | 10.00 | 6.72 | 2.38 | 5.67 |
| I view offering permissive access routes as a valuable opportunity for the public to engage with nature and/or understand more about farming. | 0.00 | 10.00 | 6.43 | 2.19 | 4.79 |
| I consider(ed) offering permissive access routes on my land to be worthwhile and was/am pleased to do so. | 0.00 | 10.00 | 6.23 | 2.30 | 5.31 |

Experiences of Offering Permissive Access by Type of Route

There are no significant differences between the type of routes respondents offered and the ratings of their experiences of the permissive access scheme overall. In terms of indicated trends, those who offered permissive cycle paths tended to have a lower opinion of the funding in terms of how well it compensated them for their time and commitment (Figure 33).

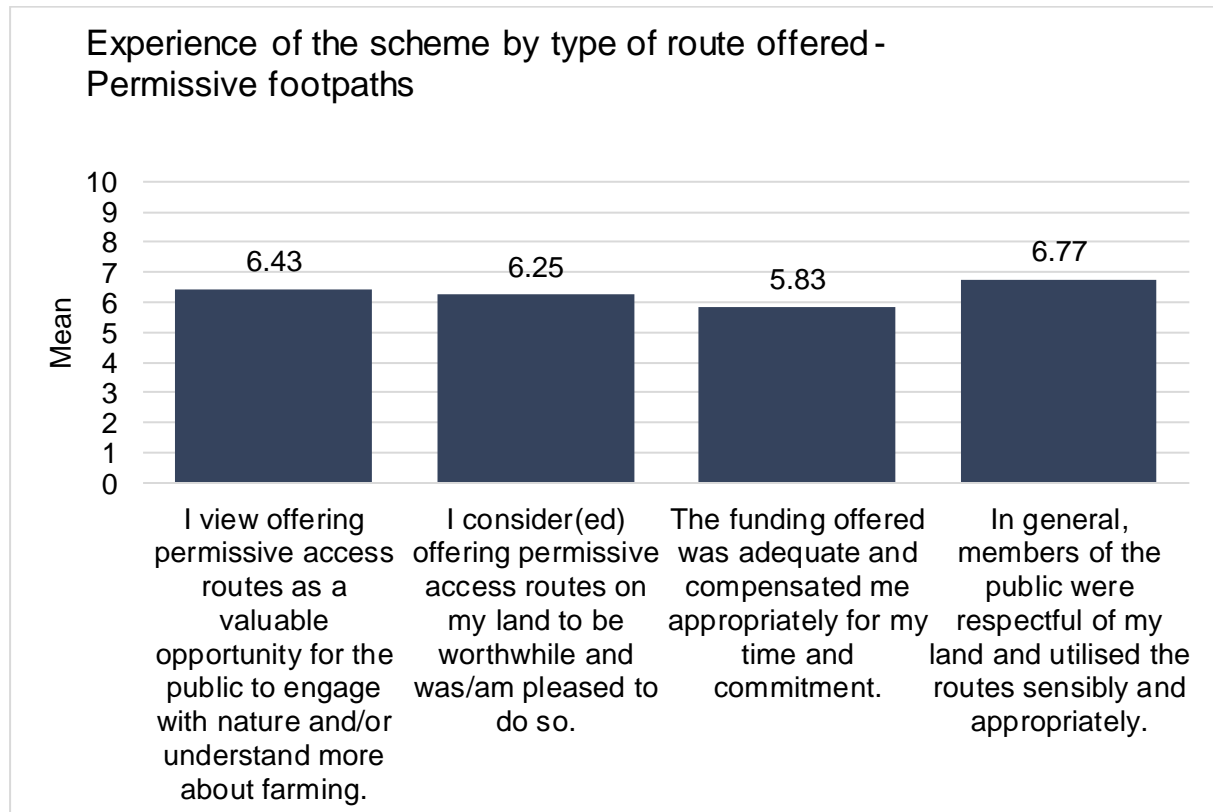


Figure 31 – Experiences of the scheme for Permissive Footpath providers

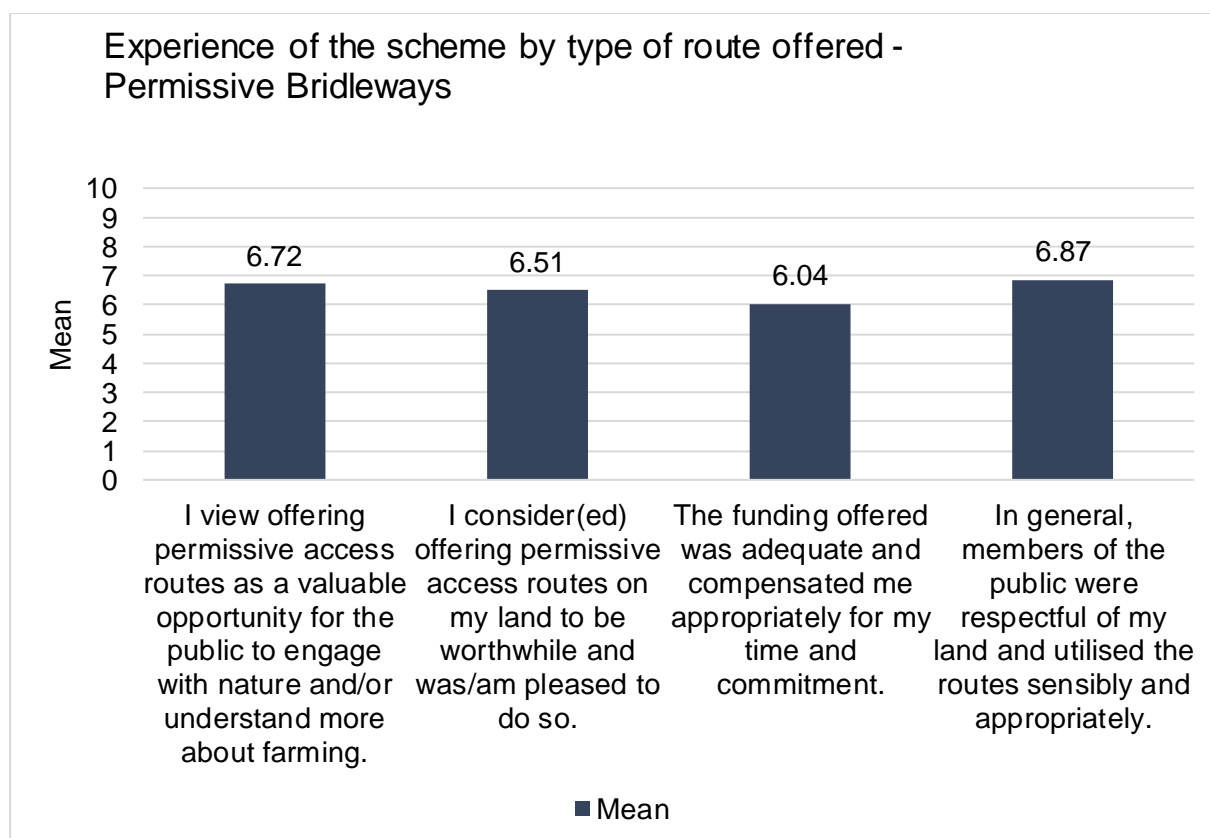


Figure 32 – Experiences of the scheme for Permissive Bridleway providers

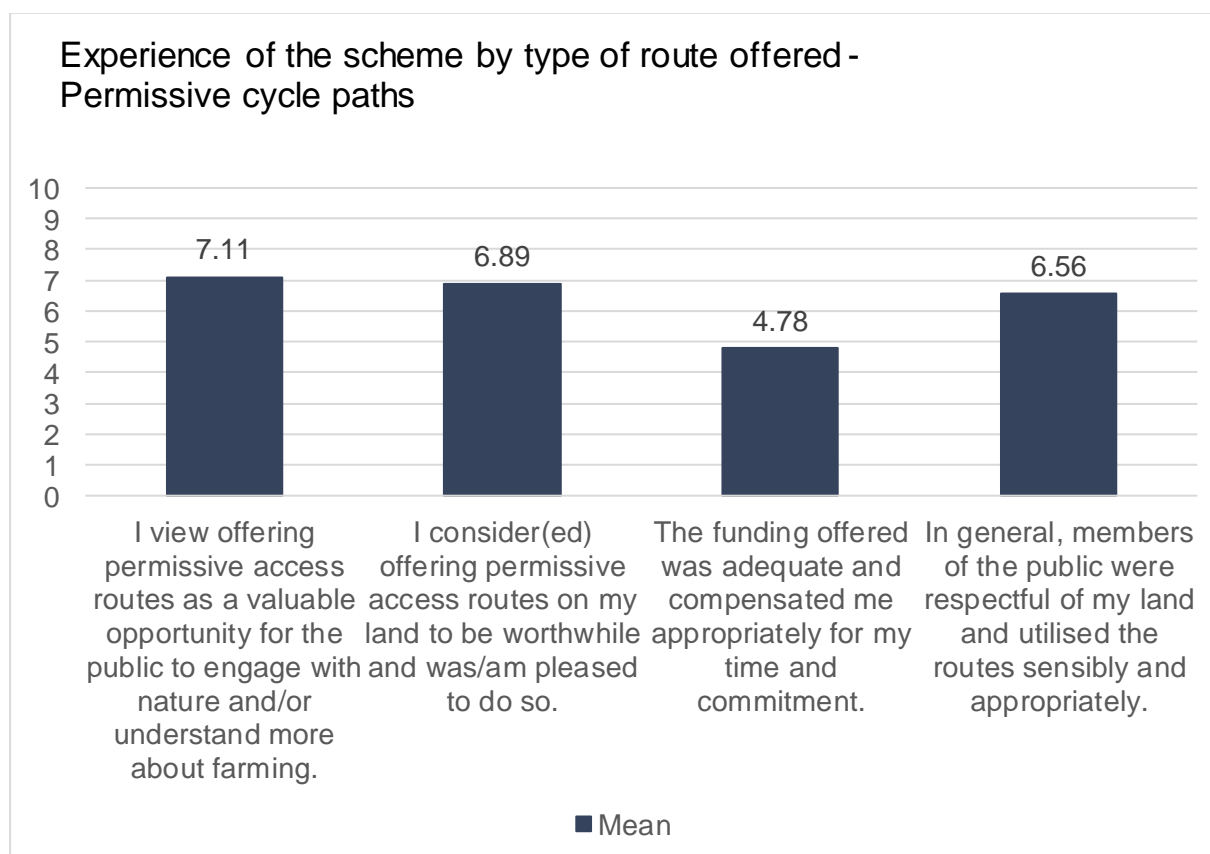


Figure 33 – Experiences of the scheme for Permissive Cycle Path providers

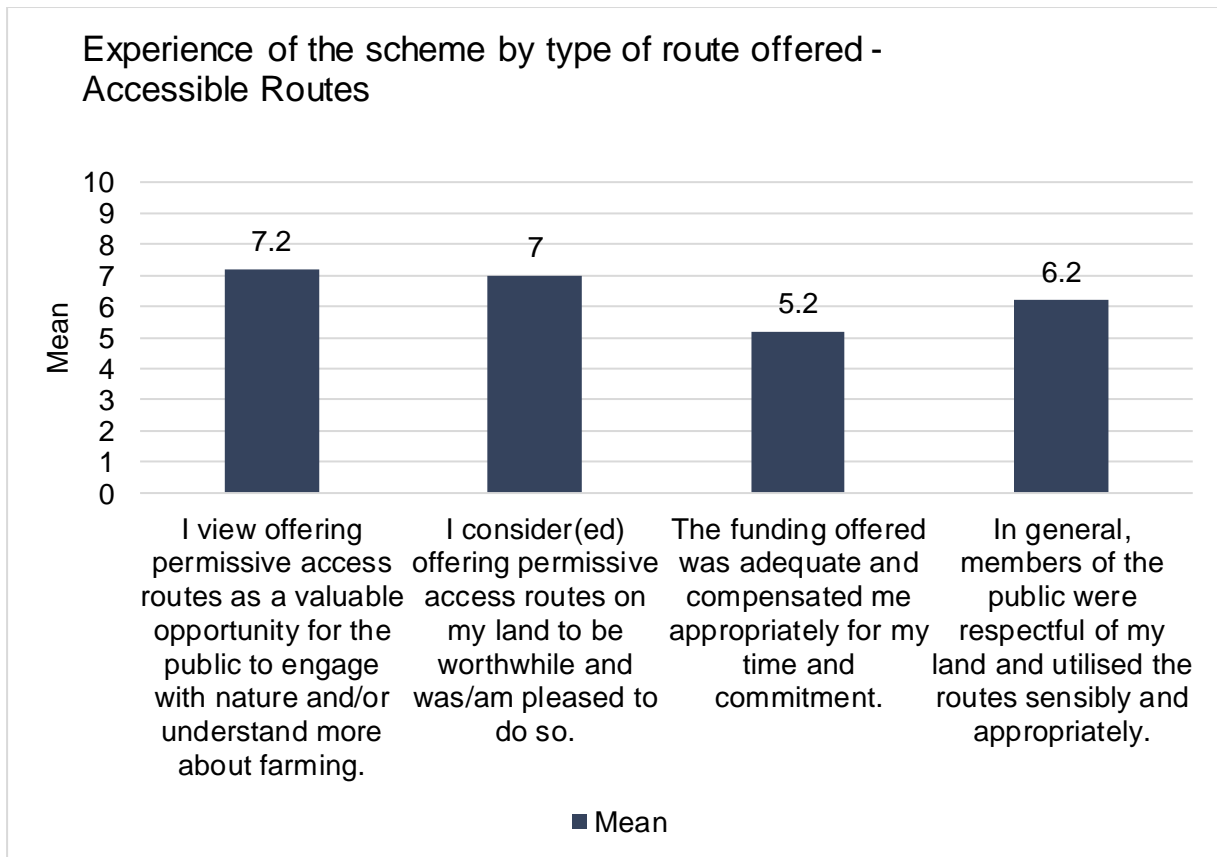


Figure 34 – Experiences of the scheme for Accessible Route providers

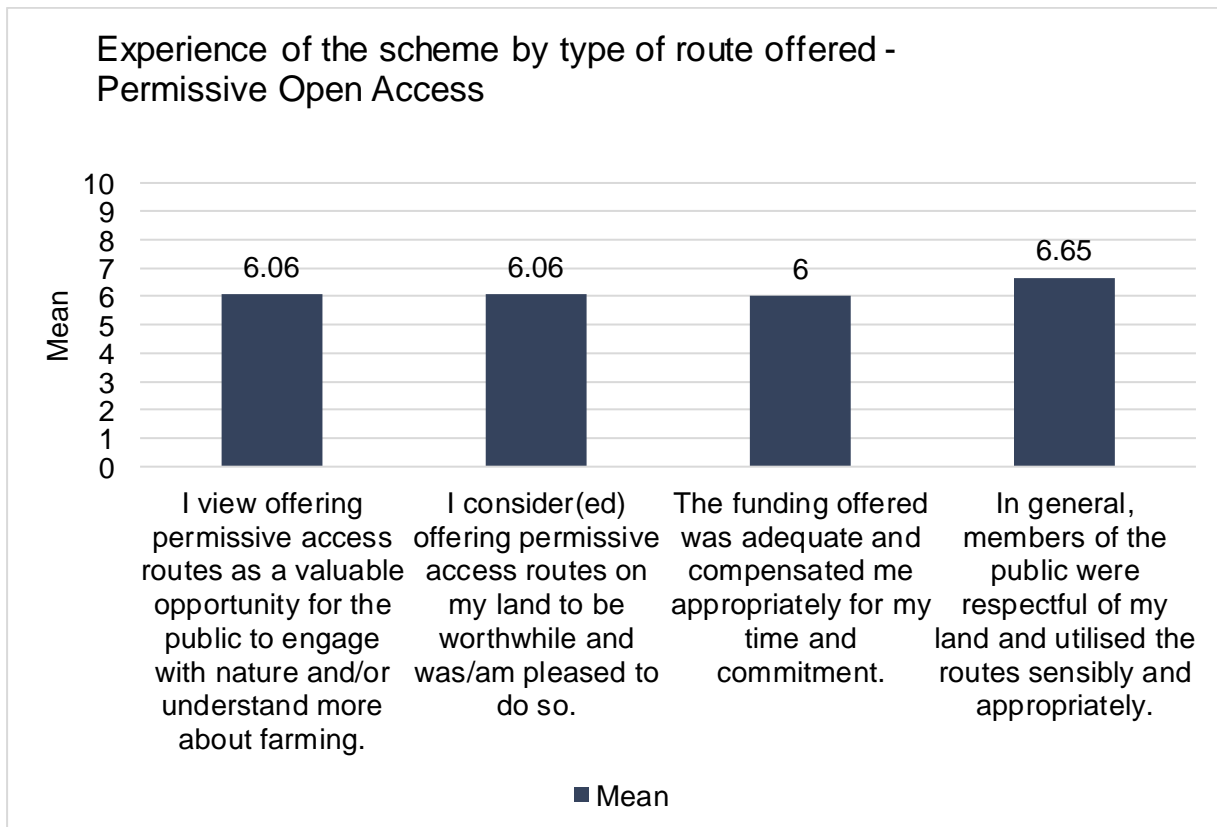


Figure 35 - Experiences of the scheme for Permissive Open Access providers

Experiences of Offering Permissive Access by Primary User

The charts below depict a breakdown of ratings out of 10 that respondents gave regarding their experiences of offering access through the scheme according to the groups that primarily made use of the routes they offered. In this instance, 10 was the highest rating of “excellent”. Whilst no statistically significant differences were identified, the data has identified trends that are worth consideration in future policy decisions.

There was no significant difference between the ratings of respondents’ experiences and the most common primary user groups for their routes, despite a proportion of respondents noting difficulties with horse riders and dog walkers.

Whilst such a small proportion selected ‘Other’ as their primary user groups, meaning that the findings are not significant, the indication is that where vehicular usage, including motorbikes, was mentioned, it is evident that this has caused these agreement holders to have difficult experiences in offering access over their land, with a greater tendency to giving very low scores for the respect with which users treated their land, and the adequacy of the compensation they were offered (Figure 43).

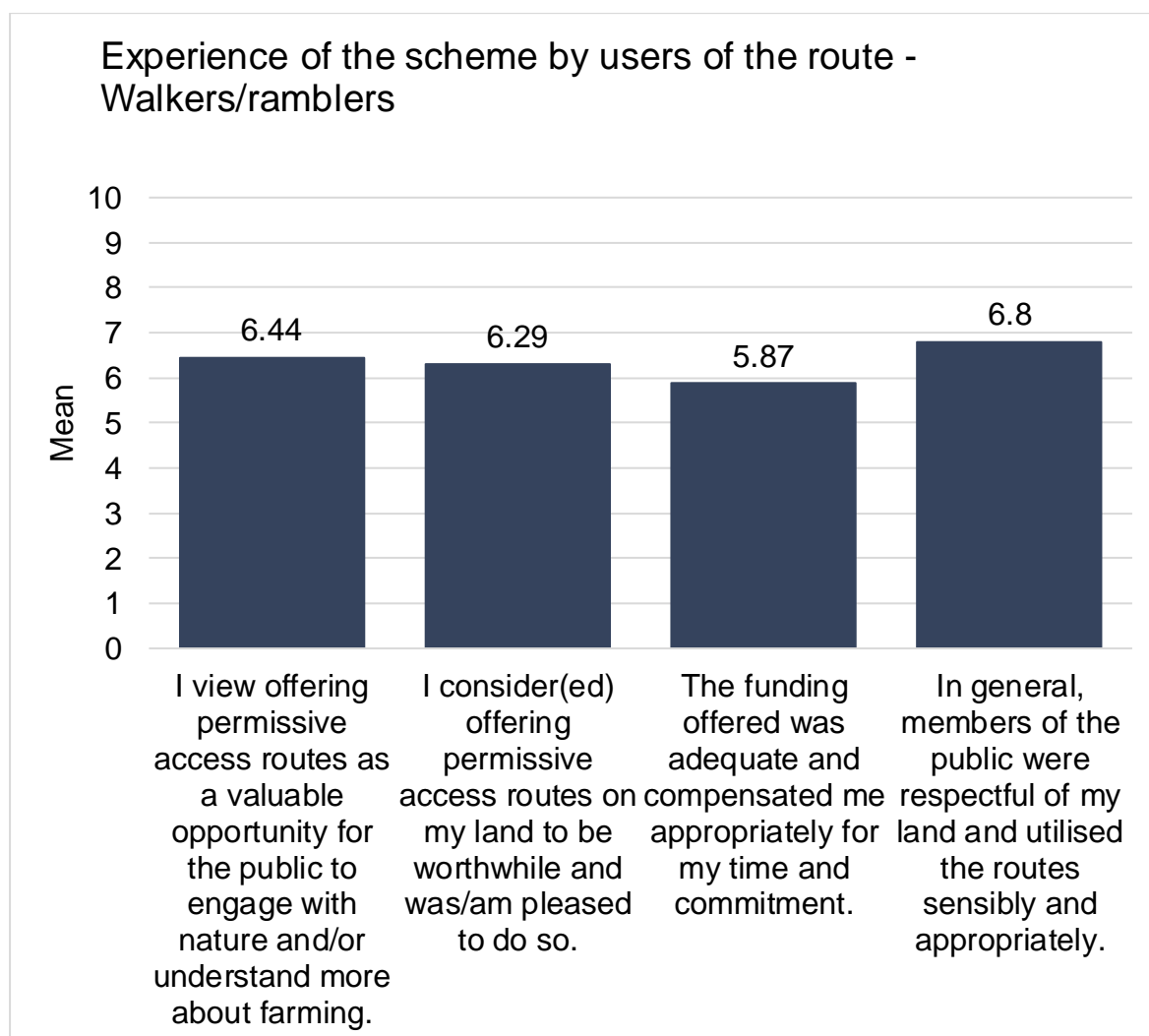


Figure 36 – Experiences of the scheme with walkers/ramblers as the primary users

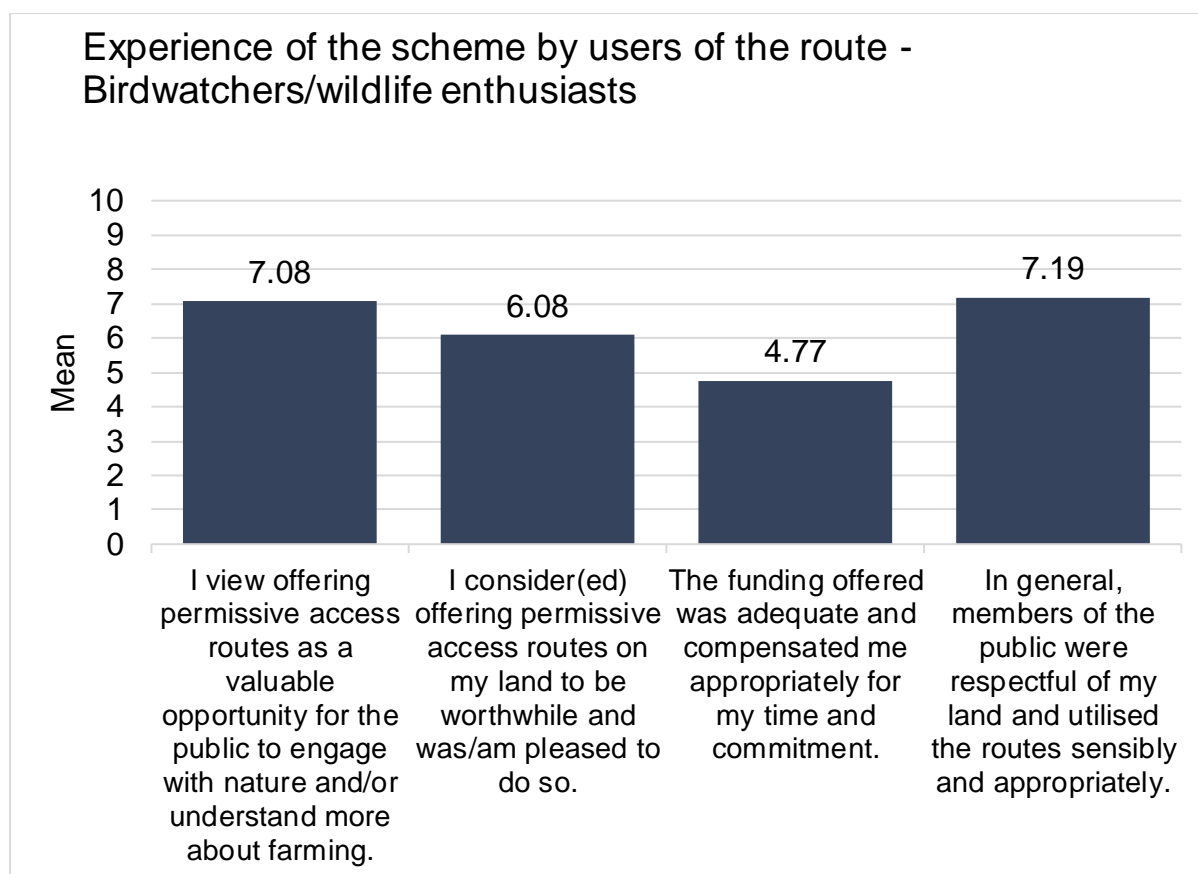


Figure 37 – Experiences of the scheme with Birdwatchers/wildlife enthusiasts as the primary users

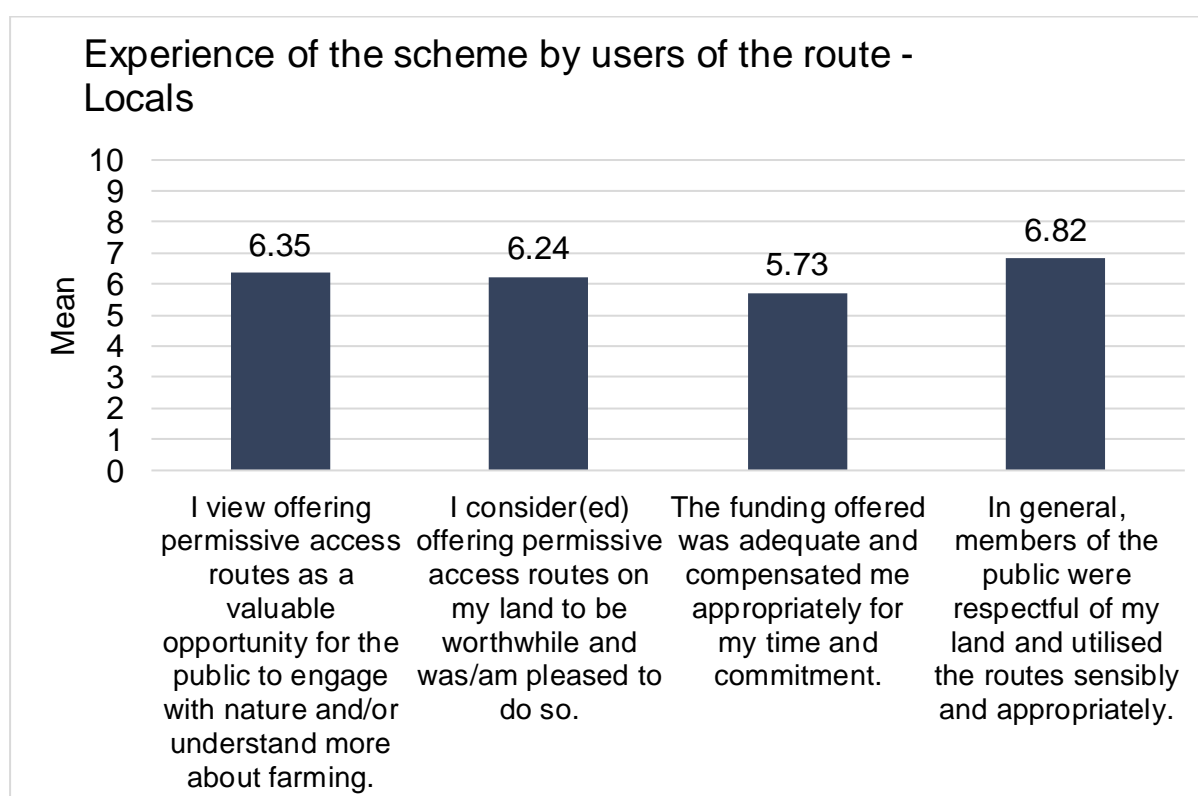


Figure 38 – Experiences of the scheme with Locals as the primary users

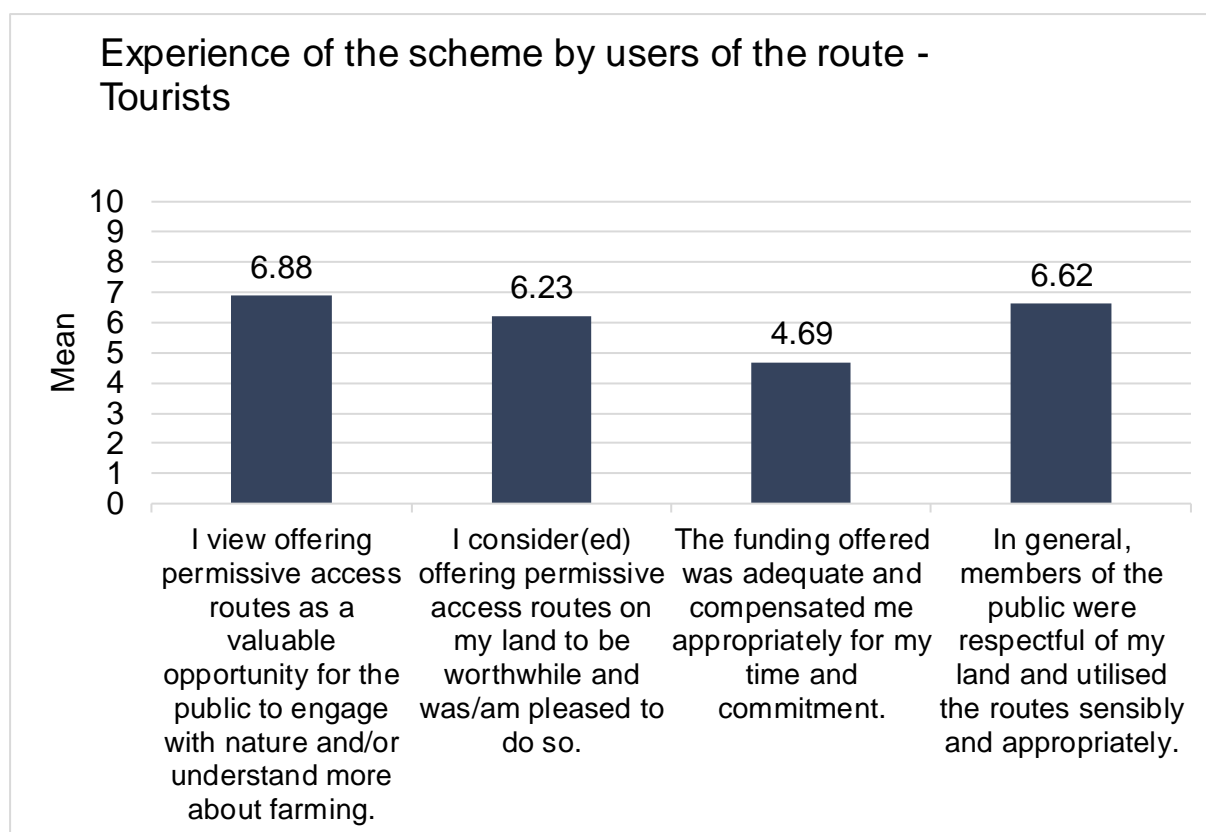


Figure 39 – Experiences of the scheme with Tourists as the primary users

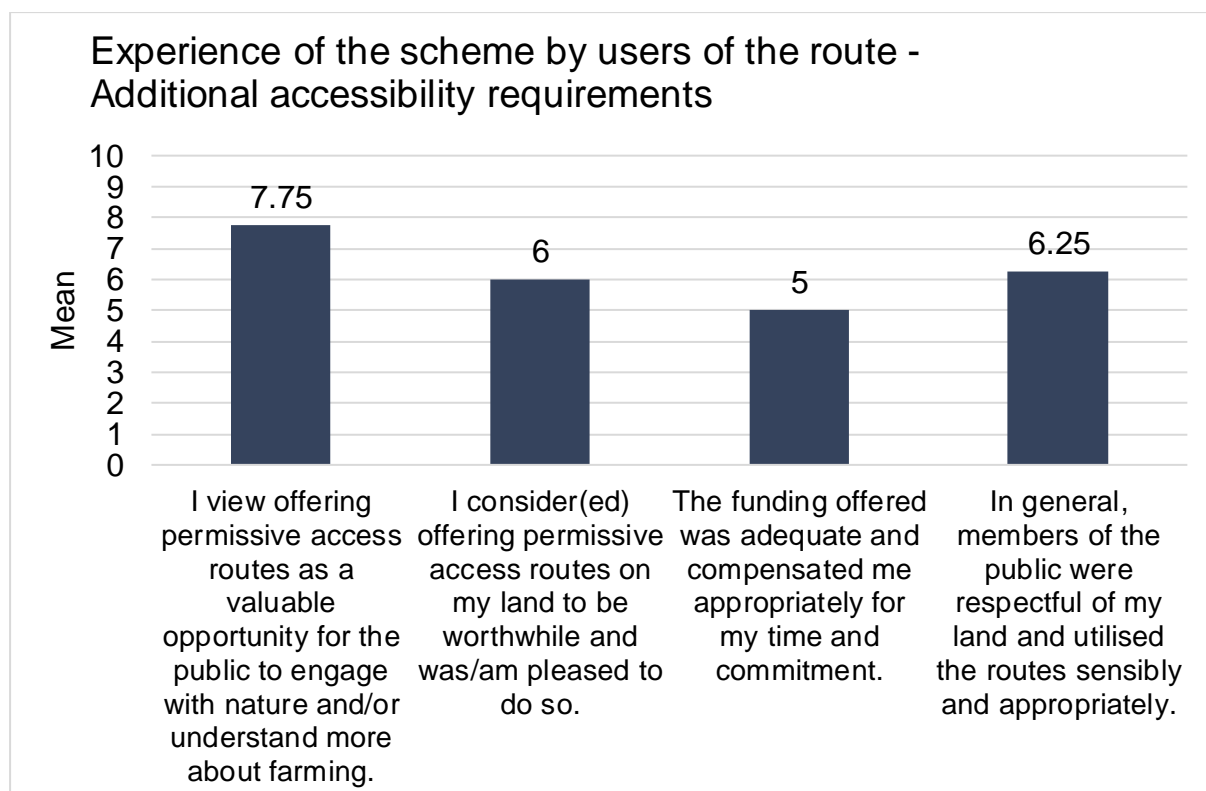


Figure 40 – Experiences of the scheme with those with additional accessibility requirements as the primary users

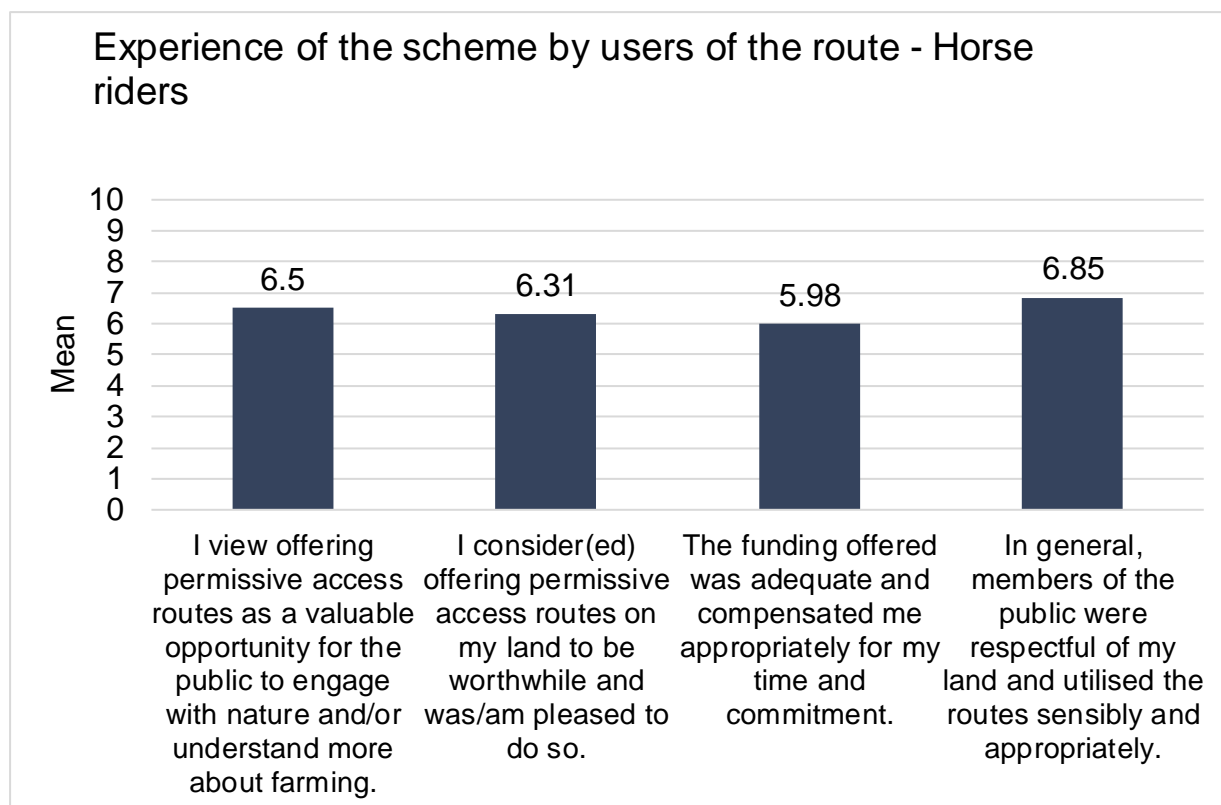


Figure 41 – Experiences of the scheme with Horse riders as the primary users

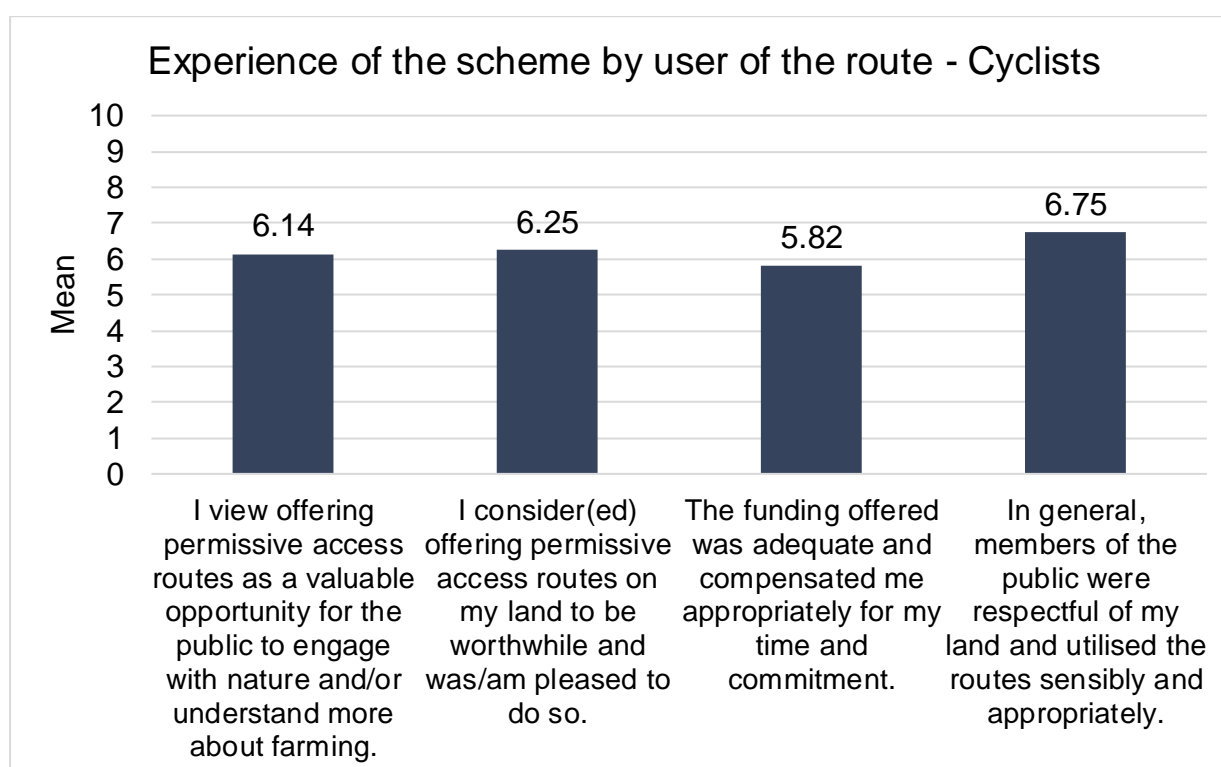


Figure 42 – Experiences of the scheme with Cyclists as the primary users

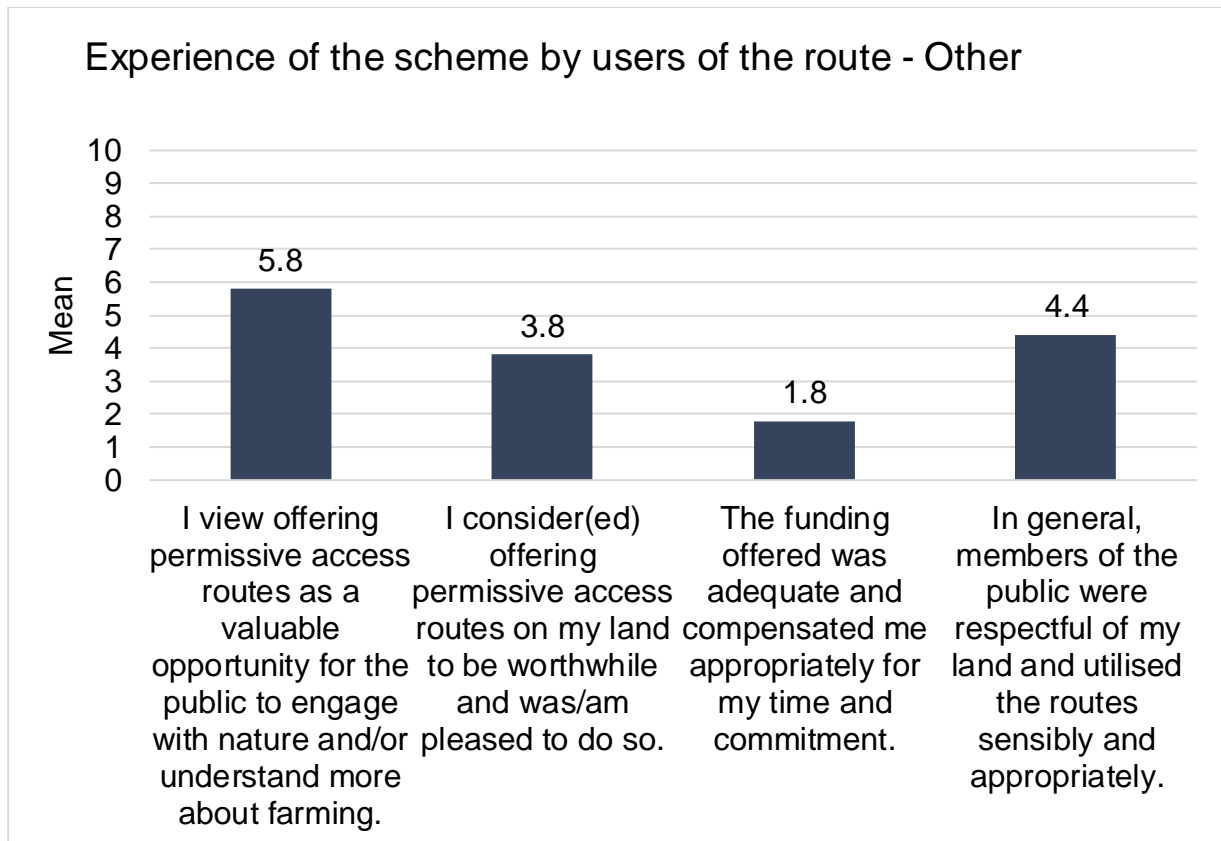


Figure 43 – Experiences of the scheme with ‘Other’ primary users

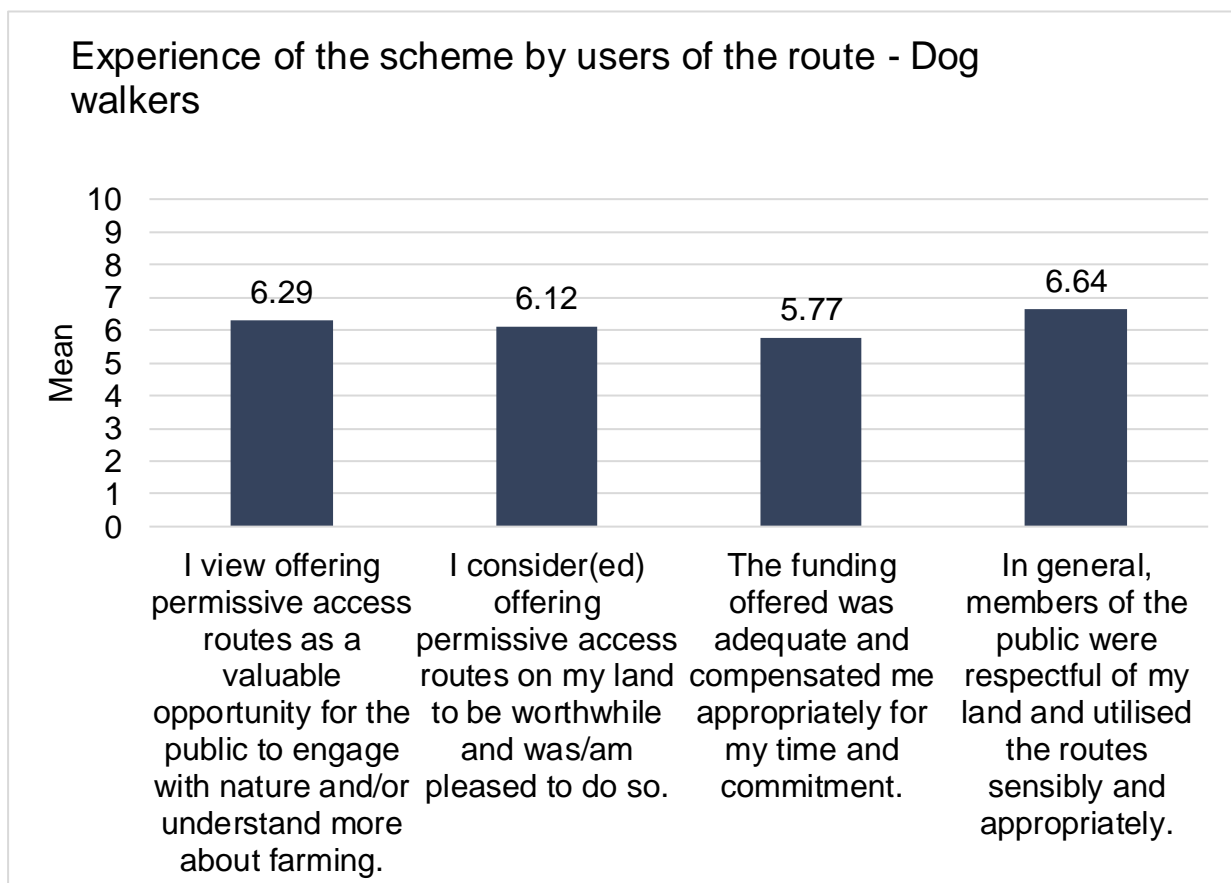


Figure 44 – Experiences of the scheme with Dog Walkers as the primary users

How Experiences of Offering Permissive Access Affected Decisions to Continue Offering Permissive Access

As would be expected, those who have continued to offer permissive access (Figure 45) generally gave more positive scores to their experiences of offering the routes than those who did not (Figure 46).

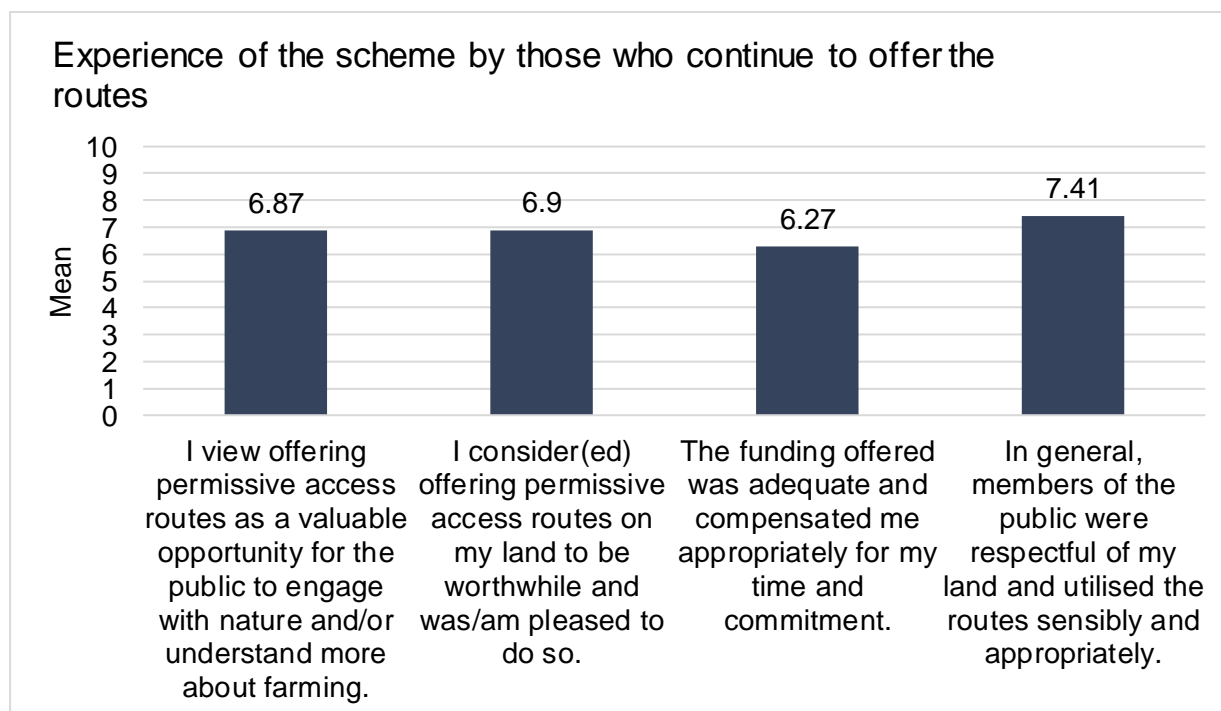


Figure 45 – Experiences of offering permissive access by those who continue to offer routes

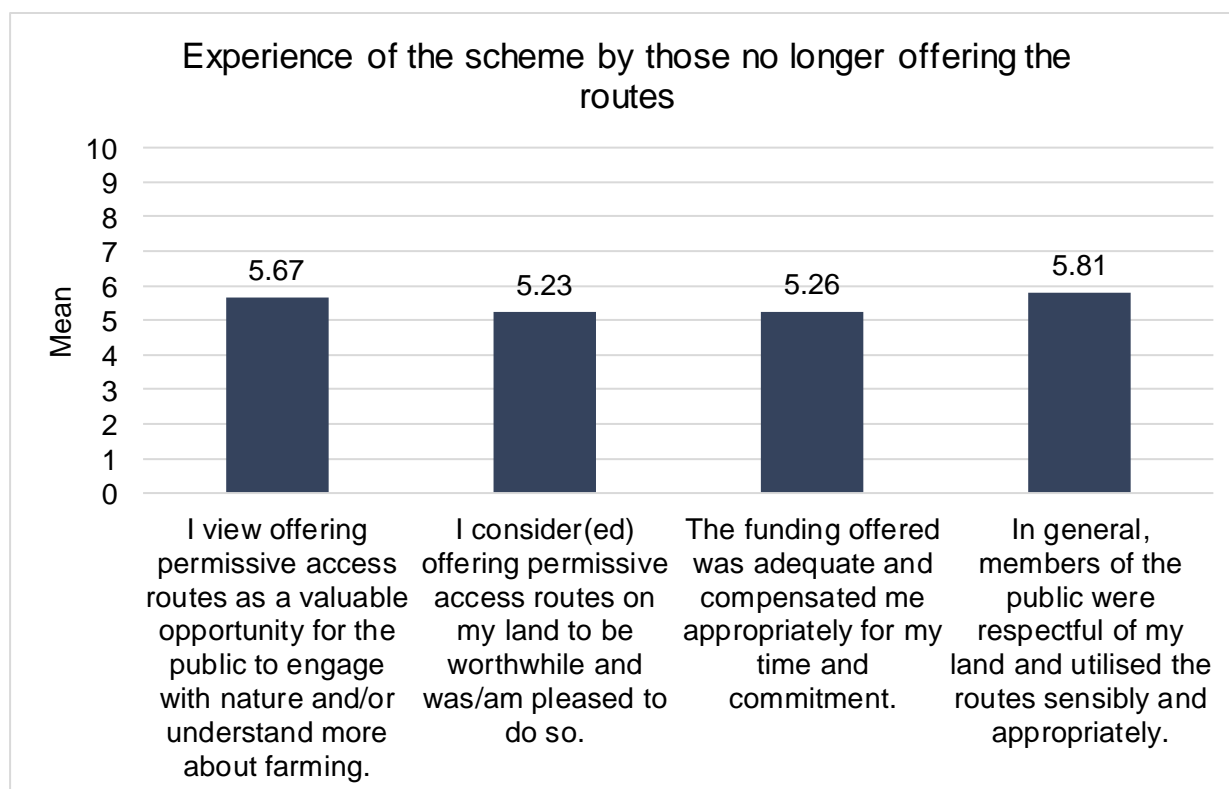


Figure 46 – Experiences of offering permissive access by those who no longer offer routes

There is a strong statistically significant relationship between decisions to continue offering and maintaining the routes or not and respondents' feelings that offering permissive access on their land is worthwhile and being pleased to offer it (Figure 47).

| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| ANOVA | |
| P-Value | 0.002 |
| Effect Size (Cohen's f) | 0.416 |
| | |
| | |

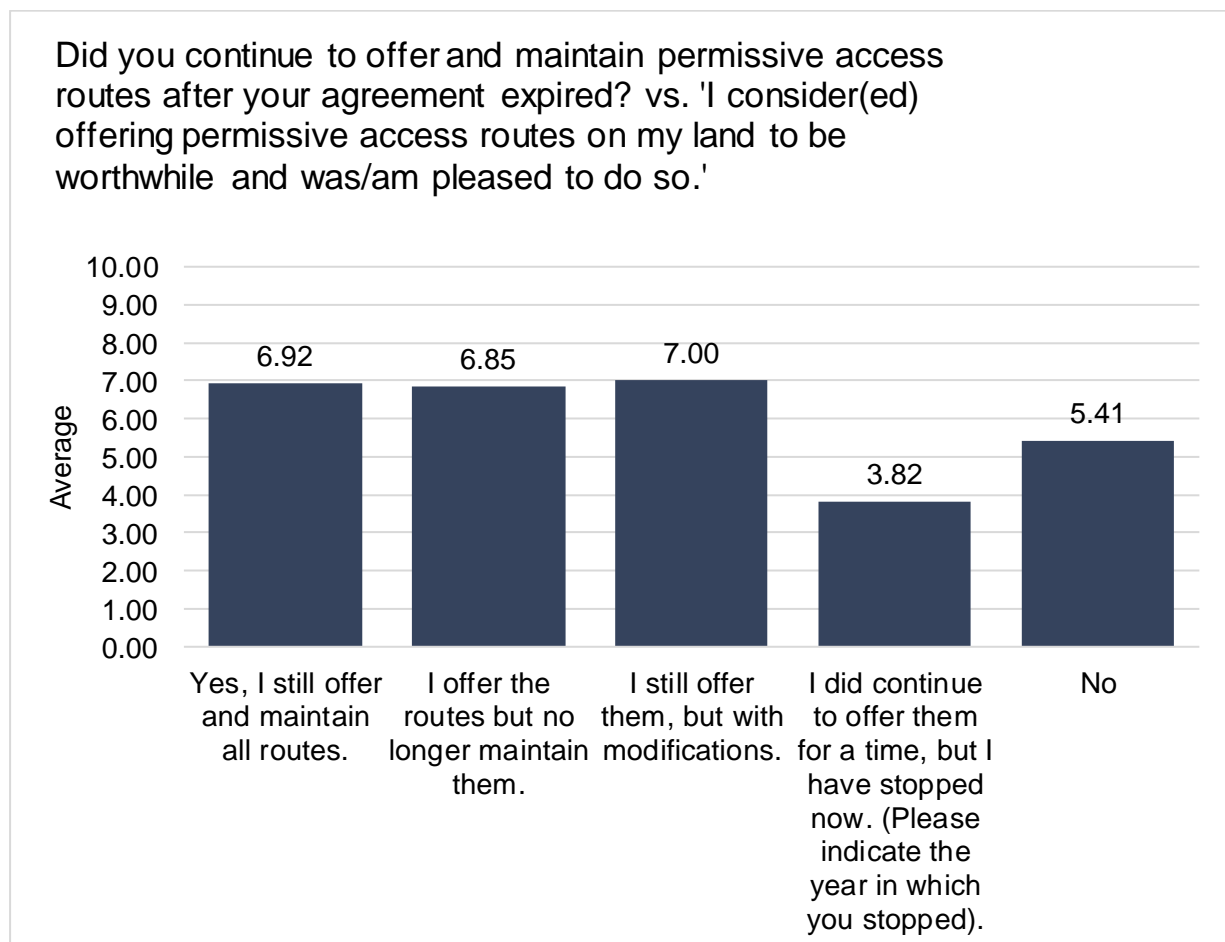


Figure 47 – Positive relationship between feeling permissive access is worthwhile and continuing to offer routes

There is a statistically significant relationship between decisions to continue offering permissive access and respondents' feelings that members of the public who utilised the routes were respectful, sensible, and appropriate in their usage (Figure 48).

| Ranked ANOVA | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| P-Value | 0.001 |
| Effect Size (Cohen's f) | 0.376 |

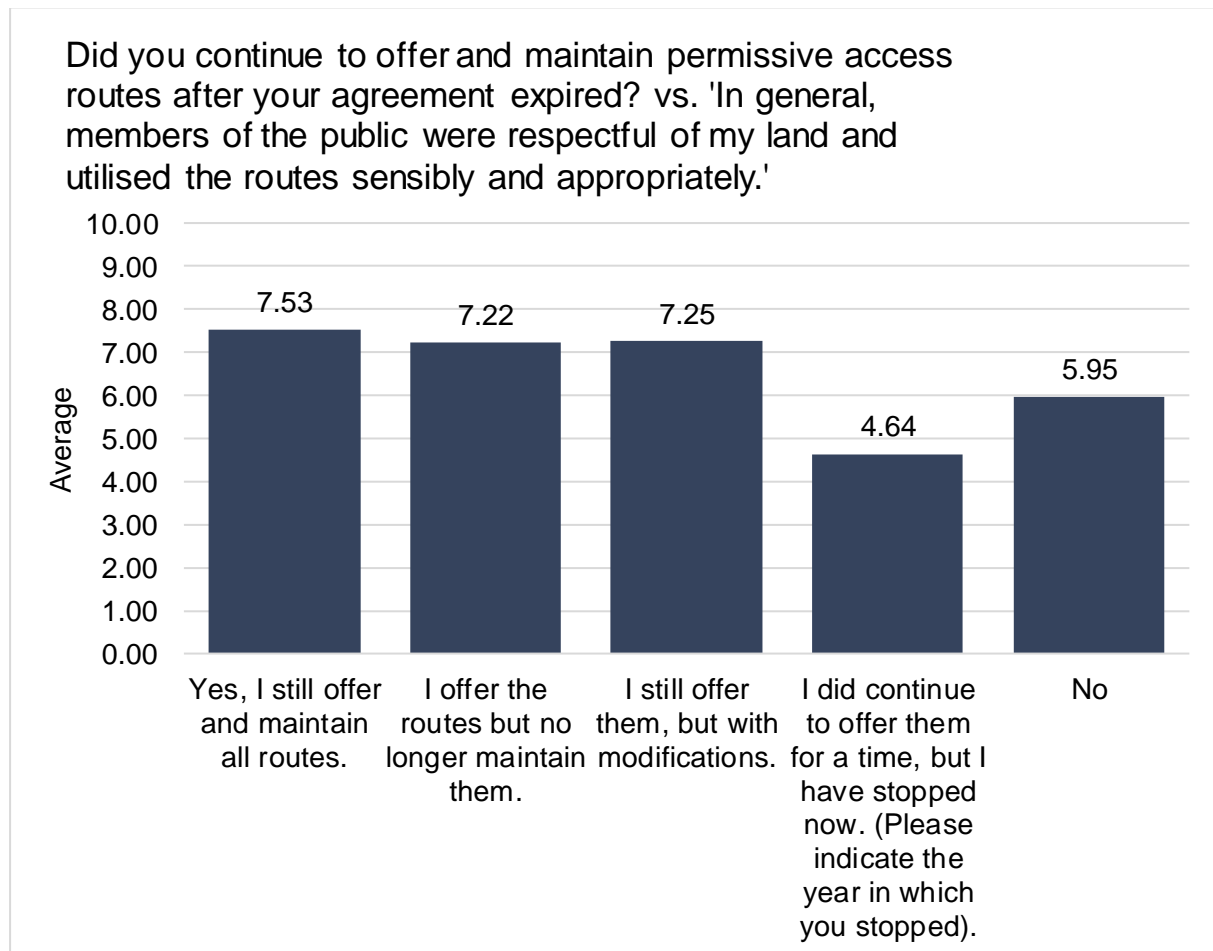


Figure 48 – Relationship between feeling members of the public were respectful and decisions to continue offering permissive access

There is a statistically significant relationship between decisions to continue offering permissive access and respondents feeling that the funding was adequate and compensated them appropriately for their time and commitment (Figure 49).

| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| ANOVA | |
| P-Value | 0.008 |
| Effect Size (Cohen's f) | 0.321 |

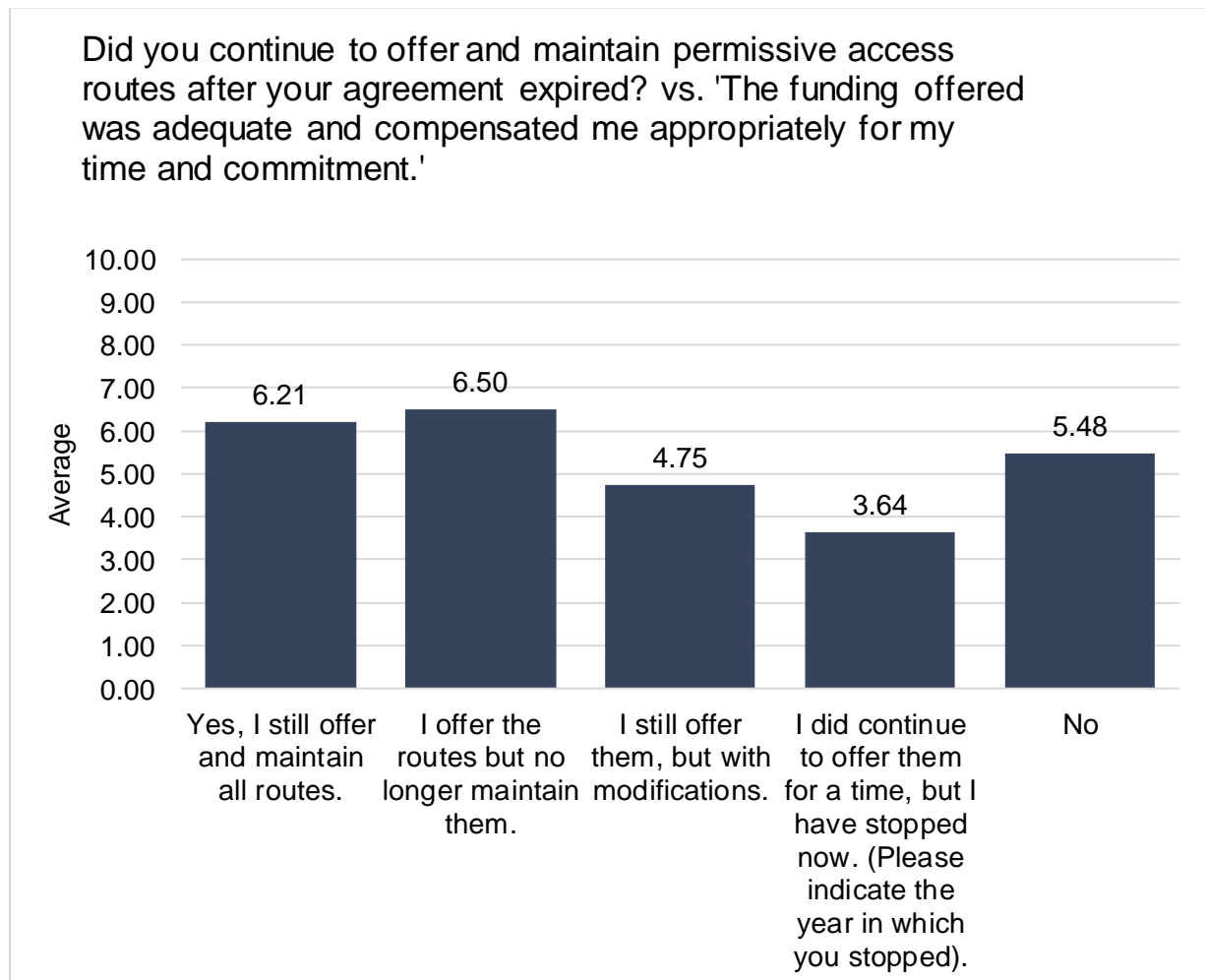


Figure 49 – Relationship between feelings that funding was adequate and decisions to continue offering routes

There is a statistically significant relationship between decisions to continue offering access and respondents' views that offering permissive access routes is a valuable opportunity for the public to engage with nature and/or understand more about farming (Figure 50).

| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| ANOVA | |
| P-Value | 0 |
| Effect Size (Cohen's f) | 0.32 |

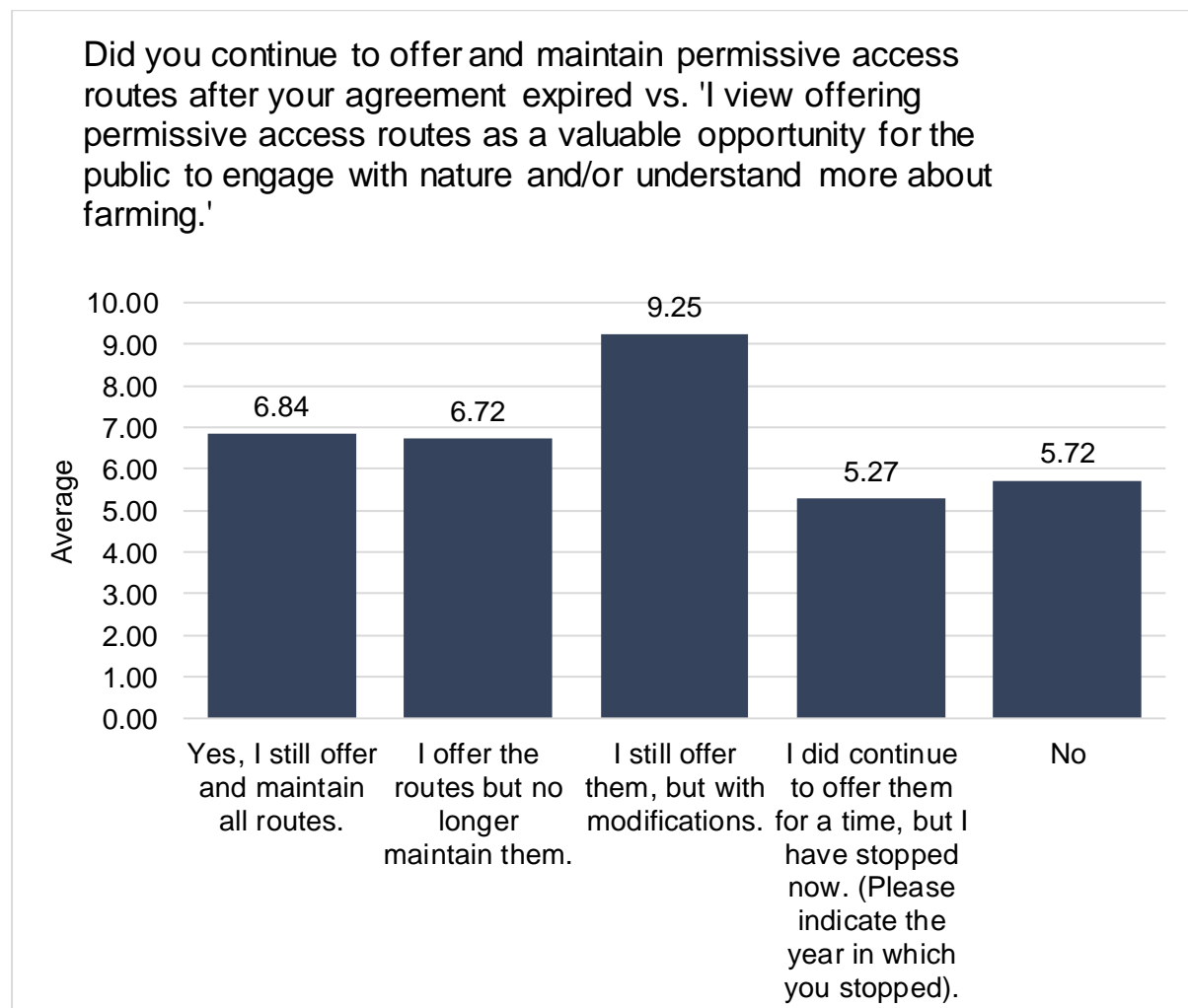


Figure 50 – Relationship between views of permissive access as a valuable opportunity for the public to engage with nature/understand farming and decisions to continue offering routes

Rating of Permissive Access Scheme Administration and Management

Respondents were asked to give their opinion on the overall administration and management of various factors around the scheme by giving a score out of 10, where 10 was excellent and 1 was extremely poor.

The overall mean scores for most aspects sit between 5 and 6 out of 10, meaning respondents were generally fairly middling in their opinions on these aspects, without particularly positive or negative feelings either way.

The support offered with maintaining and managing the routes scored lowest, with a mean of 4.55 out of 10, implying that respondents would have liked more assistance with the maintenance and management of the routes they provide(d).

Communication with the Authority managing the agreement achieved a mean score of 5.2 out of 10. Anecdotally, based on the telephone interviews we undertook, respondents felt that communication with Natural England at the start of the scheme was good. However, several commented that communication from Defra around the cessation of the scheme was poor, and they would have liked to have been invited to have more input in this decision, as agreement holders, and would have appreciated a more in-depth explanation of the decision. This is borne out by other anecdotal data from the conversations we had in which many respondents reported that they had been led to believe that they were not “allowed” to continue offering permissive access once their agreement expired. This indicates that communication around the ending of the funding may not have been adequate to ensure respondents knew they were able to continue on a voluntary basis should they have wished to.

| Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance |
|---|---------|---------|------|---------------|----------|
| The administrative burden of achieving and maintaining the funding, i.e., the application process and subsequent agreement management | 0.00 | 10.00 | 5.93 | 2.19 | 4.80 |
| Communication with the Authority managing the agreement. | 0.00 | 10.00 | 5.20 | 2.11 | 4.46 |
| The financial compensation for offering permissive access. | 0.00 | 10.00 | 5.22 | 1.99 | 3.97 |
| The support offered with maintaining and managing the routes. | 0.00 | 10.00 | 4.55 | 2.16 | 4.67 |

Rating of Permissive Access Scheme Administration and Management by Type of Route

There were no statistically significant differences between respondents' ratings of the administration and management of the permissive access scheme and the types of routes that they offered. The results indicate that those who offered accessible routes have slightly more positive opinions about the permissive access scheme's administration and management (Figure 54), but this is not a significant finding.

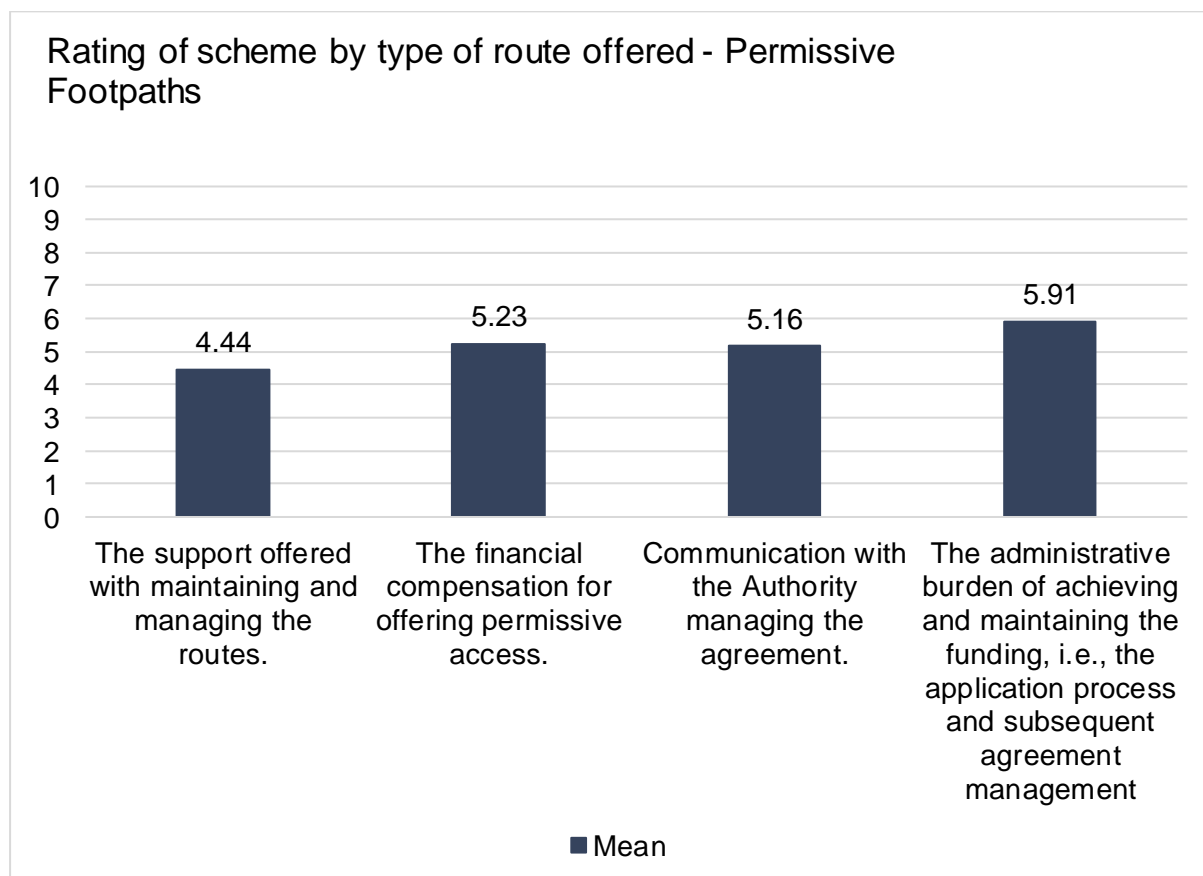


Figure 51 – Rating of administration and management for Permissive Footpaths

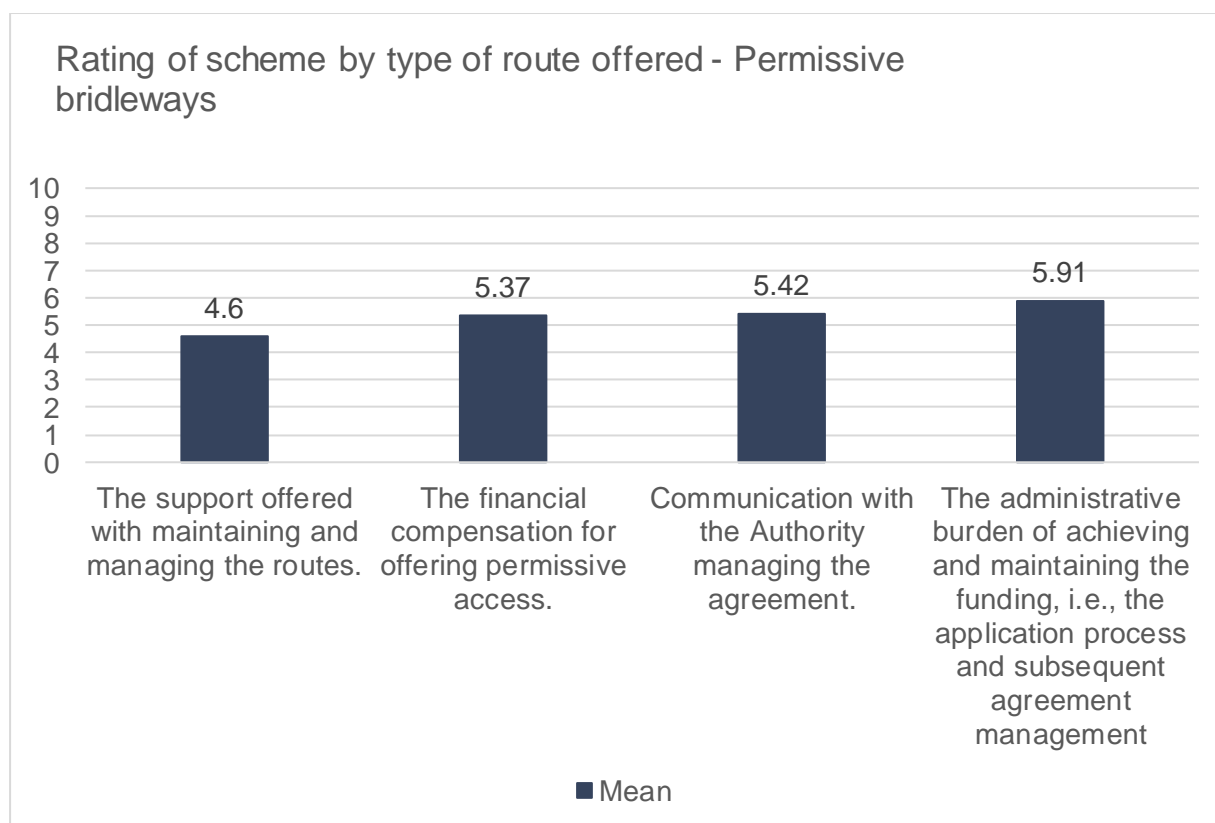


Figure 52 – Rating of administration and management for Permissive Bridleways

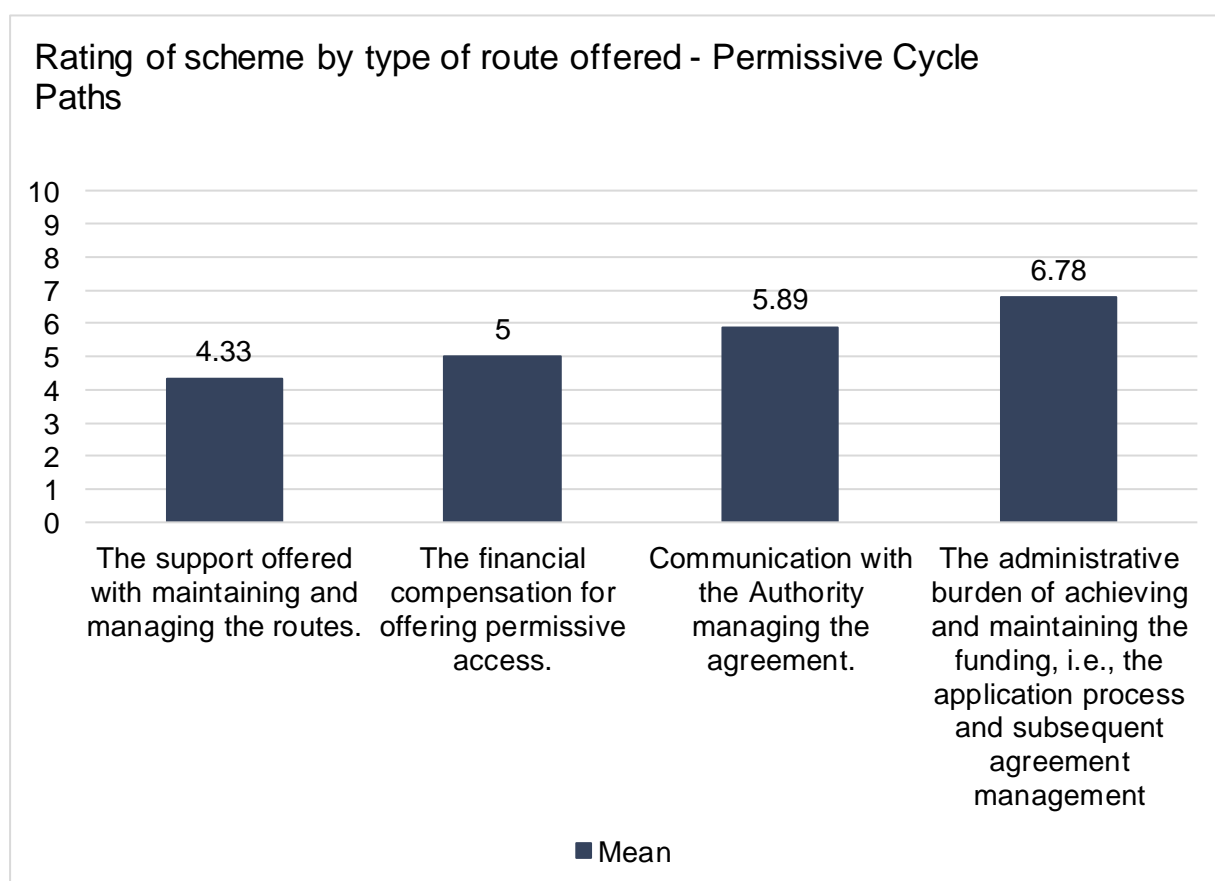


Figure 53 – Rating of administration and management for Permissive Cycle Paths

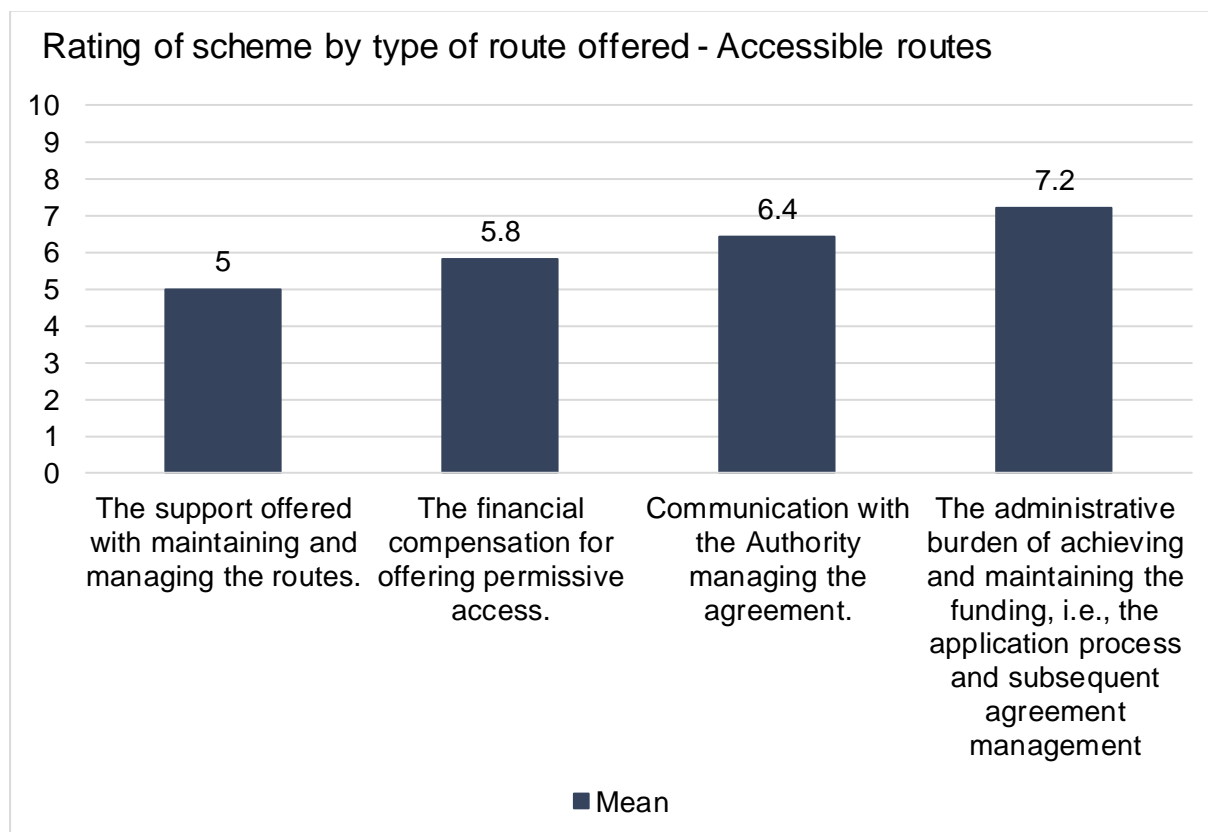


Figure 54 – Rating of administration and management for Accessible Routes

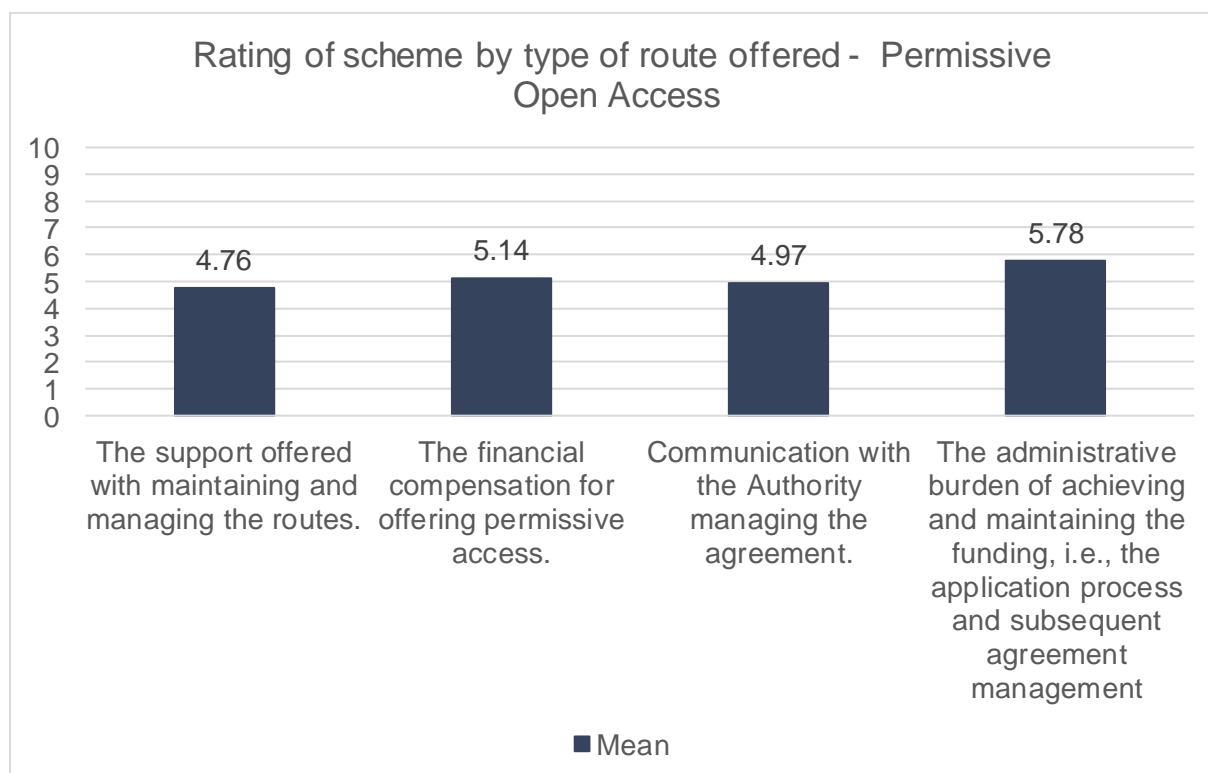


Figure 55 – Rating of administration and management for Permissive Open Access

How Ratings of the Administration and Management of the Permissive Access Scheme Affected Decisions to Continue Offering Permissive Access

Unsurprisingly, those who have continued to offer the routes (Figure 56) tend to rate their administration and management of the scheme higher than those who chose to cease offering their permissive access routes (Figure 57).

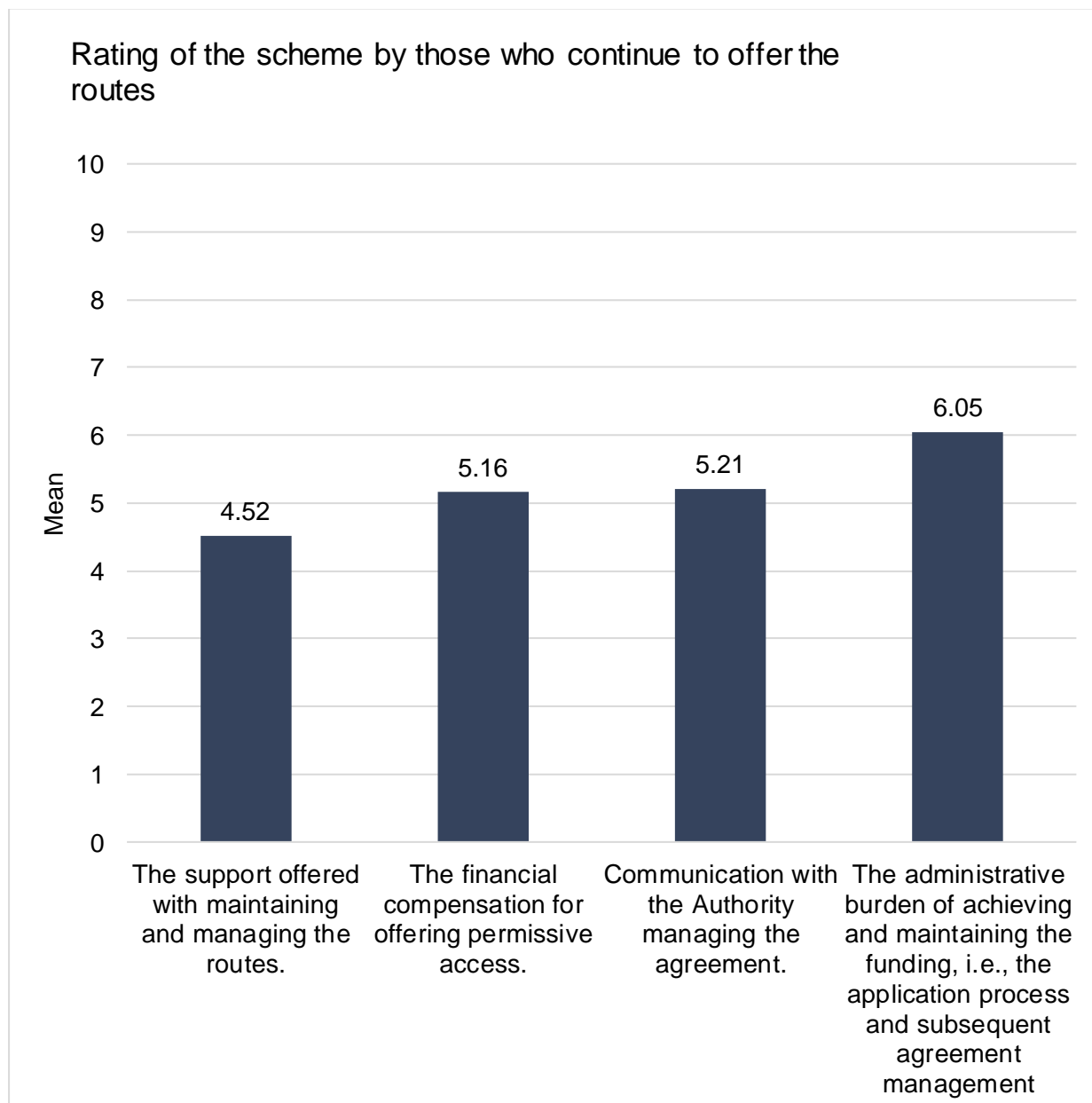


Figure 56 – Rating of the administration and management of the scheme by those who continue to offer the routes

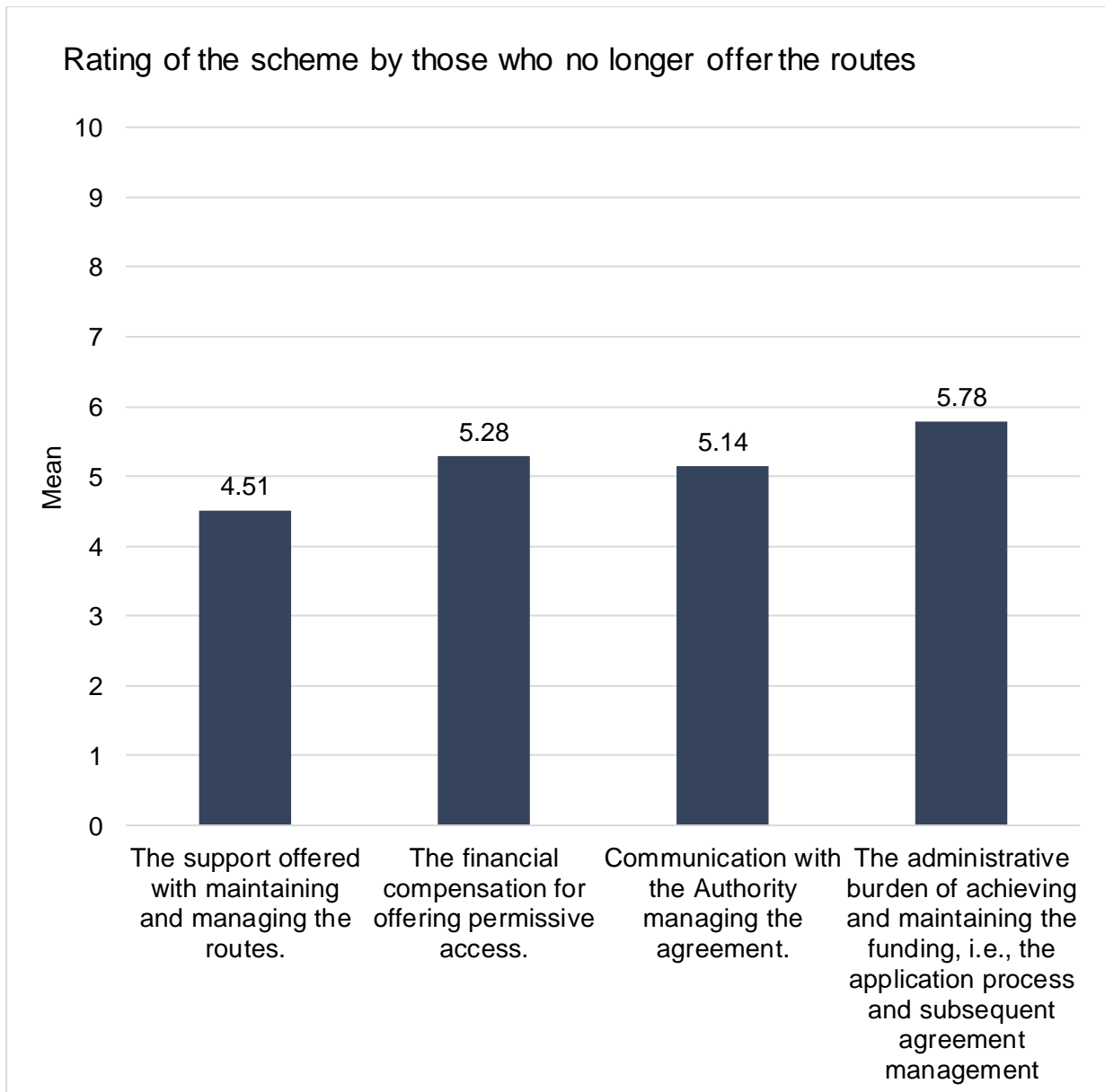


Figure 57 – Rating of the administration and management of the scheme by those who no longer offer the routes

There is a statistically significant relationship between respondents' decisions to continue offering their permissive access routes and their ratings of the administrative burden of achieving and maintaining the funding, including the application process and subsequent agreement management (Figure 58).

| Ranked ANOVA | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| P-Value | 0 |
| Effect Size (Cohen's f) | 0.387 |

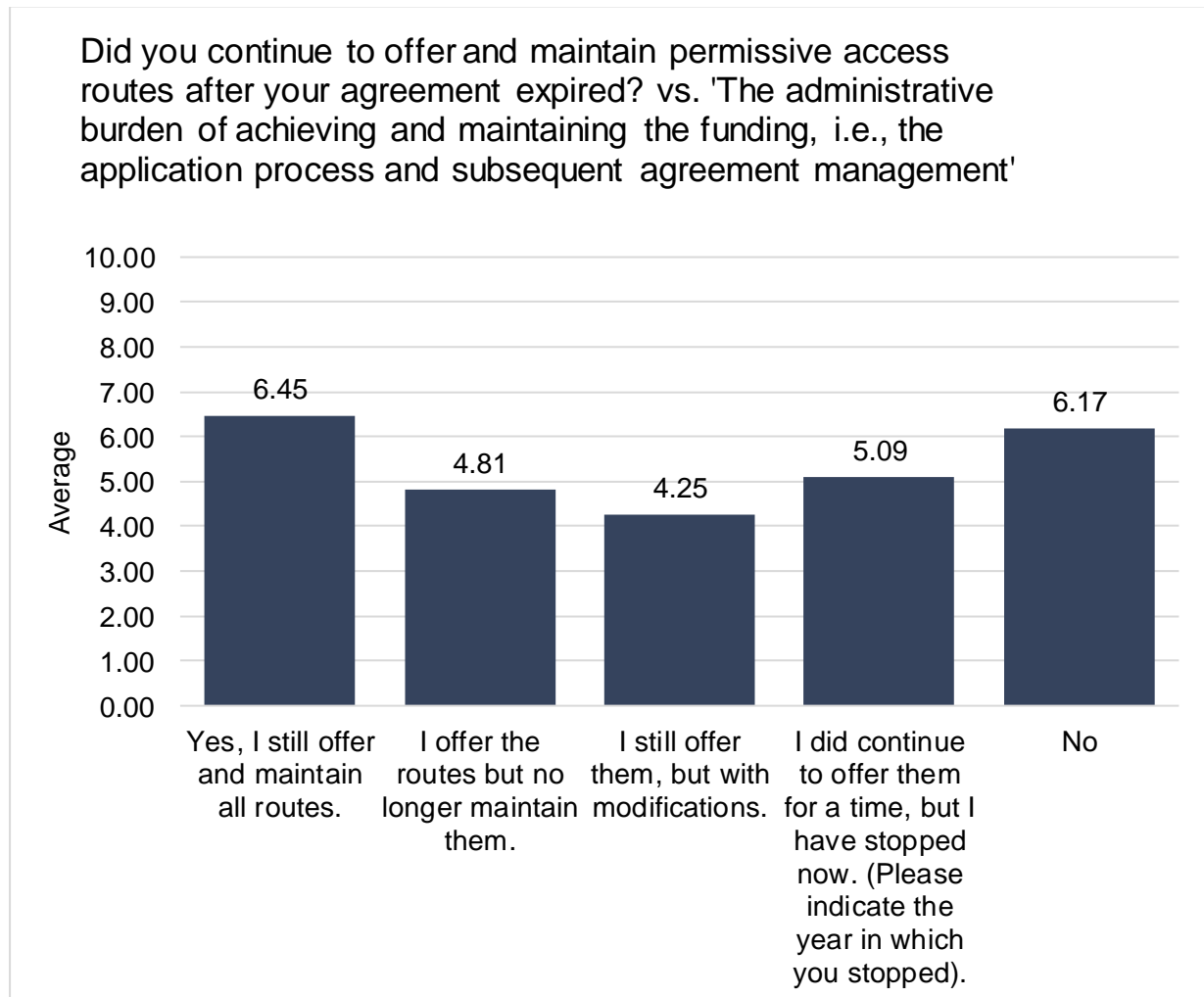


Figure 58 – Relationship between continuing to offer routes and the administrative burden of achieving and maintaining the funding

There is a statistically significant relationship between decisions to continue offering and maintaining permissive access routes after their agreements expired and the level of support that respondents feel they were offered with maintaining and managing the routes (Figure 59).

| | |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Ranked ANOVA | |
| P-Value | 0 |
| Effect Size (Cohen's f) | 0.361 |

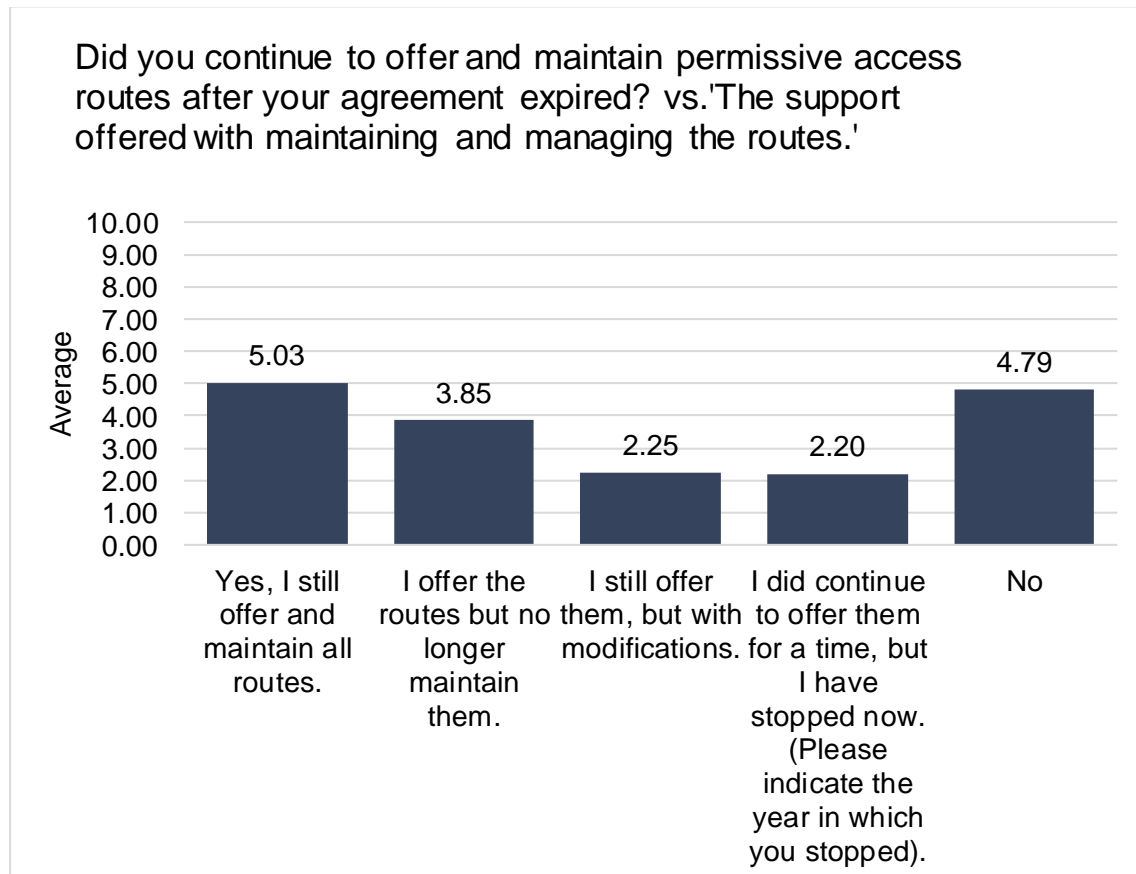


Figure 59 – Relationship between continuing to offer routes and the level of support respondents felt they were offered with maintaining and managing the routes

There is a statistically significant relationship between respondents' decisions to continue offering permissive access after their agreement expired and their opinions on the communication they had with the Authority managing the agreement (Figure 60).

| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| ANOVA | |
| P-Value | 0.005 |
| Effect Size (Cohen's f) | 0.32 |

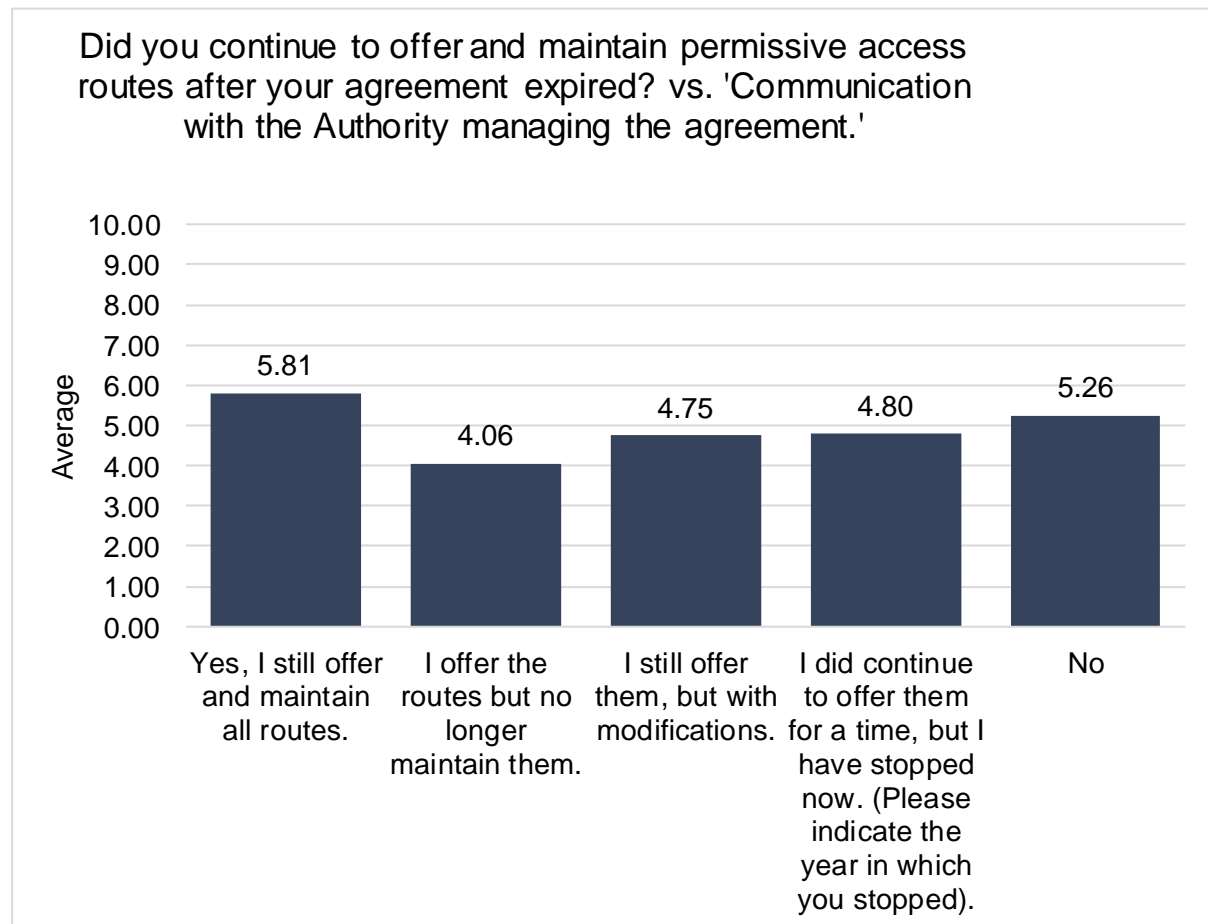


Figure 60 – Relationship between continuing to offer routes and communication with the Authority managing the agreement

There is no statistically significant relationship between respondents' decisions to continue offering permissive access after their agreements expired and the level of financial compensation for offering permissive access. This is likely because the funding in question ceased once the agreement expired (Figure 61).

| Ranked ANOVA | |
|----------------------------|------|
| P-Value | 0.23 |
| Effect Size (Cohen's f) | 0.18 |

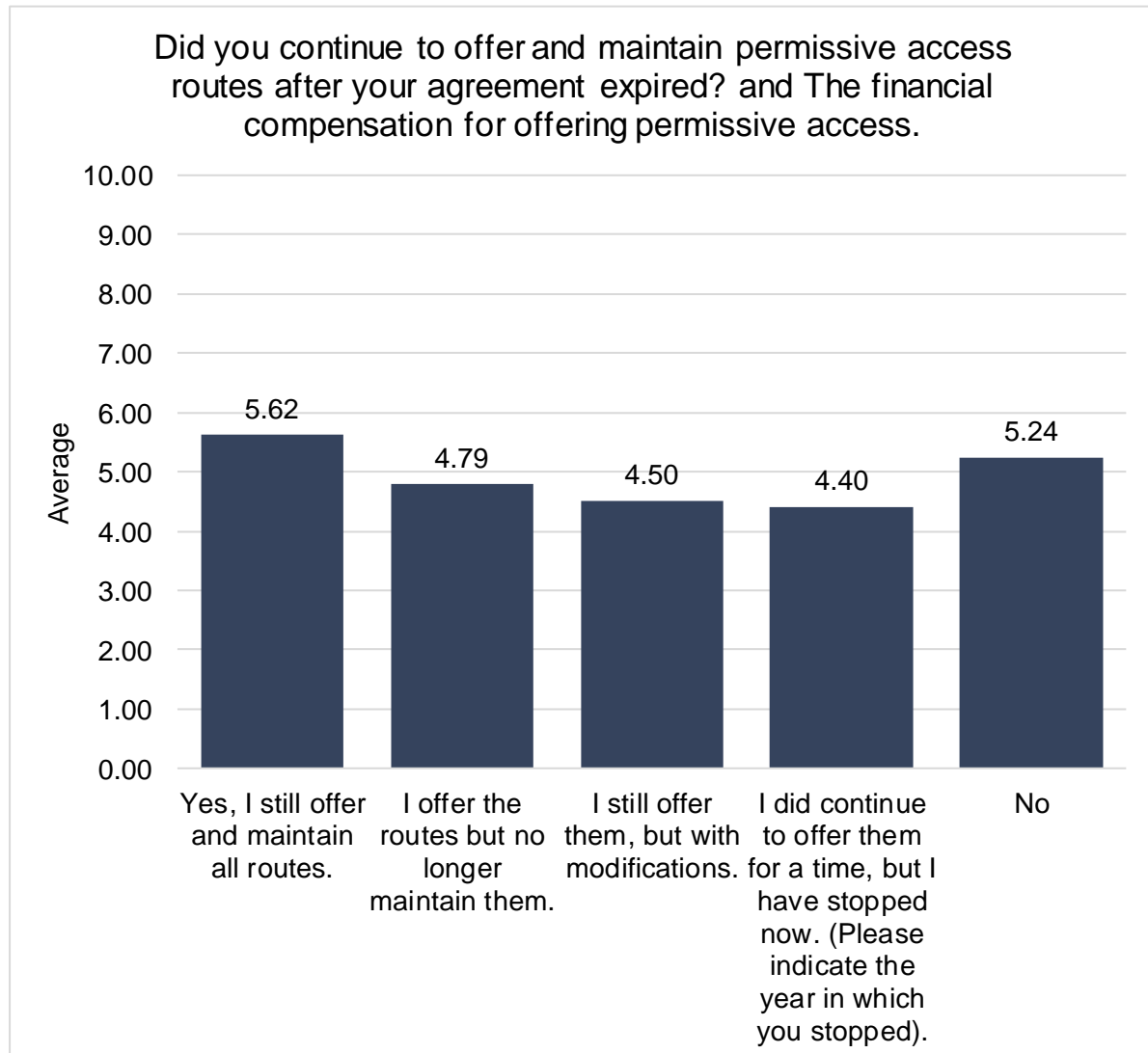


Figure 61 – No relationship between continuing to offer routes and the financial compensation for offering permissive access

Maintenance and Management of Permissive Access Routes

Frequency of Maintaining Permissive Access Routes

Just under half (49%) of the total respondent sample maintained the routes they offered as and when required, rather than on a scheduled programme of maintenance. Of those who chose to adopt a more planned approach to the maintenance and management of their permissive access, every few months tended to be the most selected level of frequency, with 24% of respondents selecting this.

Please see Figure 62 for a visual depiction of the results.

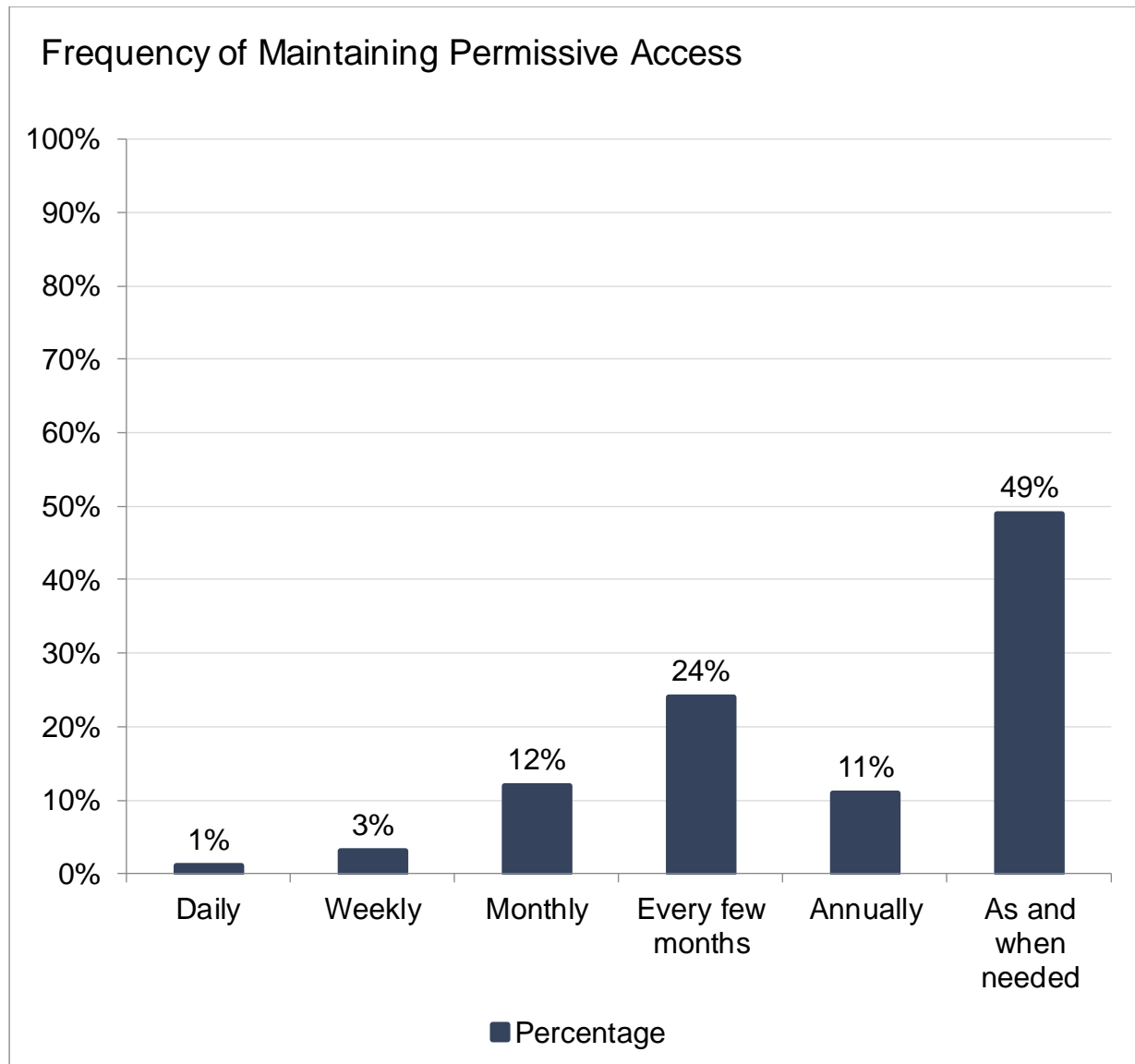


Figure 62 – Frequency of maintaining permissive access routes

Cost of Maintaining and Managing Permissive Access Routes

Respondents were asked to provide an estimate of the annual cost of maintaining their route(s) per 100 metres, including their time and labour within the figure.

The mean estimated cost from their responses was £477 per 100 metres. This represents extremely good value as the National Trust estimates £160 per metre of footpath maintained, according to a figure released in 2013.² Allowing for inflation, this figure posited by the National Trust equates to £207.70 per metre of footpath maintained in 2023.

| Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance |
|----------|---------|---------|------|---------------|----------|
| Cost (£) | 0 | 2797 | 477 | 460 | 211869 |

A table of the funding offered per 100m can be found below for comparison to respondents' estimated actual costs of maintaining and managing these routes. An additional figure indicating the monetary equivalent in 2023 has been provided.

| Options | Option rate £ (2010) | Option Rate £ (2023 equivalent) |
|---|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| HN1 - ASD to Nov 2010 Linear and open access base payment | 350/agreement | 500.56/agreement |
| HN2 - ASD to Nov 2010 Permissive open access | 41/ha | 58.64/ha |
| HN3 - ASD to Nov 2010 Permissive footpath access | 45/100m | 64.36/ha |
| HN4 - ASD to Nov 2010 Permissive bridleway/cycle path access | 90/100m | 128.72/100m |
| HN5 - ASD to Nov 2010 Access for people with reduced mobility | 100/100m | 143.02/100m |
| HN6 - ASD to Nov 2010 Upgrading CROW access for cyclists/horses | 90/100m | 128.72/100m |

² <https://www.standard.co.uk/panewsfeeds/national-trust-in-footpath-appeal-8861706.html>

HN7 - ASD to Nov 2010
Upgrading CROW access -
people with reduced mobility

105/100m

150.17/100m

Costs of Maintaining Permissive Access Routes by Farming Operation

It had been supposed that, bearing in mind the comments from respondents regarding issues with providing permissive access and livestock worrying, that livestock farmers would experience the highest costs of maintaining their routes given the need to maintain boundaries, a main cost element, more rigorously.

However, this hypothesis was not borne out in the data gathered, with horticultural farming operations and those with non-agricultural enterprises reporting the highest average maintenance costs, whilst those with livestock farms reported lower overall maintenance costs (Figure 63). However, whilst this indicates a trend, it should be noted that these are not statistically significant findings, due to the samples for both horticultural and non-agricultural enterprises being limited in size.

The full analysis can be found in Appendix 9.

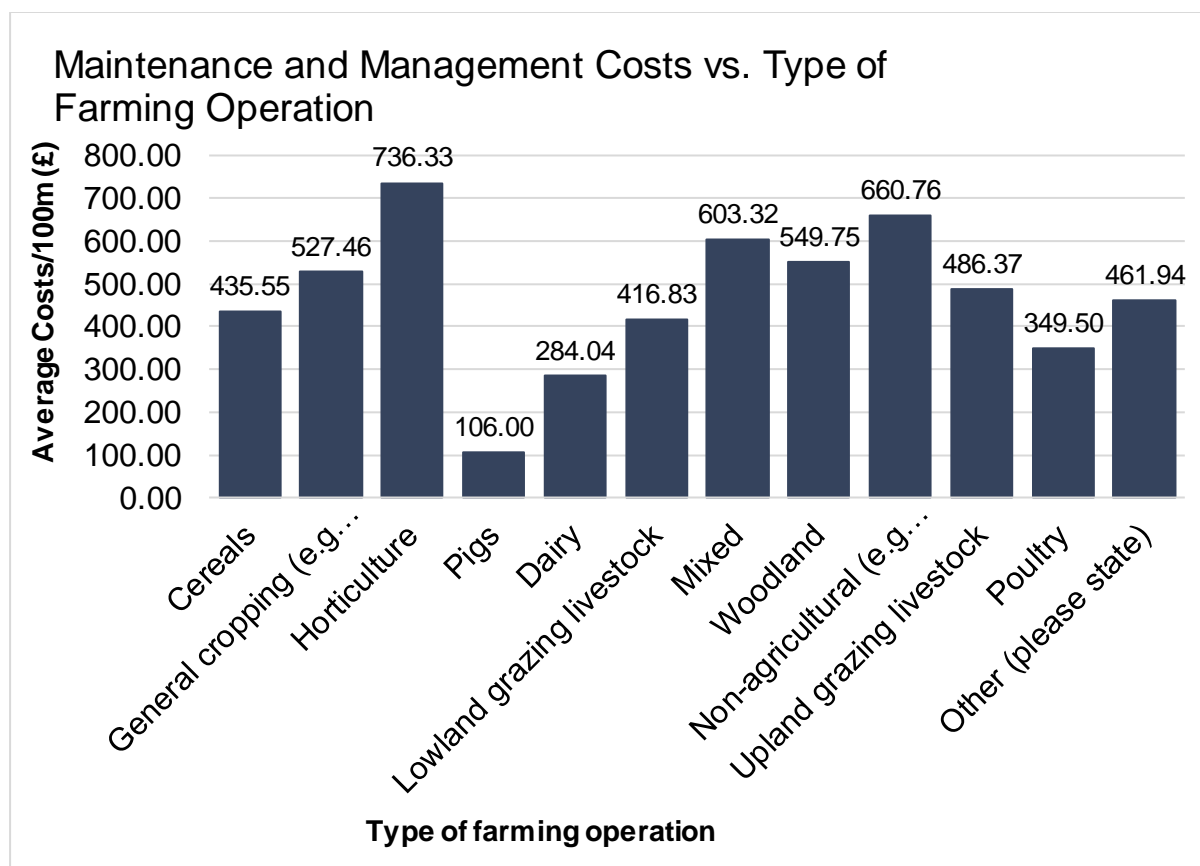


Figure 63 – Maintenance and management costs by type of farming operation

Main Cost Elements of Maintaining Permissive Access Routes

The main cost elements of maintaining permissive access were boundary maintenance, which was selected by 70% of respondents, and cutting (including fuel use), which was selected by 68% of respondents (Figure 64).

In the chart below, each element represents the percentage of respondents who selected that particular option. Respondents were asked to choose multiple options, so the percentages may add up to more than 100% when viewed collectively. It is important to interpret each element individually as a percentage of the total sample, not as a whole.

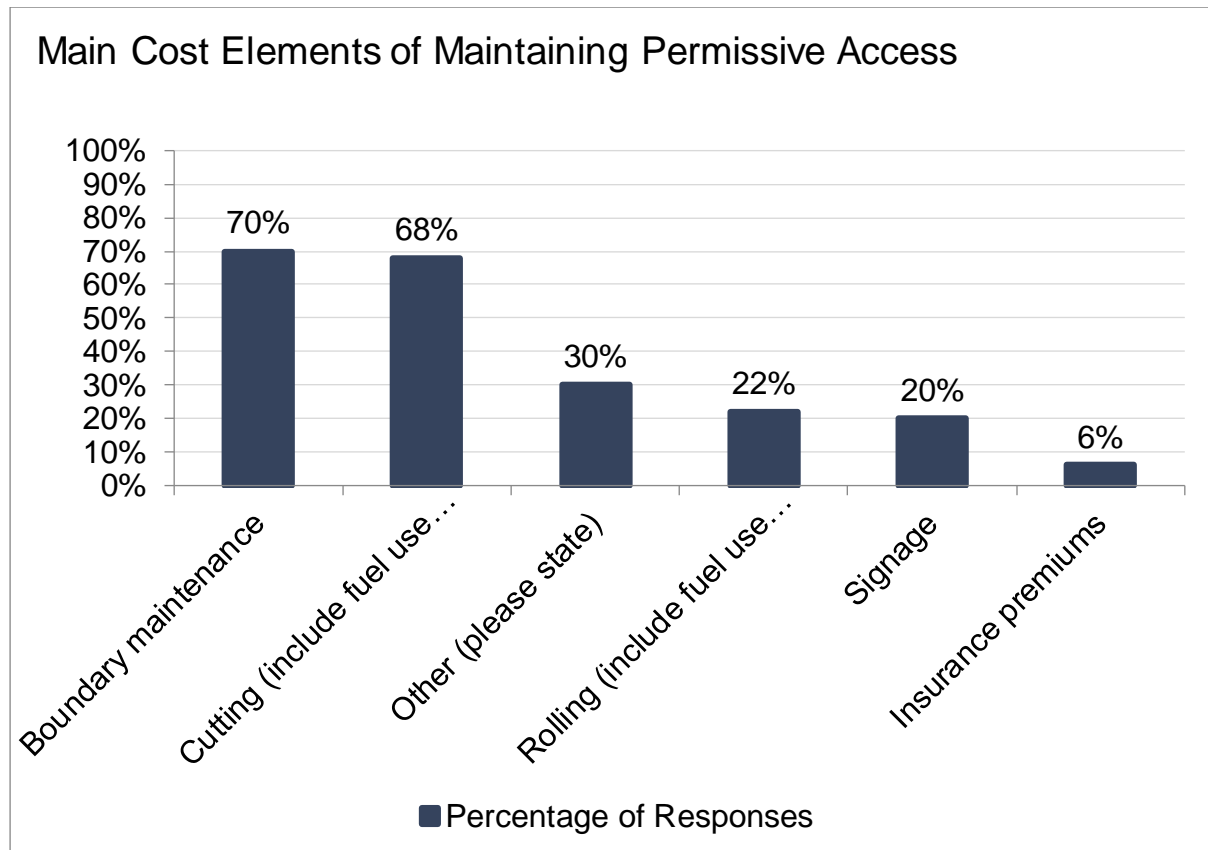


Figure 64 – Main cost elements of maintaining permissive access

Of the 29% who selected 'Other', the installation and replacement of gates were the most commonly mentioned expense, with other fencing, litter picking and removal of dog waste also featuring heavily. A full list of comments can be found in Appendix 6.

Main Cost Elements of Maintaining Permissive Access by Farming Operation

In terms of how the main cost elements differ across different types of farming operation; unsurprisingly, boundaries were found to be the main cost/concern for livestock farmers (28% of respondents, Figure 66), whereas for non-livestock farmers the main cost/concern is cutting (34% of respondents, Figure 65).

However, 31% of non-livestock farmers cited boundaries as being their main cost in maintaining access; therefore, boundary maintenance is still a bigger cost for non-livestock farmers than livestock farmers.

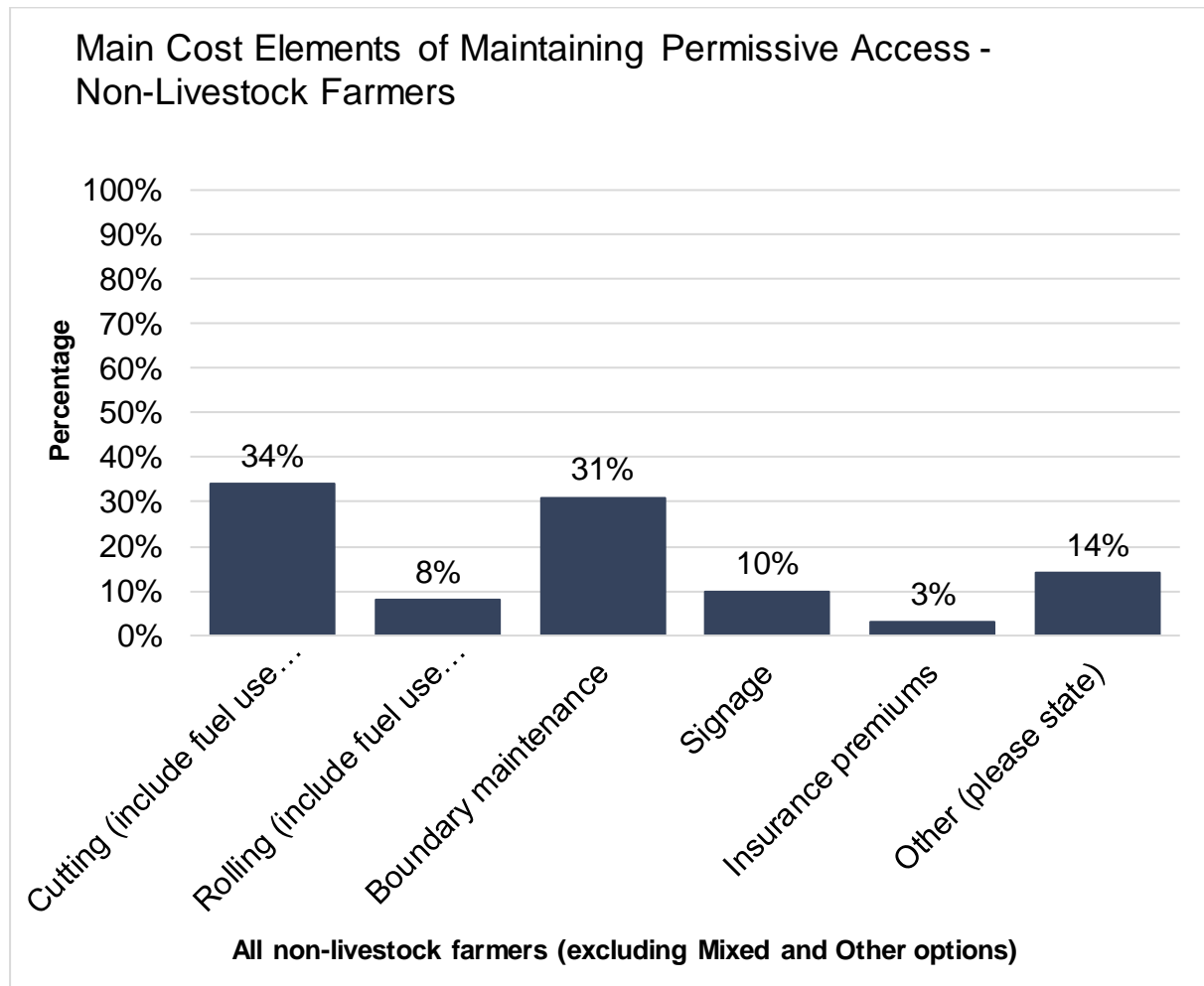


Figure 65 – Main cost elements of maintaining permissive access for non-livestock farmers

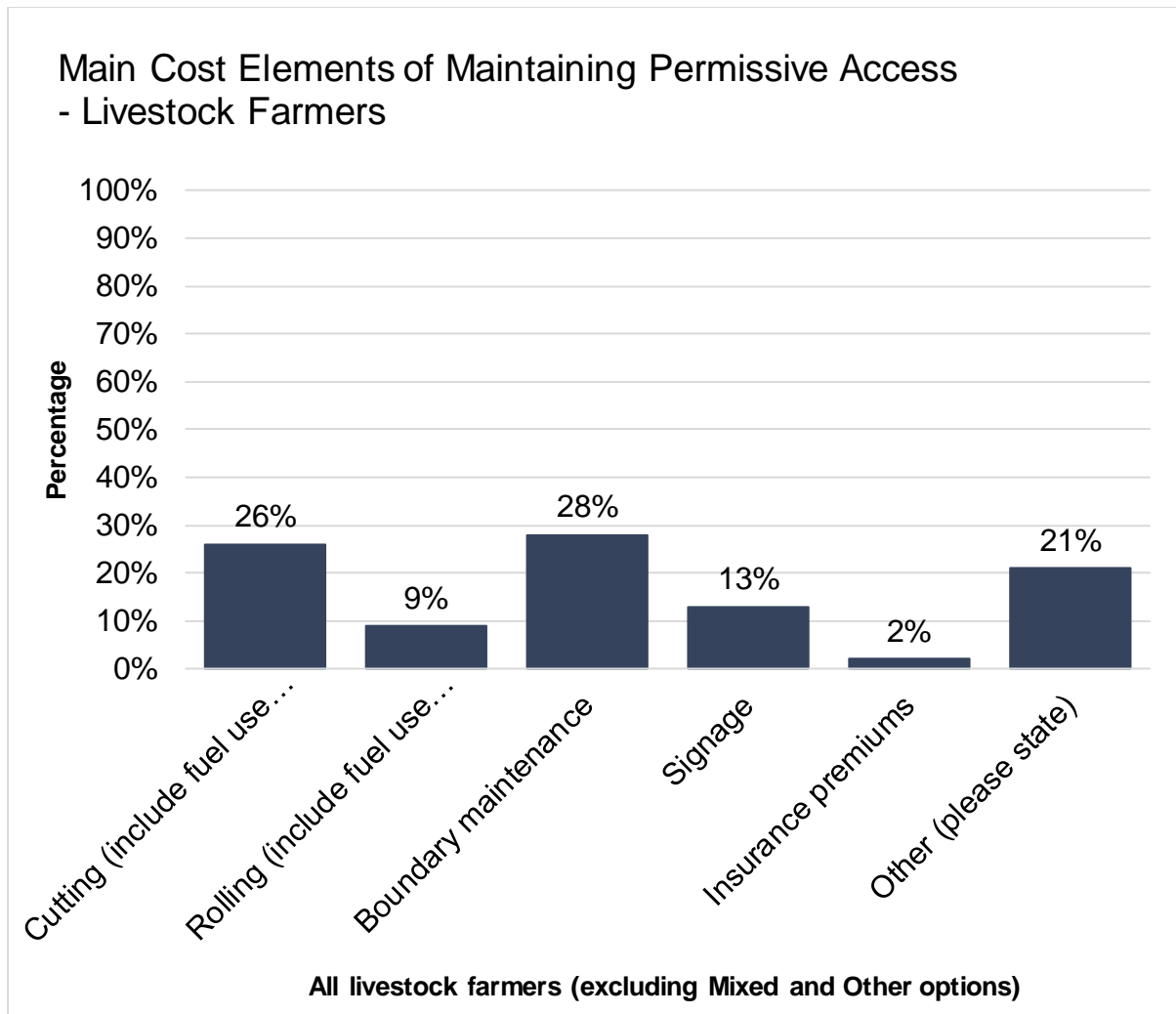


Figure 66 – Main cost elements of maintaining permissive access for livestock farmers

The Future for Permissive Access Routes

Reinstatement of Permissive Access Routes

The 43% of previous agreement holders that responded to this survey and no longer offered the permissive access routes that they had established as part of the scheme were asked what, if anything, might encourage them to reinstate permissive access on their land.

53% stated that, whilst they would consider reinstating the routes, they would only do so on a funded basis.

44% stated that they would not consider offering the routes for any reason, and 3% stated that they would consider reinstating them albeit in a modified format. None of those who had ceased to offer their permissive access routes, either immediately on cessation of the agreement or after a period of voluntary provision, were happy to reinstate the routes in their original format on a non-funded basis.

Please see Figure 67 for a visual breakdown of the results.

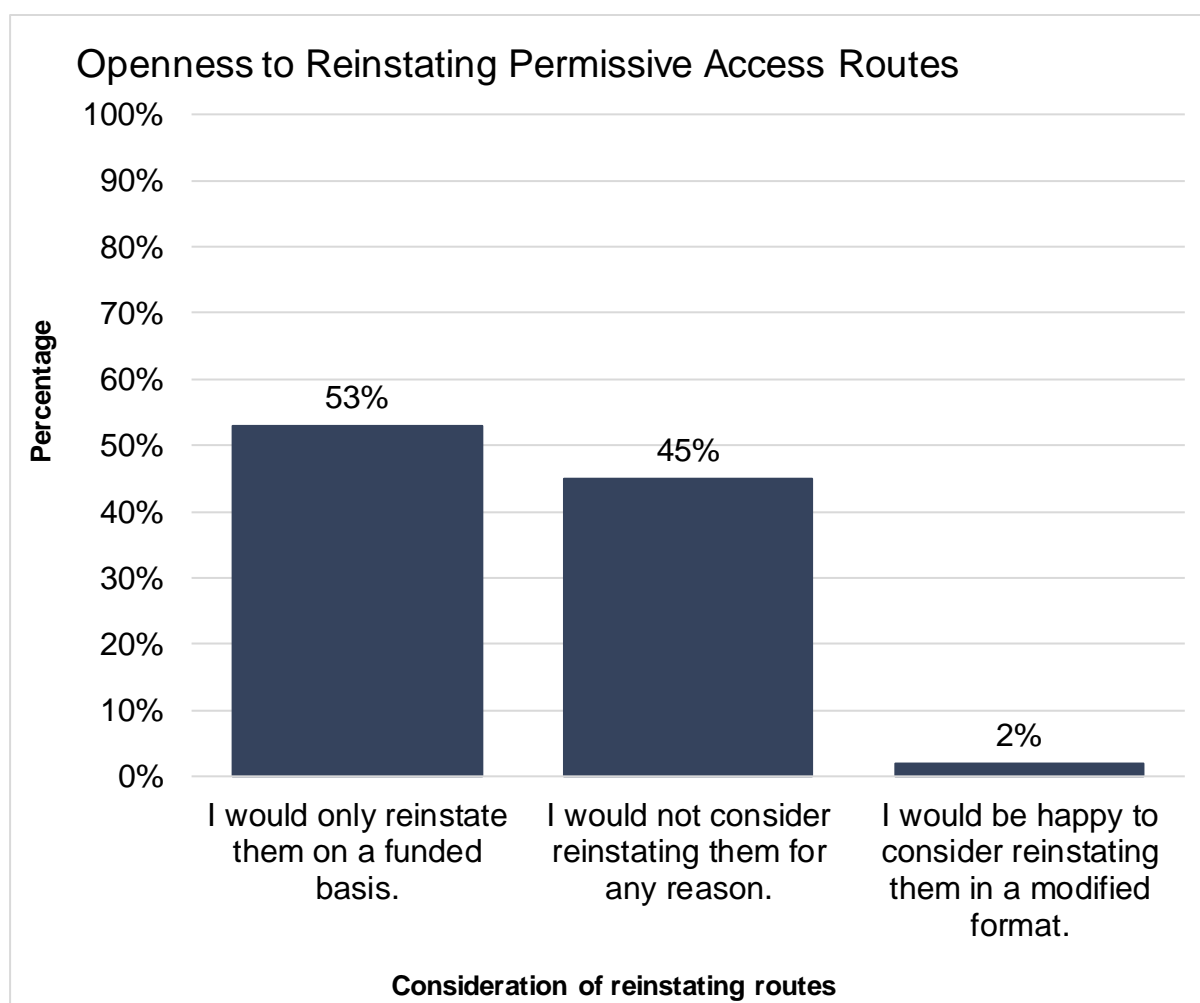


Figure 67 – Respondents' openness to reinstating permissive access routes

Likelihood of Reinstating Routes by Route Type

A higher proportion of those who offered permissive open access (Figure 72) were not willing to consider reinstating this access for any reason, compared to those who offered other types of routes. Whilst this is not a statistically significant finding, as this was a small sample group, it does indicate a potential trend towards more negative opinions around offering future access among those who offered less defined routes across their land.

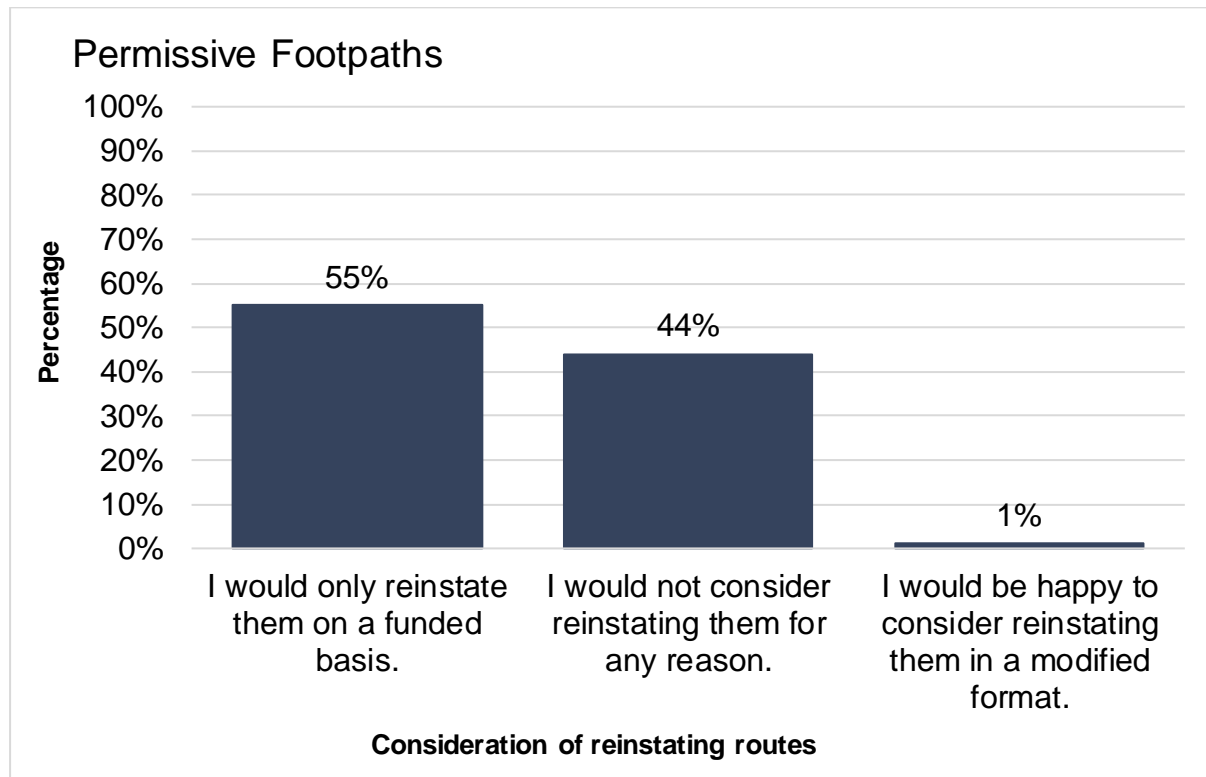


Figure 68 – Likelihood of reinstating Permissive Footpaths

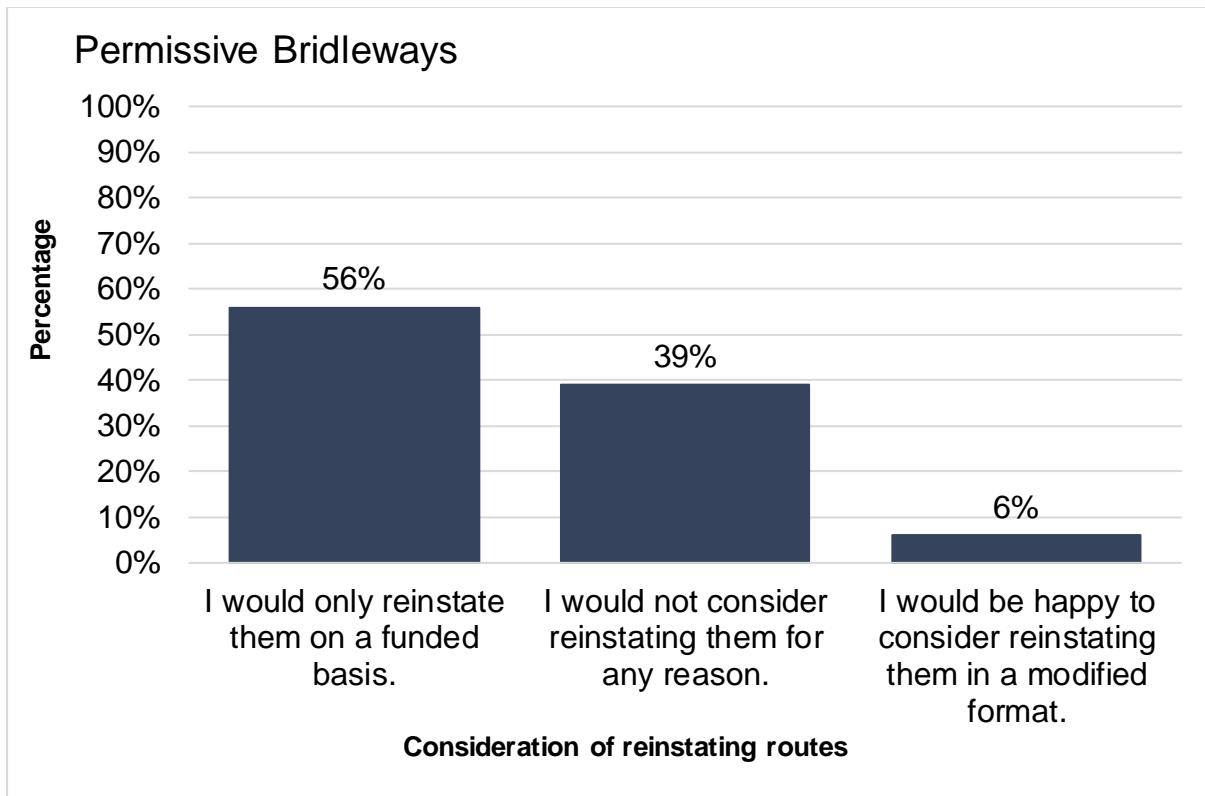


Figure 69 – Likelihood of reinstating Permissive Bridleways

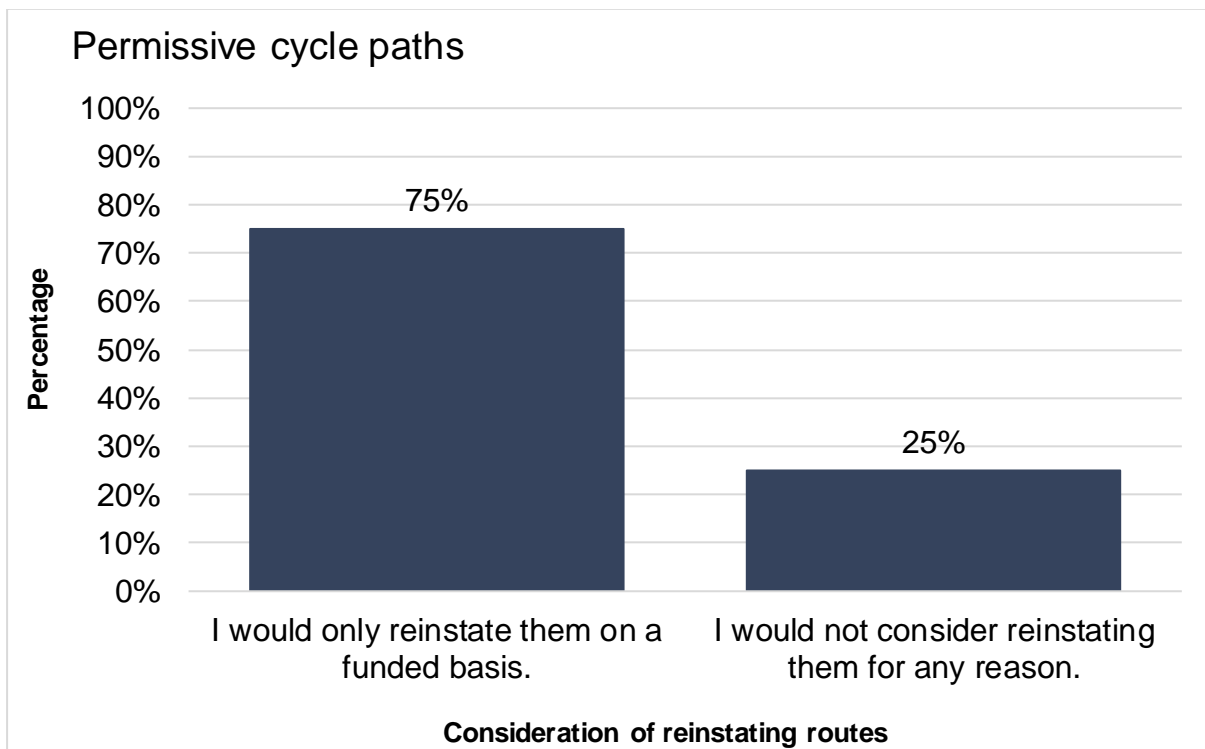


Figure 70 – Likelihood of reinstating Permissive Cycle Paths

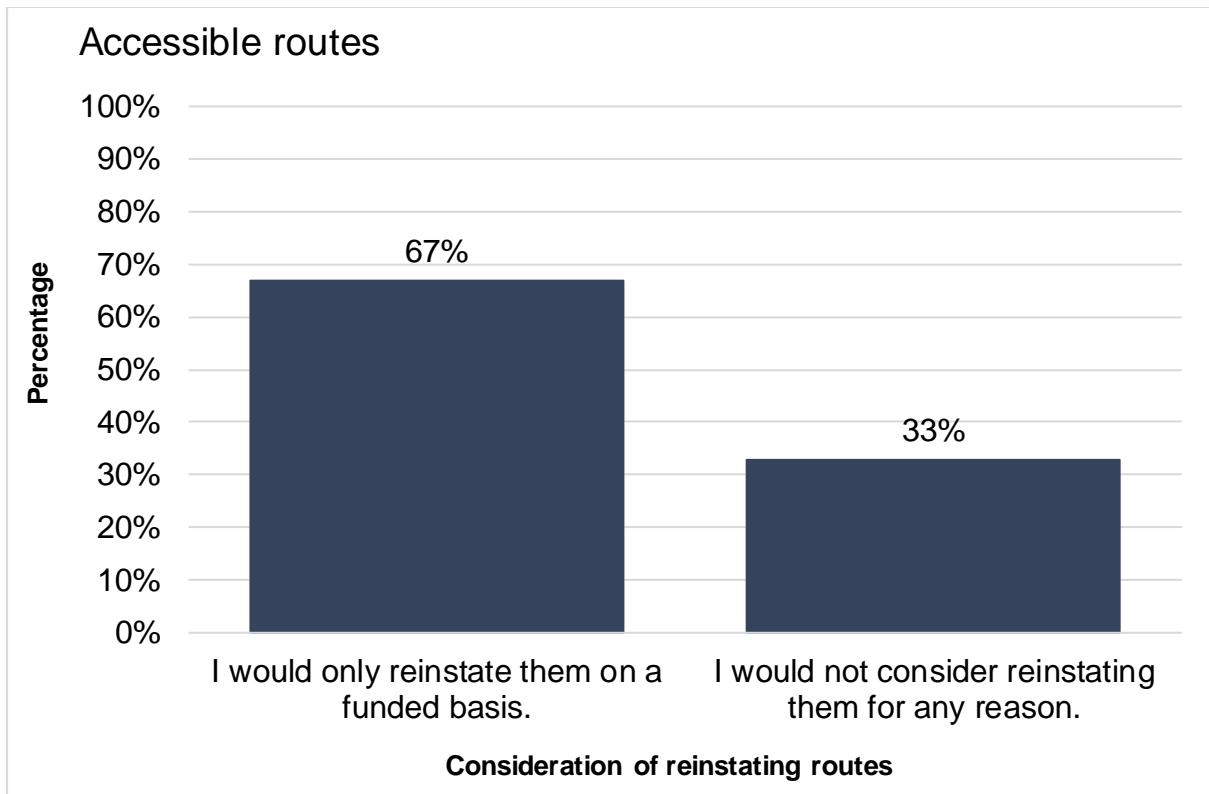


Figure 71 – Likelihood of reinstating Accessible Routes

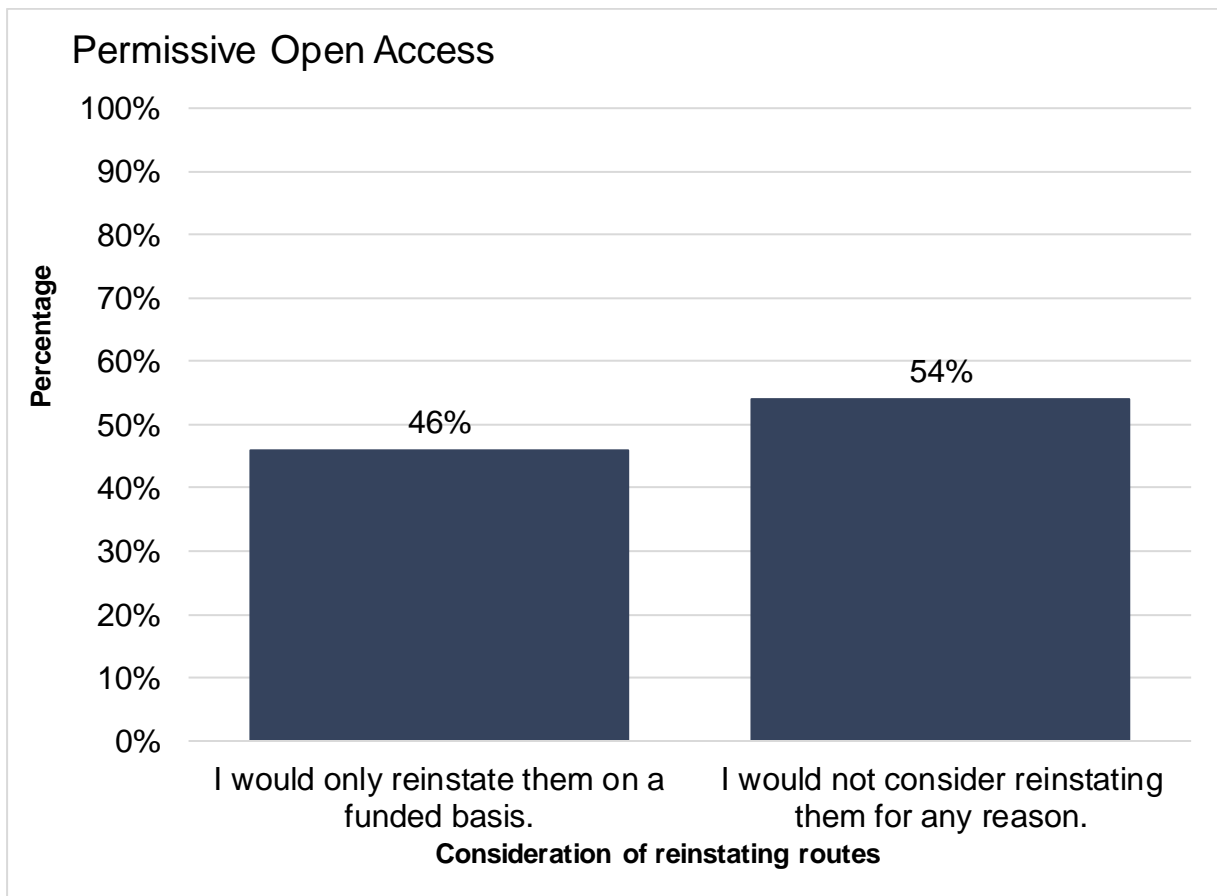


Figure 72 – Likelihood of reinstating Permissive Open Access

Reasons for Not Reinstating Permissive Access for Any Reason

Those who would not consider reinstating permissive access for any reason were subsequently asked for the reasons behind their answer. Difficulties with members of the public, in particular issues with dogs being let off leads and allowed to worry livestock, dog poo being left around and causing health issues for calves, general litter, and entitled and abusive attitudes were the primary causes for respondents not being willing to consider offering permissive access again.

Thematic analysis of the comments revealed the below themes:

Theme 1: Negative experiences with public access to farmland - Farmers and landowners expressed frustration with the lack of respect shown by the public towards the land, livestock, and wildlife. There is a recurring pattern of gates being left open, dogs chasing livestock, and dog poo left on their land. Additionally, there is a concern over the spread of disease to livestock, such as Neospora in cattle causing cows to abort.

Theme 2: Financial implications for farmers and landowners - The cost of maintaining safe access for the public is often not felt to be adequately funded, which is set within a wider picture of changes to funding and subsidies available to farmers and landowners.

Theme 3: Lack of trust in the public - Landowners express a general distrust of the public, with many feeling that they cannot be trusted to stick to designated pathways or respect livestock grazing on the land. There is a sense that the public does not appreciate the importance of protecting the land, livestock, and wildlife.

Theme 4: Challenges of balancing public access and farming - The comments reflect the challenges of balancing public access to farmland with the need to protect livestock, crops, and wildlife. Farmers and landowners feel that they are caught between a rock and a hard place, trying to provide safe access while protecting their assets.

Theme 5: Lack of awareness and education - There is a need for greater education and awareness among the public about the importance of respecting designated paths and livestock grazing areas. Many landowners feel that the public does not understand farming and wildlife, and there is a sense that more needs to be done to educate the public on these issues.

Theme 6: Changes to farming operation – Some farmers and landowners have made changes to their farming operations, including repurposing the land on which their permissive access was previously located for other activities, or selling or renting the land.

From the 44 comments, the frequency of each theme's occurrence is detailed below:

| Theme | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| Negative experiences with public access to farmland | 24 |
| Financial implications for farmers and landowners | 12 |
| Lack of trust in the public | 11 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Challenges of balancing public access and farming | 17 |
| Lack of awareness and education | 11 |
| Changes to farming operation | 9 |

Sentiment analysis:

Overall, the sentiment in the responses is predominantly negative. Respondents often express frustration, disappointment, or irritation with their past experiences with permissive access. This negative sentiment is primarily directed towards the behaviour of the public and the lack of funding or support for maintaining access.

Semantic analysis:

The language used by respondents often emphasizes their negative experiences, using words like "aggravation," "trouble," "problems," and "nightmare." They also frequently highlight specific issues with the public, such as "dog walkers," "horse riders," and "abusive people." The repetition of these terms underscores the significance of these issues for respondents.

In conclusion, the responses indicate that many landowners are unwilling to reinstate permissive access due to past negative experiences, concerns about the impact on livestock and wildlife, and a lack of funding or support for maintenance. These insights could be used to inform future initiatives aimed at addressing these challenges and improving landowners' willingness to provide permissive access.

A full list of respondents' tagged comments can be found in Appendix 5.

Likelihood of Reinstatement by Primary User Groups

Analysis of the likelihood of reinstatement of the routes according to the primary users of them indicated that, despite some of the difficulties with horse riders and dog walkers, previous agreement holders who offered access to these users were generally more likely than those who offered access to other user groups to be willing to consider reinstating the routes, even on a voluntary basis. This may be linked to regular access to their land by these groups being difficult to prevent, meaning a formalised agreement is preferable to informal access.

Whilst only a small number of respondents reported that tourists were the primary user group of the routes they provided, for those who did they were not open to reinstating the routes.

Additionally, noting that those who selected 'Other' reported that vehicles, specifically motorbikes, were using the routes, which was not the intention of the scheme and is liable to cause greater damage, liability concerns, and disruption, it is unsurprising that these landowners are unwilling to reinstate their permissive access.

Please see Figure 73 for a visual breakdown of respondents' likelihood of reinstating permissive access routes compared to the primary users of their routes.

Primary users of permissive access routes vs. Likelihood of reinstating permissive access

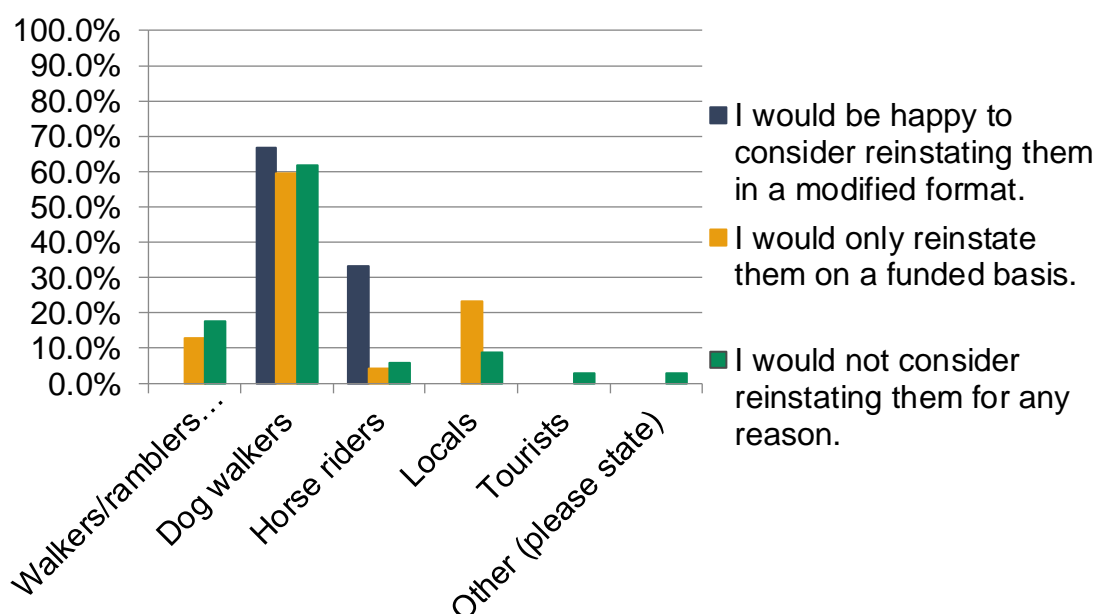


Figure 73 – Likelihood of reinstating permissive access routes compared to primary user type

Reinstatement of Permissive Access by UK Region

Analysis of the appetite for and likely form that any reinstatement of permissive access would take according to the UK region that agreement holders were based in demonstrated a clear disparity between the South East, South West, and the rest of England.

Those in the South East and South West were much more open to the idea of reinstating the routes in a modified format compared to other areas of England, and those in the Midlands were less likely to reinstate the routes for any reason.

Please see Figure 74 for a visual breakdown of the likelihood of reinstating permissive access routes compared to the UK region respondents' farms were located in.

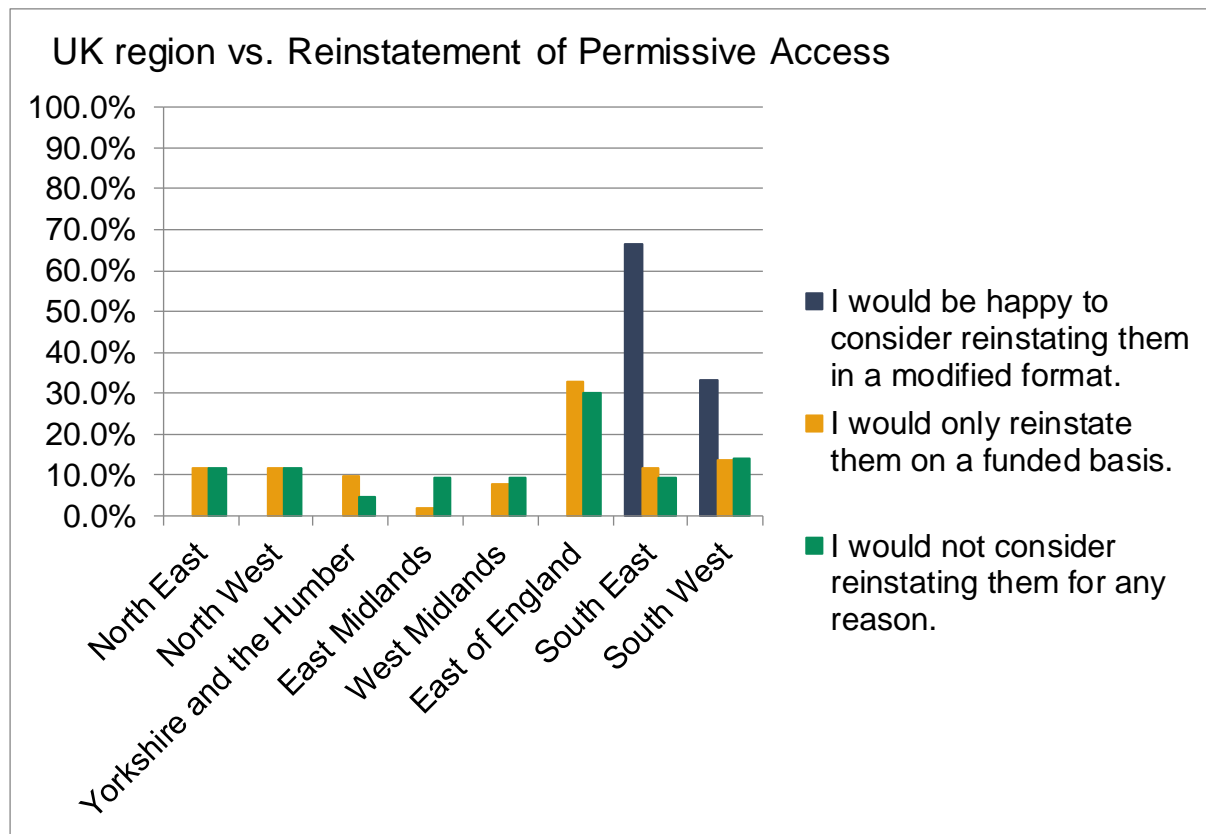


Figure 74 – Likelihood of reinstating permissive access routes by UK region

Reinstatement of Permissive Access by Farm Size

Those with farming operations over 501 hectares in size were significantly less likely to consider reinstating the permissive access routes for any reason.

Please see Figure 75 for a visual breakdown of the likelihood of reinstating permissive access routes compared to the total area that respondents farm.

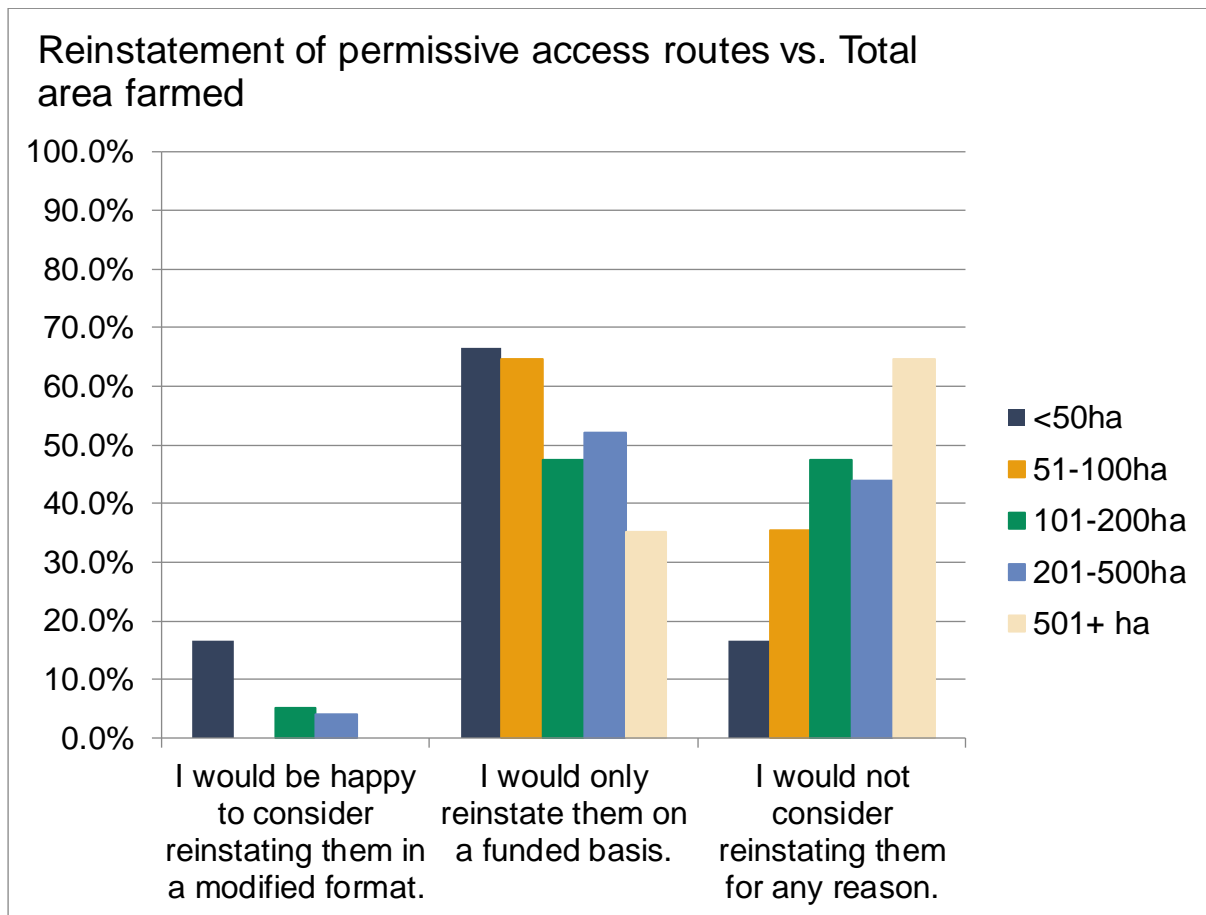


Figure 75 – Likelihood of reinstating permissive access routes by total area farmed

Factors to Encourage Reinstatement of Permissive Access Routes

When respondents were asked to select all the factors that might encourage them to reinstate their permissive access routes, grants and funding schemes and financial assistance with maintenance were the key factors, selected by the vast majority of respondents (92% and 79%, respectively).

Respondents were generally not concerned by opportunities for closer relationships with Local Authorities, with just 14% selecting this option as being something that might encourage them to offer these options again. Please see Figure 76 for a visual breakdown of the factors that might encourage farmers/landowners to reinstate permissive access routes.

In the chart below, each element represents the percentage of respondents who selected that particular option. Respondents were asked to choose multiple options, so the percentages may add up to more than 100% when viewed collectively. It is important to interpret each element individually as a percentage of the total sample, not as a whole.

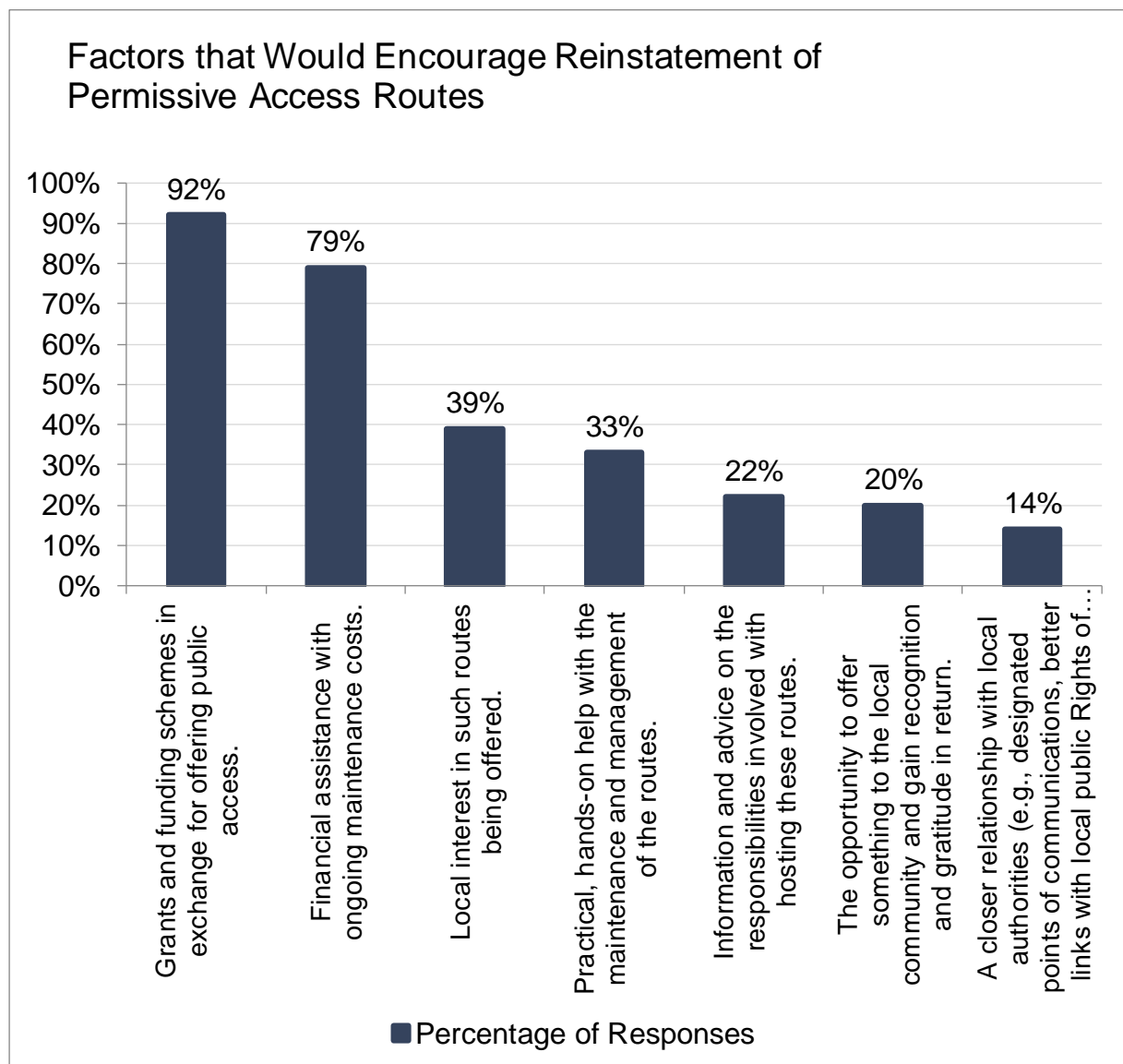


Figure 76 – Factors that would encourage reinstatement of permissive access

Likelihood of Continuing to Offer Permissive Access Over Next 5 Years

Of the 57% of respondents who continue to offer the routes, either as they were when established, with modification, or no longer undertaking maintenance on them, the majority (88%) stated that they were likely to continue offering the routes in their current format (Figure 77).

Please note, N/A was provided as an option for respondents who no longer offered the routes in their original format, or who had no intention of modifying the routes, making these options inapplicable to them.

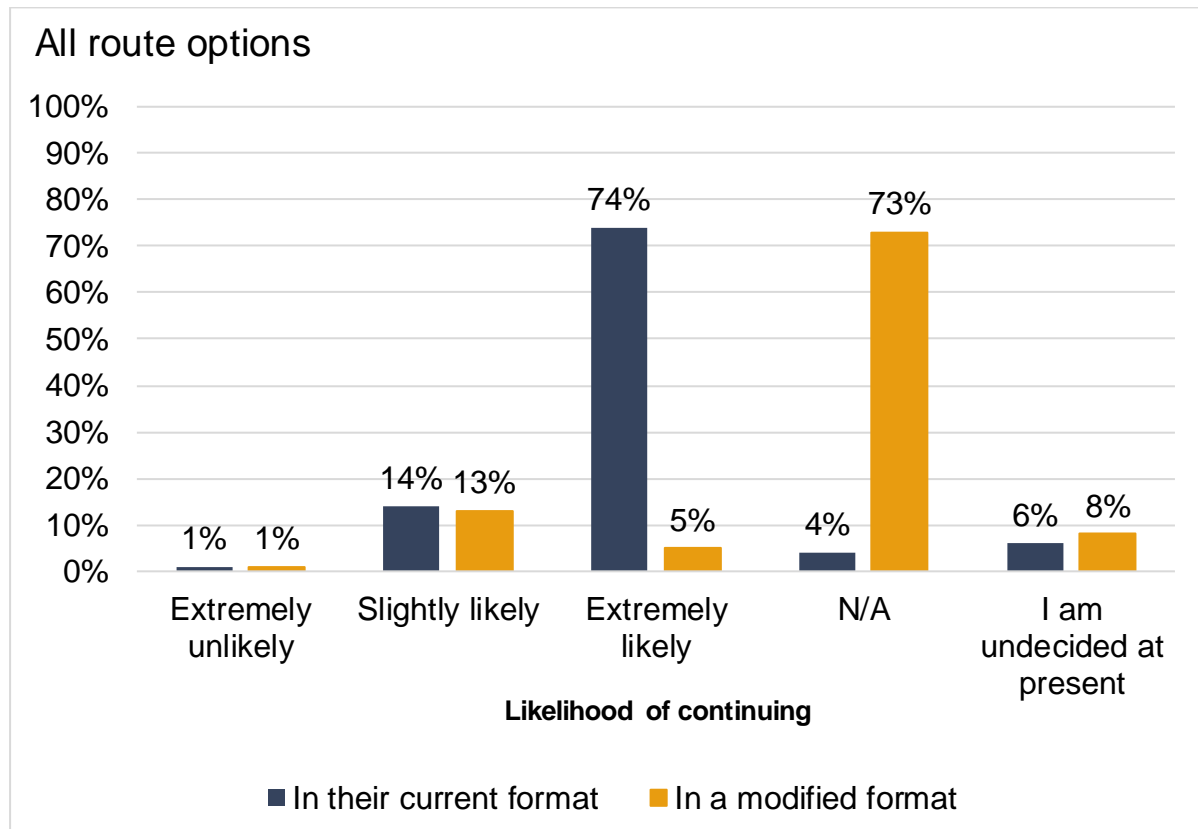


Figure 77 – Likelihood of continuing to offer permissive access in a current or modified format

Just 1% of respondents stated that they were extremely unlikely to continue offering the routes and, when asked to elaborate on their reasons for being unlikely to continue, they once again stated that this was due to issues with members of the public not sticking to routes and having no respect for the environment.

Likelihood of Continuing to Offer Permissive Access by Route Type

Bearing in mind that some respondents had experienced difficulties and poor experiences with dog walkers and horse riders, there had been a query as to whether the type of route(s) that respondents offered were influential in terms of their likelihood of continuing to offer access. However, the analysis found that there were no significant differences between respondents who offered different types of permissive access and their intention to consider offering this provision, meaning that outcomes in terms of the likelihood of continuing did not differ by the type of route provided.

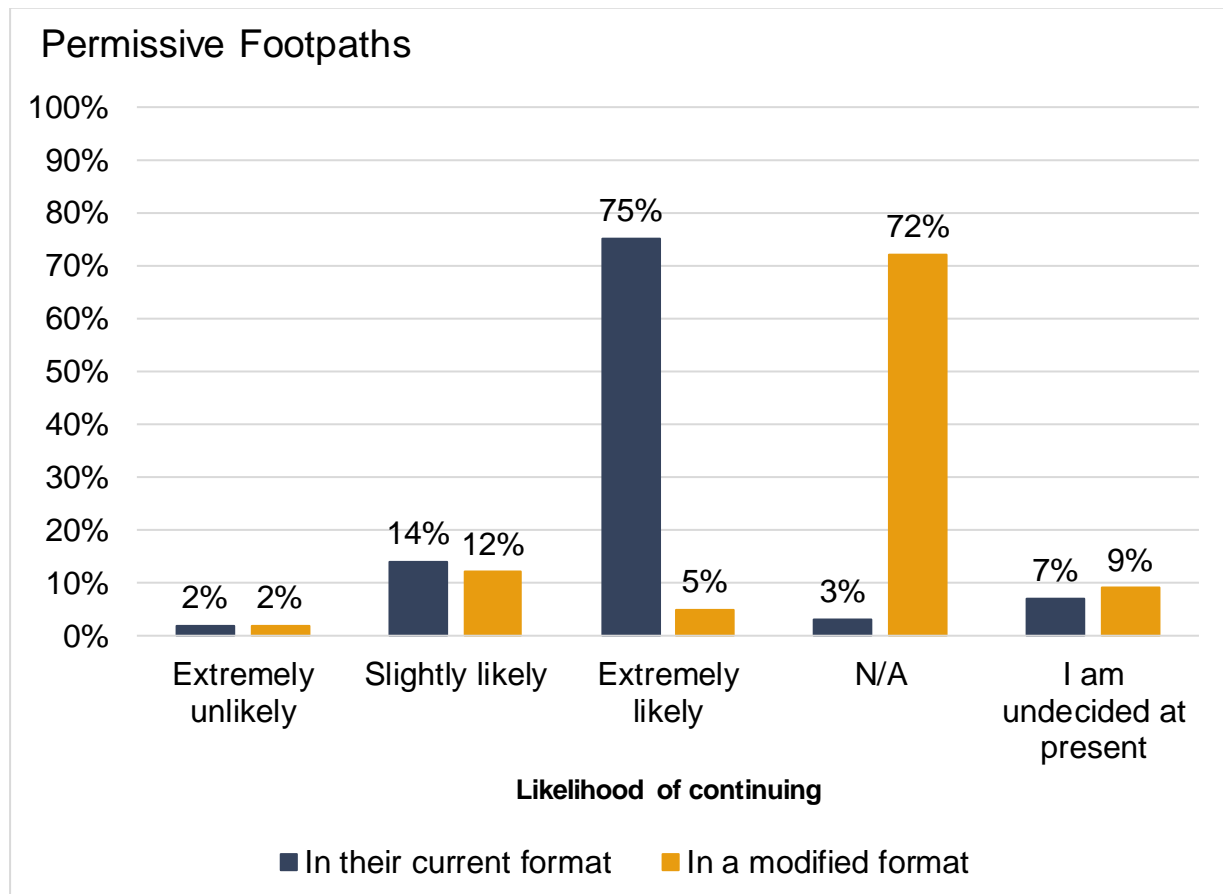


Figure 78 – Likelihood of continuing to offer Permissive Footpaths in a current or modified format

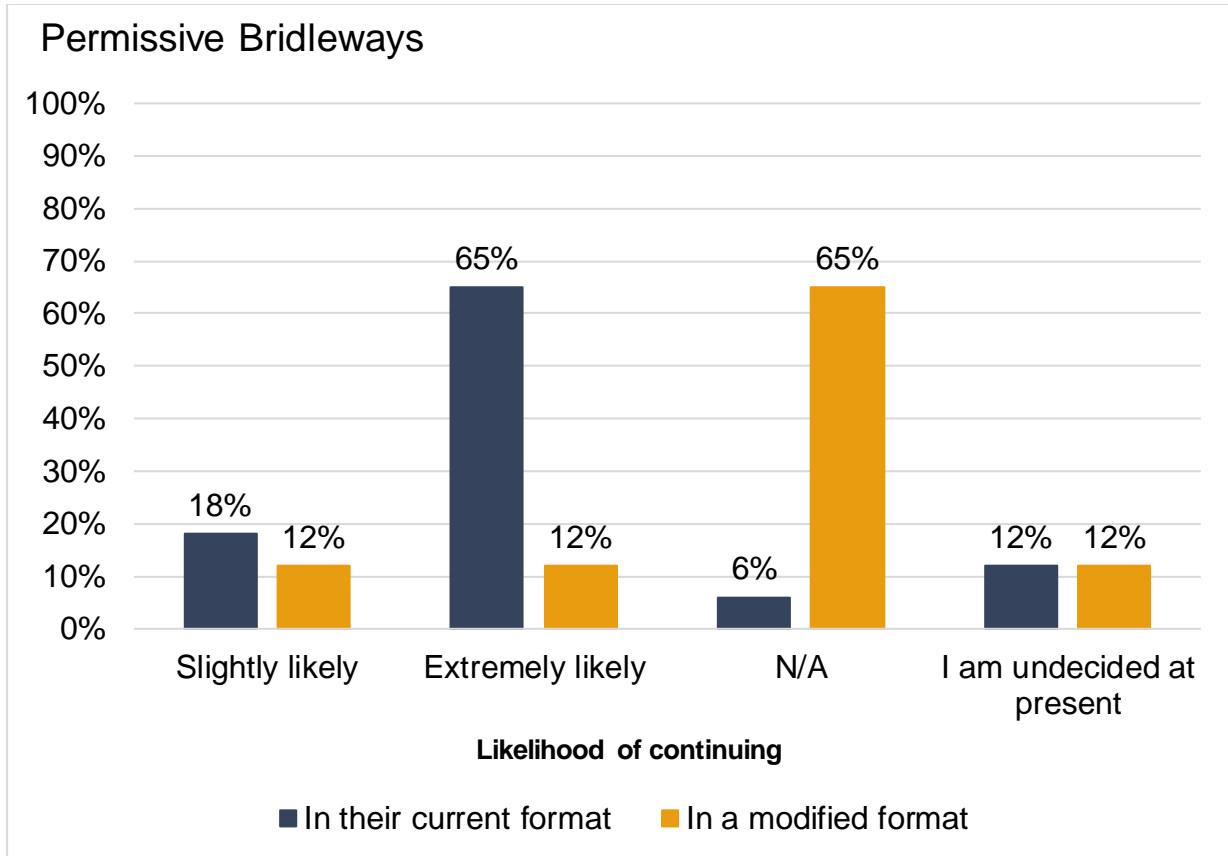


Figure 79 – Likelihood of continuing to offer Permissive Bridleways in a current or modified format

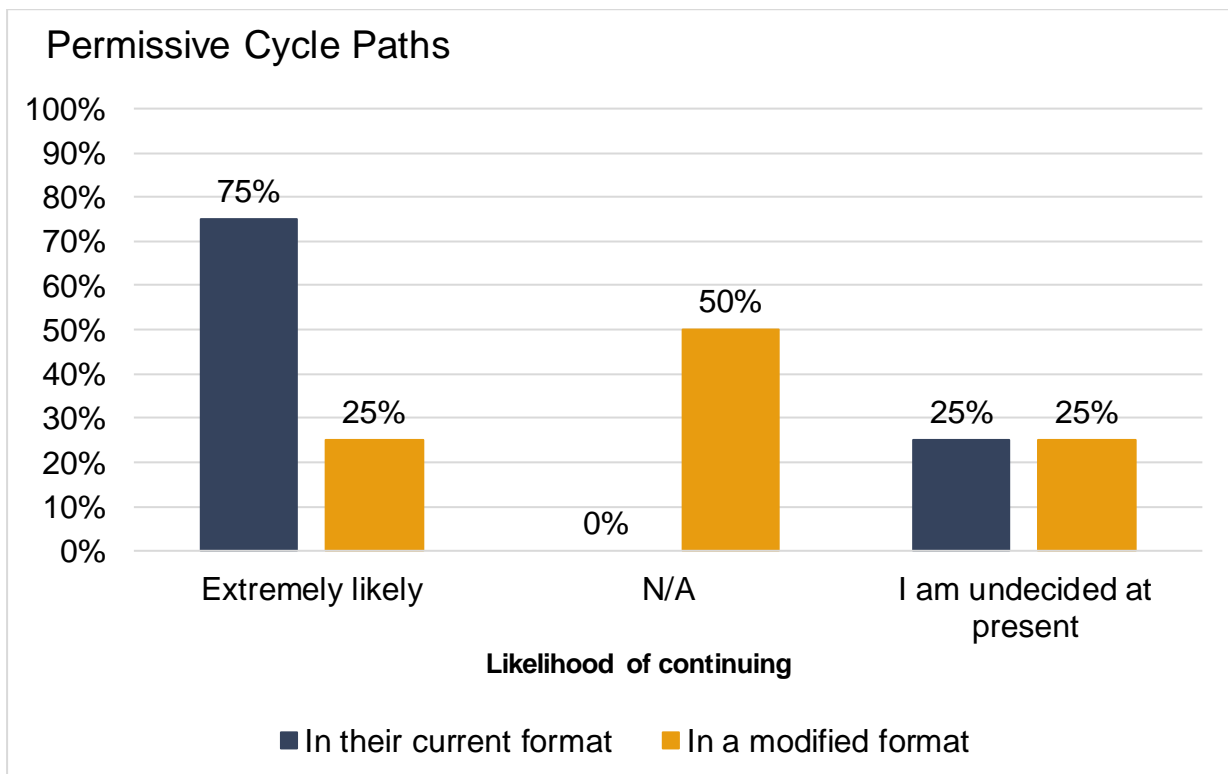


Figure 80 – Likelihood of continuing to offer Permissive Cycle Paths in a current or modified format

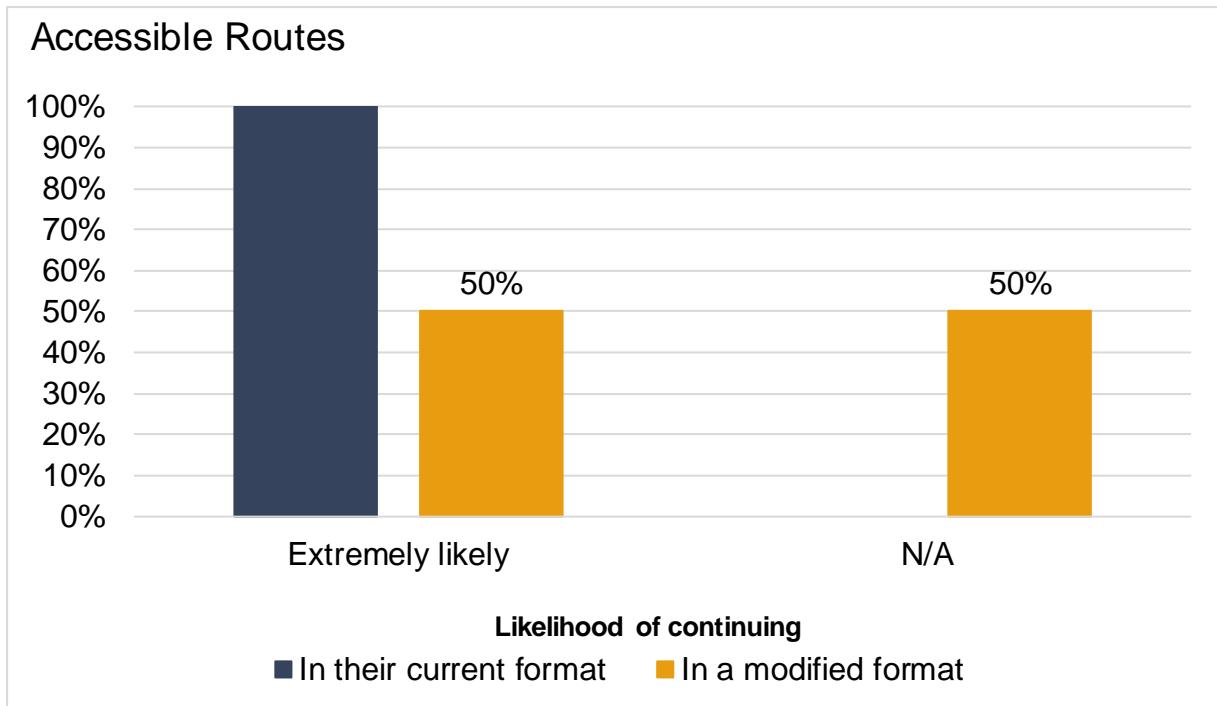


Figure 81 – Likelihood of continuing to offer Accessible Routes in a current or modified format

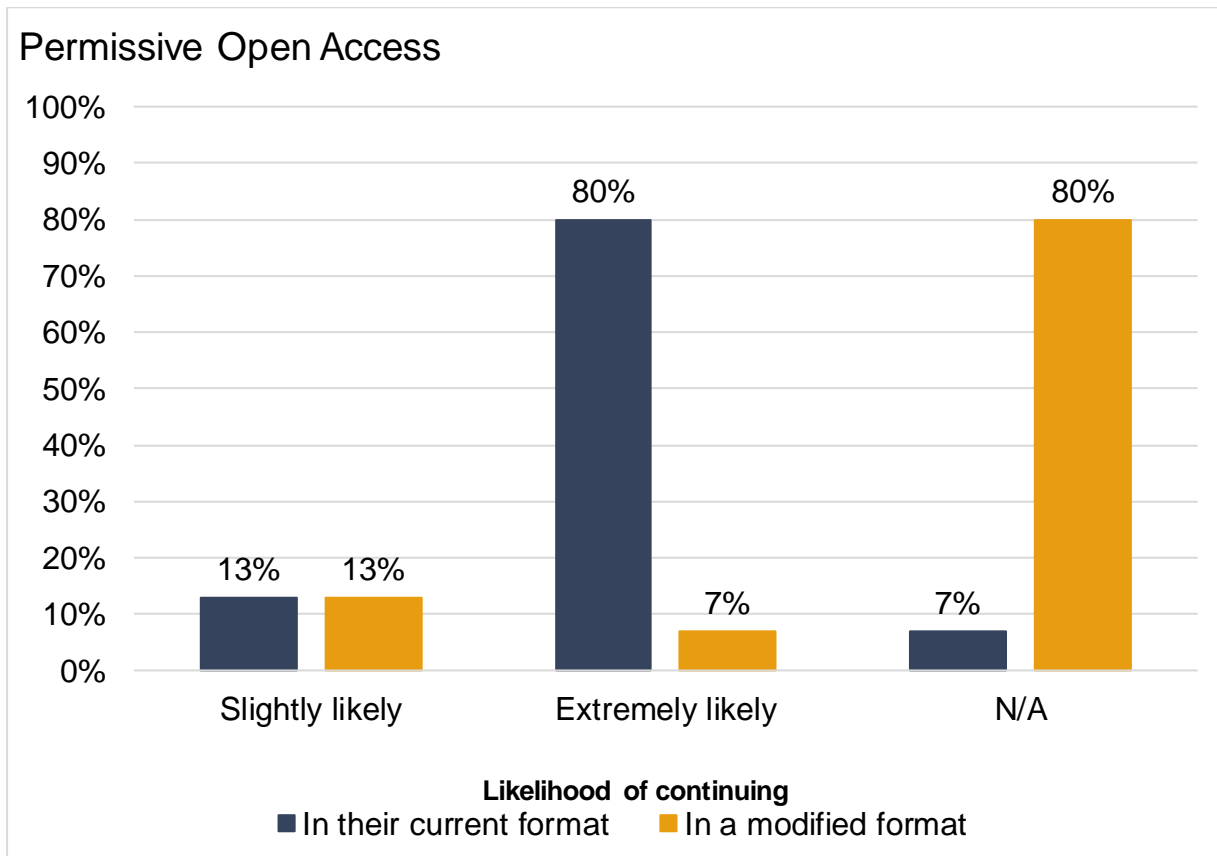


Figure 82 – Likelihood of continuing to offer Permissive Open Access in a current or modified format

Final Thoughts on Permissive Access

To close the survey, respondents were given the option to provide their thoughts on any other aspects of permissive access under the Higher-Level Stewardship scheme within an open text box. Their coded comments are included in Appendix 7, with a list of themes and their frequency indicated below:

| Theme | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| Education | 1 |
| Legal issues | 4 |
| Funding | 8 |
| Education and Awareness for the Public | 10 |
| Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement | 11 |
| Natural England and DEFRA | 12 |
| Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies | 13 |
| Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes | 14 |
| Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife | 14 |
| Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment. | 18 |
| Public behaviour | 21 |
| Permissive access | 21 |
| Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes | 23 |
| Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes | 24 |
| Wildlife Protection and Conservation | 30 |
| Agriculture | 33 |
| Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes | 33 |

Permissive access routes play an essential role in connecting local communities with the countryside and raising awareness and appreciation of wildlife protection, conservation, and agricultural practices. From the survey responses, several themes emerged, including public behaviour, agricultural challenges, funding, and support for permissive access routes. To ensure a respectful and enjoyable experience, there is a need to address these themes.

Public behaviour is a significant concern, as respondents report issues with dog walkers, horse riders, and individuals not following designated paths, leaving gates open, and engaging in illegal activities. Accordingly, there emerges a need for better education and communication measures to promote responsible behaviour and understanding of permissive access rights and responsibilities.

In addition to public behaviour, agricultural challenges are a recurring theme. Respondents stressed the importance of preserving wildlife habitats, the balance between access and wildlife protection, and managing land effectively. Collaboration and communication between farmers and government agencies, such as DEFRA and Natural England, are essential in overcoming these challenges and ensuring that appropriate mechanisms are in place for route management and conservation efforts.

Funding and support for permissive access routes are highlighted as vital in maintaining their continued availability and upkeep. Many respondents express disappointment over the discontinuation of funding for these routes and call for the reinstatement of financial support. Without adequate funding, some landowners will not partake in providing such access or may struggle to maintain the routes safely and responsibly.

Moreover, there is a demand for clearer signage and information regarding permissive access routes to guide the public accurately and minimise disruption to both wildlife and agricultural practices. In combination with better education and awareness campaigns, this would lead to a more informed and responsible public.

Additionally, respondents emphasise the opportunities that permissive access routes provide for public engagement and education on wildlife protection and agriculture. These positive aspects showcase the potential societal value of investing in the continuation and improvement of such routes.

In conclusion, the analysis of the open-text responses reveals an overarching need for addressing issues surrounding public behaviour, funding, legal concerns, education, and collaboration between farmers and government agencies. Permissive access routes function as an essential means for allowing the public to enjoy and understand the countryside and wildlife, but they likewise face numerous challenges that require attention and effort from all parties involved. By working together and prioritising these themes, both the countryside and local communities can benefit and thrive together.

Sentiment Analysis:

The overall sentiment of the survey data is mixed, with both positive and negative experiences shared by respondents. While many participants appreciate the concept of permissive access and its benefits to the community, they also express concerns and frustrations with the public, lack of funding, and impact on wildlife. The desire for funding reinstatement and better communication and education is prevalent throughout the responses (Figure 83).

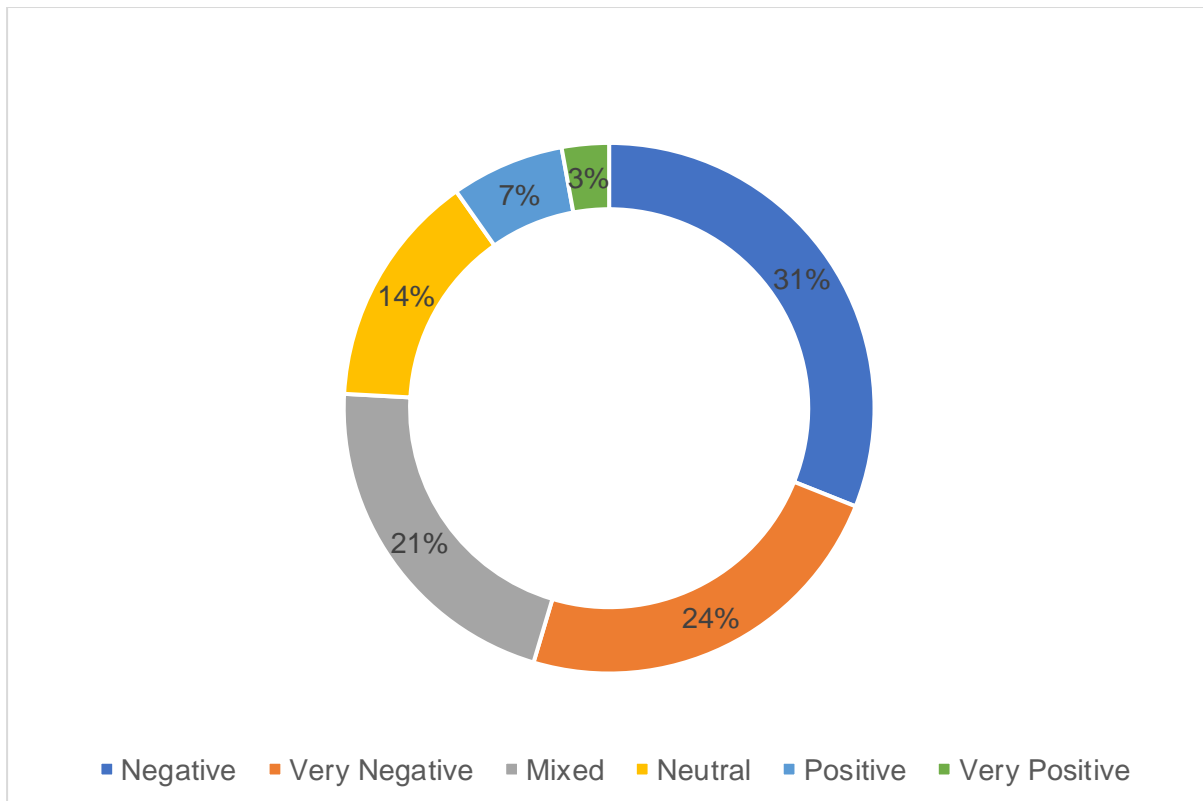


Figure 83 – Sentiment analysis on open text commentary regarding permissive access

Semantic Analysis:

The key terms identified in the survey data include "permissive access," "funding," "public," "wildlife," "dogs," "Natural England," and "footpaths." These terms highlight the main topics of discussion among respondents, illustrating their experiences and concerns with the Higher Level Stewardship scheme and permissive access in general.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study generally focused on the level of assumed knowledge, in the absence of actual data, around the usage of the permissive paths that there is. This included:

- Due to the requirement for anonymity in the responses, the exact postcode of the respondents' holding was not presented with the data, and maps of the permissive access provision were not available for this study. Using the location of the holding and analysing the distance from the nearest settlement would have been able to provide a better indication of the likely level of use by the public.
- In order to be mindful of budgetary constraints and to minimise the potential impact on respondents, the research was not conducted on-site, so none of the permissive paths that were said by respondents to remain open were checked. This means that it is not clear if the public are aware of them, whether they remain signed and waymarked, and how much use they get.

Recommendations for Policy Holders

Appetite for Funding and Financial Incentives

This research identified that there is certainly appetite for the reintroduction of funding in exchange for permissive access provision. However, any financial incentives to encourage farmers to participate must be reflective of and sufficient to cover maintenance costs, fencing, and signage. The 2013 evaluation of permissive access found that: “The majority indicated that the access had not caused them to change land management activities and had not presented any problems” and, additionally, that costs associated with providing permissive access were low. However, the current cost of living crisis and inflation causing price rises for goods and materials is likely to have changed this perception and must be taken into account for any future policy decisions.

Negative Experiences and Funding Considerations

For those who had had negative experiences of permissive access, these tended to involve the behaviour of members of the public who used the routes. Additionally, it is clear from the data gathered that the funding offered to farmers and landowners in exchange for offering permissive access over their land was often not reflective of the true costs incurred by them and that any future funding in exchange for permissive access would need to be mindful of the costs, both in terms of maintenance, signage, and boundary provision, but also of the financial implications to farmers of allowing the public access over their land.

Monitoring and Reporting System

Should any permissive access options be introduced as part of ELMS, ongoing monitoring of the provision and use by the public of permissive paths may be useful to support additional payments that reflect the higher costs incurred on some holdings where there are greater numbers of visitors, or to identify areas where visitor behaviour is particularly challenging. The implementation of a reporting system where farmers and members of the public could report issues such as littering, trespassing, or wildlife disturbances on permissive access routes would enable DEFRA and other relevant authorities to monitor and address problems more effectively. Additionally, providing greater flexibility in terms of the agreements offered would provide recognition that each farm and its surrounding environment is unique, taking into account the specific needs and helping to prevent situations where respondents are required to pay back large sums if their situation changes unavoidably, which would benefit wider relations with farmers and landowners.

Keeping Permissive Access Routes Open

Whilst the original permissive access options were about providing short-term permissive paths, in practice many (57%) have been kept open after the cessation of funding. Making future payments for such access would not represent good value for the bodies administering the schemes, but it would be difficult in practice to exclude such holdings as this would be likely to incentivise the closure of permissive access with the aim of extracting future payments. Therefore, it should be noted that any future permissive access scheme is likely to fund permissive access that is already provided in addition to securing additional public value.

Issues Related to Dogs and Behaviour

Many issues on permissive access paths were related to dogs, their behaviour and the behaviour and expectations of dog owners and the needs and expectations of farmers. This issue needs further investigation, advice and guidance within future schemes if the schemes are to secure better outcomes for people, nature and farming. This work would probably support better outcomes elsewhere too.

Advice and Guidance for Managing Permissive Access

Whilst several respondents did have positive comments to make regarding their encounters with the public, many others indicated that they had encountered aggressive people, and some had been threatened. The provision of advice and guidance about how to manage permissive access and the public would be helpful to land managers to reduce confrontations and conflict and would probably secure better outcomes for nature too.

Public Education for Respecting the Countryside

Leading on from this, a wider programme of public education, such as the development and implementation of campaigns to educate the public about the importance of respecting the countryside, wildlife, and access routes, including proper dog control and adherence to designated paths, would not go amiss as part of any funded permissive access options. This would help avoid inadvertent disruption to the pursuit of other public goods surrounding the provision of wildlife habitats and the promotion of increased biodiversity on agricultural land.

Engagement and Flexibility with Farmers and Landowners

On the subject of public engagement with permissive access, one thing that was striking within this research was the variety of uses that members of the public made of the access, including charity access, educational use, and a willingness to pay annually for access following cessation of the permissive access schemes. Engagement with farmers and landowners to allow them more flexibility with their access decision-making in signing up to any future schemes could go a long way to mitigating concerns around misuse by the public and allow them to provide access that directly correlates with the type of farming operation and its location to improve relevance, greater uptake by the public, and more positive experiences. Additionally, engagement with the general public through a further research study designed to analyse and evaluate their needs and desire for access routes could be warranted to inform future policy decisions and help to ensure that these are relevant and any routes that arise subsequently put in place are utilised.

Centralised Information Hub and Uptake of Routes

Noting that farmers and landowners had commented that some members of the public seemed to feel they had an entitlement to utilise the routes, which could lead to negative experiences and poor behaviour, it may be worth considering the development of a centralised information hub to map permissive access provision so that members of the public can easily access information on permissive access routes and guidelines for appropriate use of such routes. This may also serve to increase the uptake of less well-known routes.

Additional Funding for Common Issues

As part of any future permissive access schemes, the provision of additional funding specifically to address common issues related to permissive access, such as installing dog waste bins or assisting with the erection of temporary fencing during sensitive periods (e.g., nesting season, lambing, or calving) may also lead to better outcomes and more positive feeling about the provision of such access. These could initially be rolled out in areas where farmers and landowners have reported issues to evaluate the effectiveness of these solutions in mitigating these common issues in order to justify implementing them on a wider scale if successful.

Communication and Collaboration

Communication with the bodies delivering and administering the scheme has been identified as an issue for respondents, with many commenting that they did not feel that Defra had engaged with them as providers of permissive paths over the decision to stop payments. Some respondents indicated that they thought that they were required to close permissive paths once payments had ended, though this is not the case. More considered and frequent communications and a wider engagement programme with providers of permissive access around decisions regarding any future schemes may, therefore, result in greater value from the schemes, without incurring any additional expenditure. This could include workshops or training sessions for farmers and landowners to enable them to better understand the various schemes and benefits of permissive access, as well as to support the development of schemes that are beneficial to them and likely to have higher rates of uptake.

On the subject of communication, encouraging strengthened collaboration between Defra and Natural England, scheme holders, local authorities, and other organisations involved in land management and the provision of access, such as National Parks, would help to ensure proper maintenance and enforcement of access routes. This may include sharing responsibilities for signage, litter control, and addressing antisocial behaviour. Encouraging community involvement in the maintenance of permissive access routes, provided farmers and landowners are in agreement with such activity, could reduce the financial burden both on the authority funding any future schemes and the landowner providing them. This may include organising regular clean-up events, creating volunteer groups, or establishing partnerships with schools and community centres for educational purposes.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Permissive Access Survey

ONLINE Defra - Permissive Access Options

Survey Flow

Block: Intro + GDPR (2 Questions)

Standard: Permissive Access Details (18 Questions)

Standard: Experiences of Permissive Access Routes (5 Questions)

Standard: ELMS (4 Questions)

Standard: Demographics (9 Questions)

Page Break

Start of Block: Intro + GDPR**Q1**

Permissive access options were an element of agri-environment schemes until late 2010 when funding was withdrawn and the option discontinued for new agreements. The options continued to run in live agreements until their termination with the last ones expiring in 2020/21.

Noting that some farmers and landowners continued offering the routes on a voluntary basis after their agreements expired, Defra and Natural England now wish to understand the choices that agreement holders made at the end of the payment period.

As a previous agreement holder, please let us know about your experiences of offering permissive access routes on your land, and whether you have continued to do so or not to help shape the policies and schemes that are put in place in the future.

Participation in the survey is voluntary and should take no more than 15 minutes.

Q2 Keeping your data safe

We take data protection very seriously. This survey is conducted in accordance with the Market Research Society Code of Conduct, and information you provided will be treated in accordance with applicable data protection laws.

By proceeding with this survey, you are giving your consent for us to process your data in accordance with our privacy policy. This is to be used solely for the purposes of this research. All responses will be anonymised prior to submission of the results to Defra, and you will not be identifiable by any information included within our report.

Please get in touch with esme@englandmarketing.co.uk if you have any additional accessibility requirements to be able to participate in this survey, or any queries about your participation in this research.

End of Block: Intro + GDPR

Start of Block: Permissive Access Details

Q3 For the first part of the questionnaire, we would like to get an understanding of your experiences of the Higher Level Stewardship Permissive Access scheme and the

current status of these routes on your land.

Q4 In which timeframe did you enter into a Permissive Access scheme? This includes whether you originally offered access as part of a Countryside Stewardship that you subsequently rolled into Higher Level Stewardship.

- 1990-1995 (2)
 - 1996-2000 (3)
 - 2001-2005 (4)
 - 2006-2010 (5)
-

Q5 In what year did your permissive access agreement expire? Please provide an estimation if you are unsure.

▼ 2000 (4) ... 2020 (24)

Q6 Have you been involved in providing any other public access over your land, in addition to Public Rights of Way? E.g., allowing informal access, paid for/charged access.

(Please note, all questions in this survey relate specifically to permissive access routes your established and/or maintained under the Higher Level Stewardship scheme, and do not relate to any other rights of way that you maintain or manage.)

- Yes (please state what) (1)

 - No (2)
-

Q7 The following questions will look at the type of access you provided and to whom. For reference, an outline of the various permissive access agreement options and the

payments levels associated with them can be found below.

Options

| | Option rate £ | |
|---|--|-----------------------|
| HN1 - ASD to Nov 2010 Linear and open access base payment | | HN2 - ASD to Nov |
| 350/agreement | | |
| 2010 Permissive open access | 41/ha | |
| HN3 - ASD to Nov 2010 Permissive footpath access | | HN4 - ASD to Nov 2010 |
| 45/100m | | |
| Permissive bridleway / cycle path access | 90/100m | |
| | HN5 - ASD to Nov 2010 Access for people with reduced | |
| mobility | 100/100m | |
| HN6 - ASD to Nov 2010 Upgrading CROW access for cyclists/horses | | HN7 - ASD to Nov 2010 |
| 90/100m | | |
| Upgrading CROW access - people with reduced mobility | 105/100m | |

Q8 Which option(s) did you offer? (Please select all that apply).

(N.B. Questions relate only to access provided as part of the Stewardship scheme, and NOT any other rights of way on your land).

- Permissive footpaths (1)
- Permissive bridleways (2)
- Permissive cycle paths (3)
- Accessible routes for people with reduced mobility (4)

Q9 Did you continue to offer and maintain permissive access routes after your agreement expired?

(N.B. Questions relate only to access provided as part of the Stewardship scheme, and NOT

any other rights of way on your land).

- Yes, I still offer and maintain all routes. (1)
- I offer the routes but no longer maintain them. (6)
- I still offer them, but with modifications. (4)
- I did continue to offer them for a time, but I have stopped now. (Please indicate the year in which you stopped). (2)

- No (3)

Page Break

Display This Question:

If Did you continue to offer and maintain permissive access routes after your agreement expired?(N.B... = I still offer them, but with modifications.

Q10 Please let us know in what way(s) you have modified the routes. (Please select all that apply).

(N.B. Questions relate only to access provided as part of the Stewardship scheme, and NOT any other rights of way on your land).

- I have closed some parts of the route(s). (1)
 - I have altered the layout of the route(s). (2)
 - I have sold some land with routes but have kept the rest. (3)
 - I now charge some users (i.e., horse riders) to use the route(s). (5)
 - I now use funding from my local Parish Council to maintain the route(s). (6)
 - Other (please state what) (7)
-

Q11 Who uses/used the routes you provide(d)? (Please select all that apply).

(N.B. Questions relate only to access provided as part of the Stewardship scheme, and NOT

any other rights of way on your land).

- Walkers/ramblers (not including dog walkers) (1)
 - Dog walkers (9)
 - Horse riders (4)
 - Horse-drawn carriage drivers (8)
 - Cyclists (5)
 - Bird watchers/Wildlife enthusiasts (10)
 - Locals (14)
 - Those with additional accessibility requirements (i.e. wheelchairs, pushchairs) (3)
 - Tourists (15)
 - Other (please state) (7)
-

Q12 Do you provide/provided car parking for visitors and users of the route(s)?

(N.B. Questions relate only to access provided as part of the Stewardship scheme, and NOT any other rights of way on your land).

- Yes, we have a designated car parking area. (1)
- No (2)

Display This Question:

If If Who uses/used the routes you provide(d)? (Please select all that apply).(N.B. Questions relate only to access provided as part of the Stewardship scheme, and NOT any other rights of way on your land). q://QID38/SelectedChoicesCount Is Greater Than 1

Carry Forward Selected Choices from "Who uses/used the routes you provide(d)? (Please select all that apply).(N.B. Questions relate only to access provided as part of the Stewardship scheme, and NOT any other rights of way on your land)."





Q13 Which of these groups were/are the **primary** users of the permissive access routes you established under the Stewardship scheme?

- Walkers/ramblers (not including dog walkers) (1)
- Dog walkers (2)
- Horse riders (3)
- Horse-drawn carriage drivers (4)
- Cyclists (5)
- Bird watchers/Wildlife enthusiasts (6)
- Locals (7)
- Those with additional accessibility requirements (i.e. wheelchairs, pushchairs) (8)
- Tourists (9)
- Other (please state) (10)
-

Q14 To what extent did you offer access to benefit these groups, or as an extra option to secure your wider agreement? Please rate from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning not at all and 10 meaning extremely.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

| | |
|--|--|
| I offered access to benefit the groups above and the local community. () |  |
| I offered access to gain 'points' for the environmental part of the scheme to secure the wider agreement. () |  |

Display This Question:

If Did you continue to offer and maintain permissive access routes after your agreement expired?(N.B... = I did continue to offer them for a time, but I have stopped now. (Please indicate the year in which you stopped).

Or Did you continue to offer and maintain permissive access routes after your agreement expired?(N.B... = No

Q15 For what reason(s) did you stop offering the permissive access routes you established under the Stewardship scheme?

- Because the agreement expired, and I did not wish to continue after this. (1)
- The financial commitment of maintaining them was too great. (2)
- The time and labour commitment of maintaining them was too great. (3)
- I needed the land for another purpose. (11)
- I no longer wanted to allow public access to my land. (5)
- I no longer see the value in offering permissive access routes on my land. (7)
- I did not consider uptake and use to be high enough to make it worthwhile. (9)
- My insurers/land agent/adviser told me to stop providing permissive access. (10)
- I had a bad experience with offering permissive access routes. (Please let us know more about the experience(s) that put you off). (6)
-
- Other (please state) (8)
-

Display This Question:

If Did you continue to offer and maintain permissive access routes after your agreement expired?(N.B... = I did continue to offer them for a time, but I have stopped now. (Please indicate the year in which you stopped).

Or Did you continue to offer and maintain permissive access routes after your agreement expired?(N.B... = No

Q16 Would you consider reinstating the permissive access routes you established as part of the Stewardship scheme **on a voluntary basis**?

- I would be happy to consider reinstating them in their original format. (1)
- I would be happy to consider reinstating them in a modified format. (4)
- I would only reinstate them on a funded basis. (2)
- I would not consider reinstating them for any reason. (3)

Page Break

Display This Question:

If Would you consider reinstating the permissive access routes you established as part of the Stewar... = I would not consider reinstating them for any reason.

Q17 Where you have said that you would not consider reinstating permissive access for any reason, please could you explain the reasons behind your answer.

Display This Question:

If Did you continue to offer and maintain permissive access routes after your agreement expired?(N.B... = Yes, I still offer and maintain all routes.

Q18 How likely are you to continue offering the permissive access routes you established under the Stewardship scheme on your land over the next 5 years? Please use N/A if you do not intend to modify the route in future.

| | Extremely unlikely (6) | Slightly unlikely (7) | I am undecided at present (13) | Slightly likely (10) | Extremely likely (11) | N/A (12) |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| In their current format (6) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| In a modified format (7) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Page Break

Display This Question:

If How likely are you to continue offering the permissive access routes you established under the St... = Extremely unlikely

Or How likely are you to continue offering the permissive access routes you established under the St... = Slightly unlikely

Q19 Please let us know why you are unlikely to continue offering these routes in the future.



Q20 What would encourage you to offer permissive access routes on your land again/continue to offer permissive access routes on your land? (Please select all that apply).

- Grants and funding schemes in exchange for offering public access. (1)
- Local interest in such routes being offered. (2)
- The opportunity to offer something to the local community and gain recognition and gratitude in return. (4)
- Financial assistance with ongoing maintenance costs. (5)
- Practical, hands-on help with the maintenance and management of the routes. (6)
- Information and advice on the responsibilities involved with hosting these routes. (7)
- A closer relationship with local authorities (e.g., designated points of communications, better links with local public Rights of Way) (8)

End of Block: Permissive Access Details





Start of Block: Experiences of Permissive Access Routes

Q21 Thinking about your experiences of offering permissive access on your land under the Higher Level Stewardship scheme, to what extent do you agree with the following

statements? Please rate from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning you completely disagree, and 10 meaning you completely agree.

I am unsure/I was not involved at the start.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>In general, members of the public were respectful of my land and utilised the routes sensibly and appropriately. ()</p> |  |
| <p>The funding offered was adequate and compensated me appropriately for my time and commitment. ()</p> |  |
| <p>I consider(ed) offering permissive access routes on my land to be worthwhile and was/am pleased to do so. ()</p> |  |
| <p>I view offering permissive access routes as a valuable opportunity for the public to engage with nature and/or understand more about farming. ()</p> |  |

Page Break

Q22 How frequently did you/do you need to carry out maintenance and management work on the routes you offer(ed)?

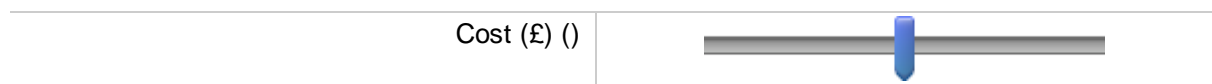
(N.B. Questions relate only to access provided as part of the Stewardship scheme, and NOT any other rights of way on your land).

- Daily (1)
- Weekly (2)
- Monthly (3)
- Every few months (4)
- Annually (5)
- As and when needed (6)

Q23 Approximately how much does/did the maintenance of these routes cost you on an annual basis per 100 metres? Please include your time and labour in your estimation.

I am unsure.

0 300 600 900 1200 1500 1800 2100 2400 2700 3000



Page Break

Q24 What are the main cost elements of maintaining permissive access as part of your stewardship scheme on your land? (Please select all that apply).





- Cutting (include fuel use associated with this) (1)
 - Rolling (include fuel use associated with this) (4)
 - Boundary maintenance (5)
 - Signage (6)
 - Insurance premiums (7)
 - Other (please state) (8)
-

Page Break

Q25 How would you rate the following aspects of the permissive access options under the Higher Level Stewardship scheme? Please rate from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning it was extremely poor and 10 meaning it was excellent.

I am unsure/I was not involved in the whole process.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

| | |
|---|--|
| The administrative burden of achieving and maintaining the funding, i.e., the application process and subsequent agreement management. () |  |
| Communication with the Authority managing the agreement. () |  |
| The financial compensation for offering permissive access. () |  |
| The support offered with maintaining and managing the routes. () |  |

End of Block: Experiences of Permissive Access Routes

Start of Block: ELMS

Q26 There has been much discussion about "public goods" in the context of land management, referring to biodiversity, the maintenance and provision of clean water and air, and soil health regeneration, but also public access and public education.

We'd now like to ask you some questions about "public goods" in the context of your land.



Q27 What do you consider your land to produce or be directly contributing to?

(Please select the top 3 for you and your land).

- Food Security (1)
 - Climate change mitigation (2)
 - Nature recovery (3)
 - Improved soil health (4)
 - Clean water and air (5)
 - Public access and education (6)
 - Public health (7)
 - Rural employment/economy (11)
 - Other (please state) (8)
-
- None of these (10)

Page Break

Display This Question:

If What do you consider your land to produce or be directly contributing to? (Please select the top... != None of these

Q28 Please rank the below aspects in terms of importance, with 1 being the most important, for you and your land.

You can rank by clicking or touching the text and dragging and dropping them into place.

- _____ Food Production (1)
- _____ Climate change mitigation (2)
- _____ Soil health regeneration (3)
- _____ Clean water and air (4)
- _____ Public access (5)
- _____ Public health (6)
- _____ Making a good living (7)

Q29 Do you have anything that you would like to add about Permissive Access under the Higher Level Stewardship scheme? (This is an optional question).

End of Block: ELMS

Start of Block: Demographics

Q30 Finally, we'd like to ask you some questions about yourself and your land. This helps us to understand more about the demographics of those who undertook the scheme and the make-up of the farmer and landowner community within the UK.

Q31 In what part of the UK are you based?

- North East (1)
- North West (2)
- Yorkshire and the Humber (3)
- East Midlands (4)
- West Midlands (5)
- East of England (6)
- London (7)
- South East (8)
- South West (9)
- Other (please note this research only covers England) (18)

Skip To: End of Survey If In what part of the UK are you based? = Other (please note this research only covers England)

Q32 What is the total area that you farm?

- < 50ha (1)
 - 51-100ha (2)
 - 101-200ha (4)
 - 201-500ha (5)
 - 501+ ha (6)
-

Q33 How long have you been farming?

- <5 years (1)
 - 5-10 years (2)
 - 10-20 years (3)
 - 20-30 years (4)
 - 30 years + (5)
-

Q34 What type of farming operation do you have?

(Please select all that apply).

- Cereals (1)
 - General cropping (e.g sugar beet/potatoes/etc) (2)
 - Horticulture (3)
 - Pigs (4)
 - Poultry (12)
 - Dairy (5)
 - Lowland grazing livestock (6)
 - Upland grazing livestock (10)
 - Mixed (7)
 - Woodland (8)
 - Other (please state) (13) _____
-
- Non-agricultural (e.g diversification enterprises, such as eco-tourism - please state which) (9) _____

Page Break

Q35 What is your farm tenure?

(Please select all that apply).

- Owned (1)
 - Rented (2)
 - Share farming/contract farming/joint venture (3)
-

Q36 Thinking about your future in farming (over the next 5-10 years), which of the following statements best apply to you?

(Please tick all that apply)

- I plan to expand the business (1)
- I plan to consolidate the business (2)
- I plan to diversify the business (3)
- I plan to stay in farming and increase productivity (5)
- I plan to stay in farming but change the core agricultural enterprises (e.g change crops and/or livestock) (6)
- I plan to pass over to a successor (8)
- I plan to retire from farming (9)
- I plan to sell up (13)
- I plan to sell the farm for development (14)
- I plan to leave farming (for a reason other than retirement) (10)

Page Break

Q37 Do you have a succession plan in place?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Working on it (3)
-

Q38 Are you currently engaged in any government support schemes? (E.g., agri-environment)

- Yes (please state which) (1)
- _____
- No (2)

End of Block: Demographics

Appendix 2: Farming Operation – ‘Other’ (unedited comments)

| |
|--------------------------------|
| ED1 |
| Equestrian |
| stewardship |
| Sugar Beet |
| Park Land |
| Grassland |
| Grassland |
| Grassland |
| Grassland |
| Wildflower meadows Fruit Trees |
| Christmas trees |
| Grassland |
| Rewilding/nature reserve |

| |
|--------------------------------|
| Woodland |
| grassland |
| allotments |
| wild seed / rare breed horses. |
| Grassland |
| Grassland |
| Grassland |
| Grassland |
| Grassland |
| Grassland/meadows |
| Grassland |
| fruit |
| Grassland |
| Grassland |
| Grassland |
| Grassland |
| Open Meadows |
| Grassland |
| pure grass land |
| Rewilding |
| Orchard |
| Grassland |
| Grassland |

Appendix 2: Farming Operation – ‘Non-agricultural’ (unedited comments)

| |
|--|
| Equestrian enterprise Wind turbine |
| livery yard |
| LIVERY YARD, OFFICES, WORKSHOPS, WEDDING/EVENT BARNs, WILD FLOWER SAFARIS, SOLAR PV, BIOMASS |
| Nature recovery (BNG etc) |
| Solar |
| Caravan site |

| |
|--|
| Weddings, meeting venue |
| Camping, glamping, fishing, cafe, deli, smokery, yoga retreat etc |
| Camping in a very small way The 28days are not helpful |
| holiday lets within an eco-friendly system |
| Holiday lets Cricket training |
| Holiday lets. Office lets. Horse rehabilitation small meeting room. Conferences yoga Pilates etc |
| Horse livery |
| DIY Livery |
| Holiday cottages |
| Couple of Farm Shops |
| Holiday cottages |
| mines |
| Equestrian Yard |
| Tourists |

Appendix 3: Current Involvement with Agri-Environment Schemes (unedited comments)

| |
|--|
| In HLS extension |
| Mid-tier |
| Countryside stewardship Higher rate & Mid Tier |
| Mid tier and farmland wildlife package |
| MID TIER |
| CS Higher Tier Nature Recovery Project (NRP) |
| CSS |
| Countryside Stewardship |
| Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier |
| OEHLS |
| HLS |
| mid - tier |
| SFI pilot |
| Mid tier |

| |
|---|
| new CS AGREEMENT just signed. Interested in Local Nature recovery |
| Countryside stewardship |
| Mid tier |
| Mid Tier and SFI |
| HLS/ELS |
| HLS |
| ElsHls extension |
| Mid tier |
| Hls extended for five years |
| Mid-Tier |
| HLS |
| Mid Tier |
| HLS |
| HLS |
| HLS |
| Mid Tier |
| HLS (ongoing) |
| Mid Tier |
| Mid Tier |
| Mid Tier |
| HLS |
| Mid Tier |
| Countryside Stewardship - Mid Tier |
| Countryside stewardship |
| HLS |
| HLS |
| Countryside Stewardship |
| Mid Tier |
| Mid Tier |
| HLS |
| HLS |

| |
|-----------------------------|
| HLS |
| SFI |
| HLS |
| HLS and Mid Tier |
| Mid Tier |
| HLS |
| CS |
| Mid-Tier |
| Higher level |
| mid - tier |
| mid - tier |
| HLS |
| CS |
| HLS |
| CS |
| Sustainable Farming |
| CS |
| Mid Tier |
| CS |
| CS |
| CS |
| Mid Tier |
| Mid Tier |
| HLS |
| Mid Tier |
| Mid Tier |
| Countryside Stewardship HLS |
| HLS |
| ELS and HLS |
| Countryside Stewardship |
| HLS |

| |
|-------------------------------|
| Mid Tier |
| HLS |
| Countryside Stewardship (ELS) |
| HLS |
| SFI |
| CS |
| ELS |
| HLS (roll over) |
| CS & SSI |
| CS |
| CS |
| CS |
| ELS - roll over |
| CS |
| High Tier |
| CS |
| CS |
| CS |
| CS Higher Tier |
| CS and mid-tier |
| CS |
| HLS |
| mid tier |
| Countryside Stewardship |
| HLS |
| HLS |
| HLS |
| HLS |
| Mid Tier |
| HLS |
| CS |

| |
|-------------------------|
| Mid Tier |
| Mid Tier |
| Mid Tier |
| HLS |
| HLS |
| HLS |
| HLS |
| CS |
| Countryside stewardship |
| Countryside Stewardship |
| HLS |
| ELS |
| HLS |
| Mid Tier |
| HLS/Mid Tier |
| ELS/HLS |
| Countryside Stewardship |
| Mid Tier |
| Higher Tier |
| Mid Tier |
| Countryside Stewardship |
| Mid Tier |
| Mid Tier |
| Higher Tier (UP3) |
| HLS entry level |
| CS |
| CS |
| CS |
| CS |
| Mid Tier |
| countryside stewardship |

| |
|-----------------|
| ELS / HLS / BPS |
| CS |
| Mid Tier |
| Mid Tier |
| Mid Tier |

Appendix 4: Ranked Importance of Specific Factors for Respondents and their Land (breakdown of results)

| Question | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Food Production | 11% | 46% | 12% | 22% | 4% | 2% | 3% |
| Climate change mitigation | 3% | 14% | 27% | 24% | 28% | 3% | 2% |
| Soil health regeneration | 10% | 22% | 28% | 27% | 10% | 4% | 0% |
| Clean water and air | 1% | 7% | 25% | 22% | 38% | 6% | 1% |
| Public access | 2% | 4% | 3% | 1% | 10% | 54% | 27% |
| Public health | 1% | 2% | 3% | 2% | 7% | 29% | 56% |
| Making a good living | 73% | 5% | 3% | 3% | 1% | 4% | 11% |

Appendix 5: Reasons Respondents Would Not Consider Reinstating Permissive Access Routes

| Comment | Themes |
|--|--|
| Abuse to staff and giving an inch and taking a mile with members of the public having an attitude that "because you have allowed me to walk here, I can walk wherever I like." | Negative experiences with public access to farmland |
| The public do not appreciate that the area is where livestock are grazing. They treat it as a dog walking playground. | Challenges of balancing public access and farming |
| The land has now been taken for a new road building scheme. | Changes to farming operation |
| Gates were left open and sheep were chased. There is a lack of respect for the access provided, with people feeling they have rights to go anywhere. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Lack of trust in the public, Challenges of balancing public access and farming, Lack of awareness and education |
| Due to the general public's attitude, especially around dogs which were frequently not in control around stock, and people who were abusive. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Lack of trust in the public, Challenges of balancing public access and farming |

| | |
|---|--|
| Problems from dog walkers and Neospora in cattle, causing cows to abort. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Challenges of balancing public access and farming, Lack of awareness and education |
| I get annoyed that a new generation think they can wander away from the footpath, especially when accompanied by dogs. They often do not pick up their poop. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Lack of trust in the public, Challenges of balancing public access and farming, Lack of awareness and education |
| There are cattle now using the areas that the dog walkers were using on permissive access. | Changes to farming operation |
| We could not continue with the access as there was no funding to help support the maintenance required. | Financial implications for farmers and landowners |
| The public were horrendous. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland |
| The land where the route was is a main grazing area and the public cannot be trusted to stick to the path. | Lack of trust in the public |
| I sold the land. | Changes to farming operation |
| I have now gone into a tenancy. | Changes to farming operation |
| The footpath linked into another Right of Way footpath that has since been closed so there would be no point in reopening our footpath. | Changes to farming operation |
| Too many issues involved with having livestock and dogs in the same field. There is also a grey area as to who and what you are responsible for. Not an experience I would want to repeat. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Challenges of balancing public access and farming, |
| We tolerated too much verbal abuse from dog walkers who allowed their dogs to mess all over and in the fields without clearing up after themselves. My husband has since died, and I would not want to repeat the experience. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Lack of trust in the public |
| Dogs worrying the sheep. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Challenges of balancing public access and farming, Lack of awareness and education |
| Public nuisance caused by users of the route. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland |
| We are livestock farmers now - too much risk from the public to be allowing access over the land. | Challenges of balancing public access and farming |
| Public | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Challenges of balancing public access and farming |
| We want to go under stewardship. | Financial implications for farmers and landowners, Changes to farming operation |
| I am now renting out the previous access to a young farmer. Additionally, the public caused no end of problems which cost us financially. | Financial implications for farmers and landowners, Negative experiences with public access to |

| | |
|--|---|
| | farmland, Changes to farming operation |
| Too many problems. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland |
| People do not respect the access that they have, they tended to wander off the footpaths across the fields and dogs were let off leads to wander all over the land regardless of livestock and crops. Very frustrating exercise. People can be very aggressive and threatening when approached. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Lack of trust in the public, Challenges of balancing public access and farming, Lack of awareness and education |
| Initially when the scheme was put in place, we were seeking to put in a car park, but we could not get planning permission and as people have to drive to the footpath, it was no longer viable to have it. | Changes to farming operation |
| Too many problems. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland |
| Lack of funding and the public were an issue. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Financial implications for farmers and landowners |
| We had a lot of problems and aggravation with horse riders and dog walkers. They never stayed on the footpath and instead trampled across my crops. The horse riders felt that they had the right of way across my land, it was a complete nightmare. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Financial implications for farmers and landowners, Lack of trust in the public, Challenges of balancing public access and farming, Lack of awareness and education |
| There was too much aggravation with dogs off leads and mess left on the footpaths. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland |
| Too much aggravation and trouble caused by horse riders and dog walkers. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland |
| We took the signs down once the agreement expired and no one has taken any notice of the signs saying that it is no longer a footpath. We have endured damage to gates, horses left on the field from travellers, and dogs running around without leads. The amount of wildlife has diminished over the years. I don't think the public from towns understand farming and wildlife. We are located alongside new housing developments, perhaps that's the problem. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Financial implications for farmers and landowners, Lack of trust in the public, Challenges of balancing public access and farming, Lack of awareness and education |
| We are no longer farming in that area. | Changes to farming operation |
| People going off the tracks and letting their dogs loose, which caused health issues for the calves. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Financial implications for farmers and landowners, Lack of trust in the public, Challenges of balancing public access and farming, Lack of awareness and education |
| Gates were left open, and sheep chased. People seemed to think they had rights to anywhere. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Challenges of balancing public access and |

| | |
|---|--|
| | farming, Lack of awareness and education |
| landlord said no | This comment doesn't fit into any of the identified themes. |
| The public were horrendous! They felt they had the right to be anywhere, dogs were always off lead and chasing cattle and sheep and leaving dog poo everywhere. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Lack of trust in the public, Challenges of balancing public access and farming, Lack of awareness and education |
| I need the land for the cattle. | Financial implications for farmers and landowners, Challenges of balancing public access and farming |
| The funding ended. | Financial implications for farmers and landowners |
| We do not get paid for it. | Financial implications for farmers and landowners |
| I have sold the farm. | Financial implications for farmers and landowners |
| My landlord will not give me permission to do so. | This comment does not fit into any of the identified themes. |
| The farm has changed and some of the access routes no longer exist in their original format. | Financial implications for farmers and landowners |
| We were surprised at the amount of disturbance the dogs caused to wildlife and the amount of damage they caused racing around off the dedicated pathways. | Negative experiences with public access to farmland, Lack of trust in the public, Challenges of balancing public access and farming, Lack of awareness and education |

Appendix 6: Costs of Maintaining and Managing Permissive Access - 'Other'

| |
|--|
| Extensive cost to maintain a local windmill. Costs were so great the building had to be closed to public access. |
| Resurfacing of roads. |
| Loss of a productive field on strong, wheat growing soil, and the inconvenience of members of the public on your farm. |
| Litter collection and replacing signs which were stolen. |
| Keeping walkers on the designated routes - some think they can go anywhere. |
| Re-building walls that the public knock down. |
| Loss of privacy. Wildlife disturbance. Increase in litter. |
| Gates, styles, and drainage. |
| Litter picking and dog poo removal. |
| Litter picking |
| Drainage |
| Repairing gates and hinges. |
| Litter picking |

| |
|---|
| Replacement and repair of gates. |
| Installing and repairing gates. |
| Replacement of gates. |
| Kissing gate |
| Fencing, gates, and posts. |
| Management of grass being trodden down. |
| Gates and posts. |
| Gates |
| Kissing gate |
| Gates |
| Fencing, chairs, and hardcore. |
| Gates |
| Fencing and gates. |
| Gates |
| Repairs on gates and stiles. |
| Chain sawing, mending gates etc., and clearing up plastic dog poo bags. |
| Kissing gates |
| Kissing gates and stiles |
| Nothing |
| Replacement of a wall as the public knocked it down. |
| Gates and stiles |
| None of the above on a frequently used route. |
| Gates |
| Gates |
| Chain harrow and roll. |
| Gates |
| New gates and posts. |
| Rubbish collection |
| Gates |
| Fly tipping |
| Posts and gates. |

| |
|--|
| Petrol |
| Disposing of rubbish. |
| Getting rid of people's waste. |
| Cattle grids and stiles |
| Gates |
| Gates and stiles |
| Gate maintenance |
| Gates |
| Gates |
| Gates and styles. |
| Stiles |
| Gate Posts and stiles |
| Replacing gates. |
| Doesn't really need any - good drainage and on lime so nothing needs doing. Gates etc. managed by Peak Park as there is an ancient burial ground on the site. |
| Gates and kissing gates. |
| Maintaining gates. |
| Gates |
| Mainly maintenance from the cattle passing through. |
| Dog waste bin and removal of dog mess. |
| N/A |
| Repair fences. |
| Keeping people to the paths where they should be required, including extra signage. |

Appendix 7: Final Thoughts on Permissive Access – Coded and Analysed Comments

| Comment | Themes |
|---|---|
| I really am pro engagement with the public. We do open farm Sunday and get 10,000 people , so we do more than our fair share. Sadly, because of neospora and cows aborting, we have to put their health first - wouldn't you? | Agriculture, Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement, Wildlife Protection and Conservation. |
| I am retiring later in the year and do not know what the future of the farm will be. | Agriculture, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Farming is not just for a nature park - our top priority is food production and more awareness of this is needed. There is a lack of education from/to the public about what subsidies we do get.</p> | <p>Agriculture, Education.</p> |
| <p>Nothing really to add, it works well - every case is a unique case and funding should be considered on an individual basis. The main problem is when we are calving and trying to stop walkers using the route for a few weeks it is a nightmare. Generally, our cows are friendly, and I would not be worried, but once they have calves then they become in protective mode.</p> | <p>Agriculture, Funding, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.</p> |
| <p>The schemes are all ok for arable farmers and access routes are easier for them in terms of having the public walking alongside their fields. However, for intensive livestock farmers like me, I would need to close the gate at lambing and calving times and prevent the public gaining access. There is always going to be a minority of people that will ignore this, and that's when there are problems, and the schemes don't work. Generally, people are well behaved but there will always be some that are more feral than they need to be. Who is DEFRA and where are they?</p> | <p>Agriculture, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Public behaviour, Responsibility, Natural England and DEFRA.</p> |
| <p>Permissive access should be offered on other schemes or bolted onto ELMS – the main thing is that areas of land should be fenced off from livestock to protect both the farm and the public.</p> | <p>Agriculture, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Responsibility.</p> |
| <p>I had a few problems, but it was still worth it as many of the regular walkers were very chatty and interested in the animals and what we were doing</p> | <p>Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement.</p> |
| <p>It's a good thing to offer permissive access. People need to have time out and a nicer vista without having to go to the National Parks.</p> | <p>Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement.</p> |
| <p>Very few people used the access routes so I did not really experience any issues.</p> | <p>Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes</p> |
| <p>Generally speaking, it works quite well. Some people can be a problem, particularly with livestock around. Perhaps you need to make the forms simpler to complete!</p> | <p>Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Agriculture.</p> |
| <p>The routes were seldom used but maintenance still needed to be done.</p> | <p>Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Continuation and</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| The footpath is still there, and I do maintain it to a point, but very few people use it now. | Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| I wouldn't do it again if you paid me 10 times the money. Not many farmers would do it again. It causes too much hassle. | Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| The biggest problem we had at the time was with the British Horse Society, if you wanted to change the route then you had to get a modification order. The definitive map was also never finalised. The problem is people do not understand permissive access and that we need to make changes to fit our farming practice. | Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Legal issues, Agriculture. |
| I feel the footpath issue has been neglected and it is good that you are calling and that it is being looked at. There are problems with permissive access from the minority of groups. | Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Public behaviour. |
| The footpath is used regularly by the local people, and we have had no issues. | Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment. |
| I regret doing it. The public were horrendous and we experienced consequences following the closure of the route. | Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment. |
| At the beginning things were ok, but around 2009 it became increasingly problematical. Route maps became digitised, and people were following their phones and there were no longer any paper maps. Having livestock, our insurance became more expensive to cover the risk. During school holidays the amount of litter picking increased massively. It was too time consuming to cover all the problems that we were experiencing. | Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment. |
| It's been fine where we have made the footpath, and we do get asked about any other access. | Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes. |
| I don't think I want to be involved in offering permissive access in the future, there are too many hurdles and there is a lot of health and safety reasons why we should not do it. I think I would rather put my energies into other environmental projects | Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Agriculture, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |

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| The biggest frustration for me is the lack of flexibility allowed under the scheme, despite the farm changing and progressing over the allotted time period. | Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes. |
| The footpath was already a permissive footpath before the scheme began. | Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes. |
| We have a public access arrangement under ED1. | Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| More input from Natural England is needed on where to put the permissive access. | Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies, Natural England and DEFRA. |
| Government are the worst business partner ever! | Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies. |
| No, it worked well and I was very surprised that it finished and was not offered as an ongoing part of the stewardship scheme. All the effort that was put into it and opening up the routes and then they took it all away. | Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes, Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes. |
| We did not have too many problems with the access routes, in fact people were very upset when we were no longer able to offer it. | Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes, Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment. |
| We moved to another farm with no permissive access, but whilst on the farm we had no problems with the access route or people using it. We would consider offering permissive access on our new farm, too. | Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| I had no problems with the access route. I no longer farm that field but there is still access routes available on it | Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| The footpath links to the Cotswold Way and most people that use it seemed to appreciate the route and it is still open now. We did not really experience too many issues. It was disappointing when it expired. | Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| More education is needed for the public. Help should have been provided to stop the public from using the routes once they had been closed down. | Education and Awareness for the Public, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes. |
| If I did it again I would require more support to make the public aware of what is going on on the farm and the potential consequences of going off track. | Education and Awareness for the Public. |
| More education and awareness is needed for the public. | Education and Awareness for the Public. |

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| The public need better education. We experienced a different dynamic of people post Covid. | Education, Public behaviour |
| I cannot understand why they stopped the funding for permissive access. It was a good system and most people benefitted from it. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes |
| It was really good, and I enjoyed engaging with the public. I was very saddened when it expired and very surprised that it has not been available since. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes |
| I do not know why they took the permissive access away and have not included it in any of the subsequent schemes at all. I think it is a must for farmland on the fringe. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes |
| Any funding offered needs to be realistic. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes |
| We were really annoyed that they took the permissive access away and the funding with it. We cannot understand why they thought it would be of benefit to anyone. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes |
| It is a good thing to do, and the funding was very helpful. We would like to see the funding reinstated as it would help enormously. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes |
| Bring back the funding for the access and we will do more of it. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes |
| We now offer a subscription service for horse riders on the previous permissive access routes, and we get same amount of money from the funding. Also, it means we have extra eyes on the farm and has reduced the amount of fly tippers. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Agriculture, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment |
| All government schemes are now tick box and very little to do with people, the land, and the environment. There are no longer any educated people to run the schemes, with more interest in finding faults and issuing fines. Does agriculture want to be straight jacketed by under educated bureaucrats? | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Agriculture, Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies, Education and Awareness for the Public. |
| It is popular and I hope payment will resume under ELMS. I did not want to break the continuity. Offering permissive access is good for farmers' public image, although it works better when farms create a network across boundaries. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Agriculture, Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies. |
| I like to encourage people onto my farm, children and adults, to learn about where their food comes from. I hope DEFRA will help me to do this. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Agriculture, Natural England and DEFRA, Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement. |

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| <p>At first we got good support from the Natural England officers in Cornwall - there were 40 covering the county in 2000, but by 2020 it was down to only 6 and all they do is police the wetlands etc. Trying to complete applications without support has been a nightmare – in particular SFI. Additionally, I was deprived of the right to roll the permissive access over for organic HLS schemes in 2020. I went to court over this with a cohort of other organic farmers and lost.</p> | <p>Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Agriculture, Natural England and DEFRA, Legal issues.</p> |
| <p>To have permissive access you would need to have the capital access to help make things safe for the public. Sometimes, the cost of fencing and gating can be expensive.</p> | <p>Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Agriculture.</p> |
| <p>The farm backs onto an airfield, which is now a paintball site and go kart track. People organise it, hire bicycles and travel around the boundaries of the fields - teenagers mainly. It was fantastic as some of these kids were disabled and had never been to the countryside. DEFRA pulling the plug on funding was very sad and I could not understand why they would do such a thing</p> | <p>Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement, Natural England and DEFRA.</p> |
| <p>I would reinstate permissive access if I got paid for it. I liked the funding and enjoyed talking to the public, so I was sad to see it go.</p> | <p>Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement.</p> |
| <p>It generally works very well and we would have had more problems trying to close the access than keeping it open without the maintenance. It seemed silly to take the funding away when they did, without any consultation. We should work together and be more collaborative on such issues.</p> | <p>Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies.</p> |
| <p>South Downs National Park were very upset that Natural England were no longer offering the routes and supporting them, so much so that they offered to help me maintain the routes so they could continue to be used for local people.</p> | <p>Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.</p> |
| <p>There needs to be an easy claim procedure – currently there is so much red tape. Farmers want to do it, but the paperwork puts farmers off.</p> | <p>Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.</p> |
| <p>Why did they stop it? Access is important for the local people, and it seems to work if we all work together.</p> | <p>Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies, Continuation</p> |

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| | and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| There is little celebration of what farmers do by Natural England. They need a newsletter as this will encourage other farmers to keep offering permissive access. I would love to have the permissive access back – I want to offer it to the public but need more funding to do so. I have links to neighbouring farms and would like help to offer linked routes with them so the public can do bigger walks, however there is no option for this yet. If we get paid by government, we should offer the public routes. A well-known dog trainer taught us on the farm how to deal with the public who have dogs and we have never had any problem with the public. They are amazing. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies, Education and Awareness for the Public. |
| Defra do seem to be taking things away and no longer offering support for farmers and walkways. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies. |
| The route still has access and is now funded by the Parish Council, otherwise I would have stopped the permissive access altogether. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| I would consider permissive access again, provided it is fully funded, managed, and supported. The public are not always understanding that wildlife is entitled to live undisturbed and need educating, especially during the breeding season. Dealing with the public & their dogs/children is not for everyone, but I strongly believe that the public really enjoyed being able to escape away from roads & noise. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Education and Awareness for the Public, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement. |
| Why the hell did they stop it? It is a lost opportunity, but it does need support to make it happen. Dogs are a problem and need to be kept on a lead as they are a problem for wildlife. There are now so many schemes, which is completely confusing and I do not want to have to pay someone to help me decide what to do. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes. |
| It's a shame it has ended - I have continued offering the routes as people were using the land anyway and would be very difficult to stop them, but anything like this has to be funded appropriately for it to be worthwhile. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes. |

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| Permissive access needs to be reinstated with funding! | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes. |
| We had very few issues with the route and were glad to offer it at the time, but without funding, it did become a struggle. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes. |
| No, it works well but I would like some financial support for offering the route. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes. |
| Why is it no longer funded? I would be very happy to reinstate public access on my farm with appropriate funding. | Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes. |
| Why was the funding taken away? I want to be paid for allowing this access. | Funding, Agriculture, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| It was the worst thing when the funding was removed from HLS and went over to CS. Permissive Access is an easy way/option for farmers to allow access onto land especially after losing the BPS. | Funding, Agriculture. |
| If more money is provided, including support with fencing costs, then we will do it. | Funding, Agriculture. |
| I am very annoyed that they took away the funding. People enjoy walking the route and it is difficult to take it away from them, but we do need to be paid for maintaining such routes. | Funding, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| We experienced a few issues, but it was the lack of funding that was the problem. The cost, although minimal, was still on me to find the time and commitment, which was difficult without any funding. | Funding, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes. |
| It was disappointing that permissive access and funding was withdrawn without any discussions or explanation. There is a lack of continuity at being able to talk to anyone at Natural England. We need to work collaboratively, farmers are in an excellent position to offer advice, but there just seems to be more and more red tape and hoops to jump through, which is not helping. | Funding, Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies, Natural England and DEFRA. |
| We need to be paid for the few issues that arise from dealing with the public. You like to think they are interested in what we do, but in reality, they really aren't. | Funding, Public behaviour, Agriculture |
| We were led up the garden path and something evil happened. I think it was disgraceful how we were treated and the way that funding was pulled from us. Most of the people using the access are very good, but still, not many people understand the countryside and farming, and I don't believe | Funding, Public behaviour, Education, Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife. |

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| they want to. They just want the right to roam with their dogs off leads wherever they want to go. | |
| The worst thing to happen to me was that I was under a 10-year agreement with HLS. The piece of land was rented and after 8 years the farmer told me he was selling the land. I told HLS and they said that as I didn't fulfil the full 10-year agreement, it meant that I had to pay the full 8 years' worth of payments that I had already received back. I will never do access again. | Legal issues, Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes. |
| I am on a rolling monthly contract. It is a brilliant scheme to be on. | N/A (The survey response does not relate to any of the provided themes.) |
| We need people who know what they are talking about in terms of agriculture when they work for Natural England / Defra. | Natural England and DEFRA, Agriculture. |
| I am not on the internet and often feel I get left behind and ignored. Natural England need to be in touch with everyone and not just assume that we are all on the internet. I do what I can and most of the people using the access are very nice, but you can get some that are awkward and will do only what they want. | Natural England and DEFRA, Education, Public behaviour |
| When we ended closed our permissive access, it was a big deal to the community. Defra should have allowed it under the Countryside Stewardship scheme. | Natural England and DEFRA, Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes. |
| Dealing with Natural England has never been easy, and it is not a relationship I like to be in. If I was aware of how appalling they were to deal with, I would not have signed up. 95% of the people who use the facility are good, but the remaining people tend to abuse the pathways and steal the fruit as the route does go through our orchard. The wildlife is amazing and is the biggest benefit to having the routes, but Natural England need to pay a lot better in the future. | Natural England and DEFRA, Public behaviour, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes. |
| Extensions are received late on. Response time from RPA is very slow. | None of the given themes are relevant to this survey response. |
| I really liked the scheme. | None of the given themes directly match the survey response. Therefore, it cannot be categorised under any of the provided themes. |
| The scheme was a good idea. | None of the given themes explicitly match the provided survey response. However, the closest theme would be |

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| | "Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement". |
| It worked really well as it was an 8 acre castle with a moat. | None of the given themes seem to be relevant to this response. |
| Natural England advisors are the most valuable thing in terms of money spent. | None of the provided themes seem to be relevant to this survey response. |
| Why remove the scheme? What is the incentive to offer public access on our land? | Permissive access, Agriculture, Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes. |
| I am happy to offer the footpath so people can enjoy the countryside and I have not had any issues in the 40 years that the footpath has been open. | Permissive access, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| I would happily offer permissive access to routes with some funding attached to it. | Permissive access, Funding, Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies. |
| We have turned a lot of the farm into rewilding/small nature reserve and actively encourage people to have access to the countryside. This is important with or without funding. Educational access is also important and should be encouraged | Permissive access, Funding, Education, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement. Response categorised: Permissive access, Funding, Education, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement. |
| Public access is good. It kept the public to specific routes and means the public do not trash our fields. If there is funding in place, I | Permissive access, Funding, Public behaviour, Continuation and |

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| <p>would reinstate the Permissive Access. We have left the access open, but it is costing us so I am unsure how long we will continue to leave it open for.</p> | <p>Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.</p> |
| <p>As long as permissive access remains permissive and doesn't become permanent, we are quite relaxed about it.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Legal issues.</p> |
| <p>In general, I do not have a problem with permissive access, it is just the people that are using it that are the nuisance, or perhaps they just cannot read! It was almost daily that I was having arguments with dog walkers or horse riders. It was a very unpleasant experience.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Public behaviour, Education.</p> <p>The response mentions the benefits and drawbacks of permissive access, specifically the issue with dog walkers and horse riders causing a nuisance. This falls under the theme of Public behaviour. The mention of people not being able to read suggests a need for better education and communication with the public, which falls under the Education theme.</p> |

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| <p>In theory, I agree with having permissive access, but in practice it was a different experience. We are still suffering with people who are vandalising my property and ignoring signs. It is not something that we will consider in the future.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Public behaviour, Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.</p> <p>Categorised response: Permissive access, Public behaviour, Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.</p> |
| <p>We have 3 footpaths that are regularly used and generally people are respectful and when we close them for lambing etc. then they don't tend to go through. However, they do tend to veer off the footpath into the fields, which can be annoying, especially with dogs off leads as it is not good for the nesting wildlife.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Public behaviour, Wildlife protection and conservation, Impact of dogs on livestock and wildlife.</p> |
| <p>The main problem we had is people walking where they want and not always keeping to paths or even reading the signage, particularly dog walkers who then interrupt the wildlife, with dogs running everywhere. People seem to do what they want and some even cause as much disruption as they possibly can.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Public behaviour, Wildlife protection and conservation, Signage and information for permissive access routes.</p> |
| <p>I feel it is the right thing to offer footpaths for people to be able to walk in the countryside. There will always be some issues when you</p> | <p>Permissive access, Public behaviour, Wildlife Protection and Conservation.</p> |

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| <p>are dealing with the public and animals, but on the whole it seems to work</p> | |
| <p>I would not consider offering any more permissive access routes without payment. A small amount of people do not respect the land or their environment. Dogs and people are a menace to wildlife. They need to bring back dog licences and hopefully people will keep their dogs on leads when asked to do so.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Public behaviour, Wildlife protection, Education.</p> <p>Permissive access: concerns about public access to farmland and the need for payment.</p> <p>Public behaviour: complaints about disrespectful behaviour from some members of the public.</p> <p>Wildlife protection: concerns about the impact of dogs and people on wildlife.</p> <p>Education: the need for better education and communication with the public about responsible behaviour and the importance of respecting farmland and wildlife.</p> |
| <p>We had a few issues with dog walkers not cleaning up after themselves, but other than that it worked well.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Public behaviour.</p> |
| <p>This is a nature reserve and public access is permitted and we maintain all rights of way, it is all run on a charity basis.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Responsibility, Funding, Agriculture.</p> |
| <p>Some people ask if they can use the access route and others feel they have the right to roam wherever they want to. It was all a little vague as to who had responsibility for the route in the past. I would only consider offering any other access routes with funding provided.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Responsibility, Funding.</p> |
| <p>I was unable to remove it after the funding finished as it had become part of people's routine and was heavily used. Rather than constantly fight people to 'get off my land' I just carried on allowing access as the least</p> | <p>Permissive access, Responsibility, Public behaviour, Agriculture, Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes, Continuation and</p> |

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| <p>aggro option. I did a Section 31 to ensure it didn't become a permanent right of way and put-up signs encouraging people to respect it. Maintenance has lapsed a bit as I'm not getting paid for it, but it is used by 40-50 people per day.</p> | <p>Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.</p> |
| <p>We have had a few issues over the time, generally horse riders not sticking to the route and riding when it is very wet and not wanting to maintain or help to maintain the mess they have made. It is good to let people have access, but they are difficult to deal with and I am not sure it is worth the headache.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Responsibility, Public behaviour, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes</p> |
| <p>I think it is great if managed correctly. Permissive access was limited due to wildlife impact and it was crucial that access was in the right place on the land.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.</p> |
| <p>We had a lot of concern about how much disturbance dog walkers caused to wildlife as the walk wherever they want and do what they want.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.</p> |
| <p>We experienced too many problems with dog walkers who allow their dogs off a lead to run off the foot paths. I don't believe dogs running wild and wildlife go together.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.</p> |
| <p>We have a few issues with dog walkers who allow their dogs off a lead which impacts on the wildlife that we have. We have a field that is known as a Wildlife Quality Site, and we like dogs to be on a lead. Some difficult and nasty people do not like to be told, but on the whole, they do appreciate the wildlife.</p> | <p>Permissive access, Wildlife protection and conservation, Public behaviour, Impact of dogs on livestock and wildlife.</p> |
| <p>No, it has worked and is a well-used footpath. I am sure if I wanted to stop access, I would not be able to, people would still try to use it, so it's best to keep with it. Some people stick to the footpath, others, unfortunately, make a cut through, which is irritating.</p> | <p>Public behaviour - Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes</p> |
| <p>The public are horrendous at not sticking to paths and not putting dogs on leads, causing death to livestock. I was worse off money wise as a result of offering permissive access.</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Agriculture</p> |
| <p>We have a lot of people come with their dogs and there are signs asking them to keep their</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Agriculture, Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife,</p> |

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| <p>dogs on leads because of the livestock, but they totally ignore the advice and even when you ask them politely, they can be really aggressive. These people are very selfish as they are spoiling it for so many other people who appreciate the countryside and the environment.</p> | <p>Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes, Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment.</p> |
| <p>There were some people that abused the area and stole some fencing and batteries. They left gates open so cattle could escape, and dogs were often off a lead and chased all the wildlife and ran through wild meadow fields. It was quite a frustrating exercise!</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Agriculture, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.</p> |
| <p>Mostly, people were respectful. Some were a little apprehensive with cattle in the fields, but they were there first. Occasionally we would have people having barbecues all over the field, but generally when I approached them they would finish the barbecue and then bugger off.</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Agriculture.</p> |
| <p>Generally it worked well, although a few people do try to ignore the rules.</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.</p> |
| <p>The footpath runs alongside the river, and we have had problems with people having barbecues and not clearing up after themselves. We also had a party of 200 end of term school kids along the riverbank, which was a nightmare. These footpaths do not come without any problems and some people can be very threatening and aggressive.</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.</p> |
| <p>I have had issues and still continue to get them from some people who think it is a public right of way and they have the right to roam. You cannot reason with some people as they can be aggressive and rude.</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.</p> |
| <p>I am stunned what people do and feel they have the right to do and there is an increasing number of people that are abusive and feel they have the right to roam all over the land and not stick to the footpaths. I don't feel that we should have to endure the aggression that some people have, or the colourful language used.</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Education</p> |
| <p>I have always had people on the farm, but by giving them permissive access their attitudes changed and they seemed to feel that they have the right to be there and were horrible.</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Education.</p> |
| <p>People do not understand permissive access - they think they have the right to wander all</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Education.</p> |

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| over the land just because they have previously. | |
| Permissive access is great provided that the users realise that it is not a public right of way. | Public behaviour, Education. |
| It is a waste of time. None of the general public appreciate what you do and more often than not there is dog poo everywhere, whether in bags or not. | Public behaviour, Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife. |
| The public need to keep dogs on leads and understand how dangerous flying through a farm and leaving gates open can be. They killed loads of lambs and their actions meant badgers and foxes increased. | Public behaviour, Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife. |
| We have had a few issues with people wandering off the pathway, but on the whole people are respectful. | Public behaviour, Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment. |
| Most of the people using the route were very good but you do get the odd few that should be shot and not allowed into the countryside. | Public behaviour, Public respect for the countryside and environment. |
| Generally, it was a good experience. Some people left litter and gates open but, on the whole, not too many problems. | Public behaviour, Responsibility |
| The majority of people using the footpath are respectful and close the gates, but there are a few dog walkers who roam all over the place and have no regard for cleanliness and livestock. | Public behaviour, Responsibility, Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife. |
| In my opinion, most people don't want to just roam the countryside, they want to know where they are going and that the route is safe and want to walk on established footpaths. | Public behaviour, Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes |
| On the whole it works very well. There is always a couple of people that wander off the pathway, and cyclists sometimes do not respect the signage, but on the whole we don't have too much trouble. I guess it would be impossible to stop the access now that it has been open for a number of years, I think I would have more trouble if I tried. | Public behaviour, Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| No, the only problem we had was with the dog mess and cleaning out the dog bins. The majority of people would pick up the mess, but a few did not respect the signage. | Public behaviour, Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes. |
| I didn't really have any issues. My boundaries are alongside housing estates, so I expect to see people wanting to walk within the countryside. | Public behaviour, Wildlife Protection and Conservation |

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| <p>Most people use the footpath with respect, I have more of a problem with gypsies and hare coursers.</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Wildlife Protection and Conservation</p> |
| <p>Sadly, it is the minority that spoil it for the majority. We have verbal abuse, fly tipping and dogs running all over the land. If you want to protect wildlife, then keep the public out of the countryside. We have put field margins in for wildlife but then we have dogs running through them, so what chance does the wildlife have? Footpaths need to be fenced in to prevent dogs and people from wandering off the paths. I have to pick up rubbish daily - beer cans, dog poo, condoms and the like.</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Agriculture, Education and Awareness for the Public, Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes.</p> <p>The response highlights concerns about disrespectful behaviour from some members of the public, the impact of dogs on wildlife, and the need for better education and communication with the public about the importance of respecting farmland and wildlife. It also touches on the cost of fencing and gating to prevent dogs and people from wandering off the paths and the need for signage and information for permissive access routes. Finally, it highlights the frustration of dealing with littering and other forms of disrespectful behaviour from the public.</p> |
| <p>On the whole it was a good experience, despite some damage and people flouting the rules. Dog walkers can be a problem as letting dogs off leads does upset the wildlife.</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.</p> |
| <p>The general public did not respect signage, nature or the environment!! Dogs were left to run wild, causing damage to wildlife habitat and sheep attacks, rubbish was left strewn everywhere, people did not respect signage, damaged and removed signs, and did not stick to routes but went wherever they pleased. Joy riders accessed the land and caused damage, and fires to crops and machinery are started.</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes, Agriculture</p> |
| <p>The footpaths were abused by some people - dog walkers not cleaning up after themselves and dogs running all over the land</p> | <p>Public behaviour, Wildlife Protection and Conservation.</p> |

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| irrespective of what was on the land. I experienced some verbal abuse, too, when people were approached. | |
| Mostly good, but some issues with people. | Public behaviour, Wildlife protection and conservation. |
| Sadly, it leaves a bad taste in the mouth when people leave litter and allow their animals to run around the field. With livestock, this was always a worry. A small percentage of people spoil it for the rest. | Public behaviour, Wildlife Protection and Conservation. |
| No real issues with the footpaths and the people using them. Some litter and dog poo was left and we had to clean it up but generally people did look after the routes. | Public behaviour, Wildlife Protection and Conservation. |
| Most people using the footpath are very good, we did have a problem with hare coursers so we narrowed the entrance down so they could not get a vehicle through. A few issues with litter but on the whole it works very well. | Public behaviour, Wildlife Protection and Conservation. |
| The people that use the route are very respectful and there is never any rubbish left anywhere. It is a pleasure to have such people who are also interested in what is going on on the farm. The route is closed for around 3/4 weeks whilst we move cattle and no one seems offended with this, they do work with us. | Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment, Agriculture. |
| I like the idea that people learn what is going on in the countryside but it is just not worth the hassle with the grief and aggression you sometimes get from the public. I am not sure they really care about the countryside. | Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment, Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement. |
| We may have had more difficulty trying to prevent people from using the footpath, so we continued with it. On the whole it seems to work, most people are respectful and only a few are not. | Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes. |
| We have not had too many problems; most people have respected the access. There are a few that will leave the gates open, but generally it's not too bad. | Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes. |
| I have left casual crime / theft / hare coursers / fly tipping as there are more people who report it to me directly as I have a good relationship with the public - extra eyes are good for me. The public are becoming more and more aware of what is happening on the farm and more and more engaged with the eco system. | Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment, Education and Awareness for the Public. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Walkers need to understand that this is not a continual right and to treat the land/farm and its staff with respect. | Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment, Education and Awareness for the Public. |
| We used to have our own advisors when under HLS who knew our land. Now we have no one and so it is difficult to explain to people who do not know our land. | Responsibility, Agriculture, Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies. |
| If I could see the track from my farmhouse or from my outbuildings, I may consider doing it again. However, the track was behind the farm and I could not see / keep tabs on who / what was going on. | Responsibility, Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes. |
| Most people seem to enjoy the access route and it is now maintained by the local council, so the burden is no longer ours. | Responsibility, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. |
| The route is about to change and will be part of the governments Greenway and we will no longer be responsible for the maintenance of the route. It was not really a problem, people using it were generally very good and appreciated the route and scenery to be had. | Responsibility, Natural England and DEFRA, Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes, Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment. |
| Footpaths are ok and are a right of way for people, but why should I have to police it? Local councils should take it on. The majority of horse riders are ok, but some just ride their horses all over my land, and dog walkers, too, leave a mess and feel they have the right to leave their dogs off a lead whilst my sheep and lambs are in the field. We need some legal rights to safeguard our land and animals. | Responsibility, Public behaviour, Legal issues, Agriculture. |
| I didn't understand why it had been taken away and not offered in any other schemes. The only real problem we had was with the dog mess and people not clearing up after their own dogs. | Responsibility, Public behaviour, Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes. |
| It is important for me to be in control of the situation and being able to state "these are my rules and we would like you to keep to them". | Responsibility. |
| I had a few issues with signage as the Natural England ones never turned up no matter how many times I requested them, so I made my own. Also, it seems to be a great secret of where people can go and find permissive access routes. Sadly, there does not seem to be anything on the website to alert people to these areas where they can walk. | Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes, Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Signage is important and signs need to be informative and innovative. Some areas are too sensitive for wildlife to be roamed on by walkers. It is very difficult to broker agreements with a parish council as many from outside the parish use the facility in effect for free. Thought needs to be given for central funding.</p> | <p>Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes, Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes.</p> |
| <p>Dogs were a real problem; we had to shoot one of the lambs as they had been mauled by a dog. People just do not understand how careful they need to be in a field with cows and their calves. People do not seem aware of the signs that we put up explaining the risks of walking with your dog.</p> | <p>Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife, Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes, Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment.</p> |
| <p>Unfortunately, dog walkers and biodiversity do not go hand in hand. Dogs off a lead interfere with the ground nesting birds and it is something dog owners don't understand or do not want to understand. It is difficult as NE want us to be environmentally more considerate and then you also want the public to be able to walk in the countryside. The South Down National Park now help with funding part of the footpath, so it wasn't totally closed.</p> | <p>Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Public behaviour, Agriculture, Natural England and DEFRA.</p> |
| <p>We are keen to regenerate our land into wildflower meadows and encourage native species. The only issue we have is that some people are reluctant to keep dogs on leads particularly in the nesting seasons. We have used the footpath as an educational route with information about what we are doing on the farm and it seems to be working.</p> | <p>Wildlife Protection and Conservation, Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment, Education and Awareness for the Public, Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife, Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement.</p> |

Appendix 8: Qualitative Analysis Methodology, 'Final Thoughts on Permissive Access – Comments'

Loaded survey responses: 227

Split responses into chunks: 2

Chunk 1 themes: ['Permissive access: opinions on the benefits and drawbacks of allowing public access to farmland, including concerns about dog walkers and wildlife disturbance.', 'Funding: frustration with the lack of funding and support for permissive access schemes.', 'Responsibility: confusion and disagreements over who is responsible for maintaining and managing the access routes.', 'Public behaviour: complaints about littering, vandalism, and disrespectful behaviour from some members of the public.', 'Education: calls for better education and

communication with the public about the importance of respecting farmland and wildlife.', 'Legal issues: concerns about legal liability and disputes over agreements and contracts.', 'Agriculture: the impact of permissive access on farming practices, including concerns about livestock safety and the cost of fencing and gating.', 'Natural England and DEFRA: opinions on the effectiveness and responsiveness of government agencies involved in permissive access schemes.'])

Chunk 2 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Education and Awareness for the Public', 'Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes', 'Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.'])

Merged themes: ['Permissive access: opinions on the benefits and drawbacks of allowing public access to farmland, including concerns about dog walkers and wildlife disturbance.', 'Funding: frustration with the lack of funding and support for permissive access schemes.', 'Responsibility: confusion and disagreements over who is responsible for maintaining and managing the access routes.', 'Public behaviour: complaints about littering, vandalism, and disrespectful behaviour from some members of the public.', 'Education: calls for better education and communication with the public about the importance of respecting farmland and wildlife.', 'Legal issues: concerns about legal liability and disputes over agreements and contracts.', 'Agriculture: the impact of permissive access on farming practices, including concerns about livestock safety and the cost of fencing and gating.', 'Natural England and DEFRA: opinions on the effectiveness and responsiveness of government agencies involved in permissive access schemes.', 'Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Education and Awareness for the Public', 'Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes', 'Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.'])

Processed theme 1/18

Processed theme 2/18

Processed theme 3/18

Processed theme 4/18

Processed theme 5/18

Processed theme 6/18

Processed theme 7/18

Processed theme 8/18

Processed theme 9/18

Processed theme 10/18

Processed theme 11/18

Processed theme 12/18

Processed theme 13/18

Processed theme 14/18

Processed theme 15/18

Processed theme 16/18

Processed theme 17/18

Processed theme 18/18

Refined themes: ['Permissive access: opinions on the benefits and drawbacks of allowing public access to farmland, including concerns about dog walkers and wildlife disturbance.', 'Funding: frustration with the lack of funding and support for permissive access schemes.', 'Responsibility: confusion and disagreements over who is responsible for maintaining and managing the access routes.', 'Public behaviour: complaints about littering, vandalism, and disrespectful behaviour from some members of the public.', 'Education: calls for better education and communication with the public about the importance of respecting farmland and wildlife.', 'Legal issues: concerns about legal liability and disputes over agreements and contracts.', 'Agriculture: the impact of permissive access on farming practices, including concerns about livestock safety and the cost of fencing and gating.', 'Natural England and DEFRA: opinions on the effectiveness and responsiveness of government agencies involved in permissive access schemes.', 'Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Education and Awareness for the Public', 'Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes', 'Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 1 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 2 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.']

Response 3 themes: ['None of the themes are applicable to this response.']

Response 4 themes: ['None of the themes mentioned in the refined themes list are applicable to this response.']

Response 5 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Public behaviour', 'Wildlife protection and conservation', 'Signage and information for permissive access routes.']

Response 6 themes: ['None.']

Response 7 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies.']

Response 8 themes: ['Agriculture', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Public behaviour', 'Responsibility', 'Natural England and DEFRA.']

Response 10 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Legal issues', 'Agriculture.']

Response 11 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 12 themes: ['Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment', 'Agriculture.']

Response 13 themes: ['Natural England and DEFRA', 'Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 14 themes: ['N/A (The survey response does not relate to any of the provided themes.)']

Response 15 themes: ['Natural England and DEFRA', 'Public behaviour', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 19 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes']

Response 20 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes']

Response 21 themes: ['Natural England and DEFRA', 'Education', 'Public behaviour']

Response 22 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes']

Response 24 themes: ['Responsibility', 'Public behaviour', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 25 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 30 themes: ['Responsibility', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 36 themes: ['None of the provided themes seem to be relevant to this survey response.']

Response 37 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 38 themes: ['Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 39 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 40 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Responsibility']

Response 41 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation']

Response 42 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.']

Response 43 themes: ['Funding', 'Public behaviour', 'Agriculture']

Response 44 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Responsibility', 'Funding', 'Agriculture.']

Response 45 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Public behaviour', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes. \n\nCategorised response: Permissive access', 'Public behaviour', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 46 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.']

Response 47 themes: ['Responsibility', 'Public behaviour', 'Legal issues', 'Agriculture.']

Response 48 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation.']

Response 49 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Public behaviour', 'Education. \n\nThe response mentions the benefits and drawbacks of permissive access', 'specifically the issue with dog walkers and horse riders causing a nuisance. This falls under the theme of Public behaviour. The mention of people not being able to read suggests a need for better education and communication with the public', 'which falls under the Education theme.']

Response 50 themes: ['None.']

Response 51 themes: ['None of the themes mentioned in the refined list.']

Response 52 themes: ['None of the given themes are applicable to this response.']

Response 53 themes: ['Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement.']

Response 54 themes: ['Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 55 themes: ['None.']

Response 56 themes: ['Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement.']

Response 57 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 58 themes: ['Legal issues', 'Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 59 themes: ['Responsibility.']

Response 61 themes: ['Public behaviour\n- Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes']

Response 62 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies', 'Education and Awareness for the Public.']

Response 64 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Education.']

Response 65 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Responsibility', 'Funding.']

Response 66 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Agriculture', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.']

Response 67 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 68 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes']

Response 69 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Public behaviour.']

Response 70 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Agriculture']

Response 71 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment.']

Response 72 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Public behaviour.']

Response 73 themes: ['None of the themes are applicable to this response.']

Response 74 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Wildlife protection and conservation', 'Public behaviour', 'Impact of dogs on livestock and wildlife.']

Response 75 themes: ['None of the given themes are relevant to this response.']

Response 76 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Education.']

Response 77 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 78 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 79 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 80 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Responsibility', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.']

Response 81 themes: ['Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment', 'Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement.']

Response 82 themes: ['Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 83 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Legal issues.']

Response 84 themes: ['There is no information provided in the survey response to categorise it under any of the given themes.']

Response 85 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement', 'Natural England and DEFRA.']

Response 86 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 87 themes: ['None of the given themes are relevant to this survey response.']

Response 91 themes: ['Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies', 'Natural England and DEFRA.']

Response 94 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Education']

Response 95 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment.']

Response 96 themes: ['Funding', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 98 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Agriculture', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment']

Response 99 themes: ['Natural England and DEFRA', 'Agriculture.']

Response 101 themes: ['Funding', 'Agriculture.']

Response 102 themes: ['Education and Awareness for the Public.']

Response 105 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Agriculture', 'Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 107 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.']

Response 111 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement.']

Response 113 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 114 themes: ['Agriculture', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 116 themes: ['Education', 'Public behaviour']

Response 117 themes: ['Funding', 'Agriculture.']

Response 118 themes: ['Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment', 'Education and Awareness for the Public.']

Response 119 themes: ['None of the given themes directly match the survey response. Therefore', 'it cannot be categorised under any of the provided themes.']

Response 120 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Agriculture', 'Natural England and DEFRA', 'Legal issues.']

Response 121 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes']

Response 122 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Wildlife protection and conservation.']

Response 123 themes: ['None of the given themes are relevant to this response.']

Response 124 themes: ['Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 125 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes']

Response 126 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Funding', 'Education', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement. \n\nResponse categorised: Permissive access', 'Funding', 'Education', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement.']

Response 127 themes: ['None of the given themes are applicable to this response.']

Response 128 themes: ['None of the themes are applicable to this response.']

Response 129 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 130 themes: ['None of the given themes are applicable to the response "NO".']

Response 131 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Agriculture.']

Response 132 themes: ['None of the themes are applicable to this response.']

Response 133 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.']

Response 134 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation.']

Response 135 themes: ['Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment.']

Response 137 themes: ['None of the themes mentioned in the refined list.']

Response 139 themes: ['None of the given themes explicitly match the provided survey response. However', 'the closest theme would be "Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement".']

Response 140 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes']

Response 141 themes: ['None of the given themes are applicable to this response.']

Response 142 themes: ['Agriculture', 'Education.']

Response 143 themes: ['Funding', 'Agriculture', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 145 themes: ['None of the given themes seem to be relevant to this response.']

Response 146 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 147 themes: ['None of the themes are applicable to this response.']

Response 149 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Agriculture', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 151 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Public respect for the countryside and environment.']

Response 152 themes: ['Responsibility', 'Agriculture', 'Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies.']

Response 153 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Agriculture', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment.']

Response 155 themes: ['Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 156 themes: ['Education and Awareness for the Public.']

Response 157 themes: ['None of the themes mentioned in the refined themes list are applicable to this response.']

Response 158 themes: ['Education and Awareness for the Public', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 159 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment.']

Response 161 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Responsibility', 'Public behaviour', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes']

Response 163 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Funding', 'Public behaviour', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 164 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 165 themes: ['None of the themes apply to this response.']

Response 166 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes']

Response 168 themes: ['Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies.']

Response 169 themes: ['None of the given themes are applicable to this response.']

Response 170 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 171 themes: ['None of the themes mentioned in the refined themes list are applicable to this survey response.']

Response 172 themes: ['Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment.']

Response 173 themes: ['Agriculture', 'Funding', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.']

Response 174 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment.']

Response 175 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Agriculture.']

Response 176 themes: ['Responsibility', 'Natural England and DEFRA', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment.']

Response 177 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Agriculture.']

Response 178 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Funding', 'Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies.']

Response 179 themes: ['Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes', 'Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies']

Response 180 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes']

Response 181 themes: ['Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment', 'Education and Awareness for the Public', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife', 'Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement.']

Response 182 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 183 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation']

Response 184 themes: ['Funding', 'Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies', 'Natural England and DEFRA.']

Response 185 themes: ['Funding', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 186 themes: ['Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes', 'Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 187 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 188 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation.']

Response 190 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Agriculture', 'Education and Awareness for the Public', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes. \n\nThe response highlights concerns about disrespectful behaviour from some members of the public', 'the impact of dogs on wildlife', 'and the need for better education and communication with the public about the importance of respecting farmland and wildlife. It also touches on the cost of fencing and gating to prevent dogs and people from wandering off the paths and the need for signage and information for permissive access routes. Finally', 'it highlights the frustration of dealing with littering and other forms of disrespectful behaviour from the public.']

Response 191 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Public behaviour', 'Wildlife protection', 'Education. \n\nPermissive access: concerns about public access to farmland and the need for payment. \n\nPublic behaviour: complaints about disrespectful behaviour from some members of the public. \n\nWildlife protection: concerns about the impact of dogs and people on wildlife. \n\nEducation: the need for better education and communication with the public about responsible behaviour and the importance of respecting farmland and wildlife.']

Response 192 themes: ['Responsibility', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 193 themes: ['Funding', 'Public behaviour', 'Education', 'Impact of Dogs on Livestock and Wildlife.']

Response 194 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies.']

Response 195 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation.']

Response 196 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Public behaviour', 'Wildlife protection and conservation', 'Impact of dogs on livestock and wildlife.']

Response 197 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 198 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 199 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Public behaviour', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation.']

Response 200 themes: ['Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Public behaviour', 'Agriculture', 'Natural England and DEFRA.']

Response 201 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 204 themes: ['Agriculture', 'Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation.']

Response 207 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 208 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Agriculture', 'Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies', 'Education and Awareness for the Public.']

Response 211 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes', 'Agriculture']

Response 213 themes: ['Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 216 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment', 'Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes', 'Education and Awareness for the Public', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement.']

Response 218 themes: ['Challenges of Managing Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 219 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Agriculture', 'Natural England and DEFRA', 'Benefits of Permissive Access for Education and Public Engagement.']

Response 221 themes: ['Public Respect for the Countryside and Environment', 'Education and Awareness for the Public.']

Response 222 themes: ['Permissive access', 'Responsibility', 'Public behaviour', 'Agriculture', 'Signage and Information for Permissive Access Routes', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 223 themes: ['Public behaviour', 'Education.']

Response 225 themes: ['Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies', 'Continuation and Maintenance of Permissive Access Routes.']

Response 226 themes: ['Agriculture', 'Wildlife Protection and Conservation', 'Responsibility.']

Response 227 themes: ['Funding and Support for Permissive Access Routes', 'Agriculture', 'Collaboration and Communication between Farmers and Government Agencies.']

Saved tagged survey responses to 'tagged_survey_responses.csv'

Appendix 9: Costs of Maintaining Permissive Access Routes by Farming Operation – Analysis

| What type of farming operation do you have? (Please select all that apply). - Selected Choice | Average | Confidence | Median | Sum | Sample Size |
|---|---------|-----------------------|--------|-------|-------------|
| Cereals | 435.55 | 345.38 to 525.73 | 300.0 | 43991 | 101 |
| General cropping (e.g sugar beet/potatoes/etc) | 527.46 | 374.32 to 680.60 | 413.0 | 19516 | 37 |
| Horticulture | 736.33 | -2,333.42 to 3,806.09 | 46.0 | 2209 | 3 |
| Pigs | 106.00 | 106.00 to 106.00 | 106.0 | 106 | 1 |
| Dairy | 284.04 | 159.09 to 408.99 | 275.0 | 6533 | 23 |
| Lowland grazing livestock | 416.83 | 326.86 to 506.80 | 304.0 | 31262 | 75 |
| Mixed | 603.32 | 483.88 to 722.76 | 514.0 | 35596 | 59 |
| Woodland | 549.75 | 374.02 to 725.48 | 499.5 | 15393 | 28 |
| Non-agricultural (e.g diversification enterprises, such as eco-tourism - please state which) | 660.76 | 364.12 to 957.41 | 527.0 | 11233 | 17 |
| Upland grazing livestock | 486.37 | 339.81 to 632.92 | 488.5 | 14591 | 30 |
| Poultry | 349.50 | -2,744.46 to 3,443.46 | 349.5 | 699 | 2 |
| Other (please state) | 461.94 | 360.06 to 563.83 | 413.0 | 16168 | 35 |