

Natural England Commissioned Report NECR083

# Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment: The national survey on people and the natural environment

Annual Report from the 2010-11 survey

First published 30 June 2011

[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)





# Foreword

Natural England commission a range of reports from external contractors to provide evidence and advice to assist us in delivering our duties. The views in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of Natural England.

## Background

Although there is a growing evidence base about the benefits that people derive from contact with the natural environment, there is a lack of information about how and why people currently engage with the natural environment.

In the past, a series of surveys have been carried out by Government and its partners to track participation in leisure day visits. The Leisure Day Visits Survey Series (undertaken in 1994, 1996, 1998, 2002/03 and 2005) collected information on the extent of participation in leisure day visits and provided estimates of the volume of visits. Whilst these surveys included 'days out' in the countryside, they did not provide up to date and robust information on people's day to day use and enjoyment of the natural environment.

Natural England, Defra and the Forestry Commission therefore commissioned TNS Research International to undertake this survey.

### The survey was commissioned in order to:

- Understand how people use, enjoy and are motivated to protect the natural environment.
- Provide data that monitors changes in use and enjoyment of the natural environment over time, at a range of different spatial scales and for key groups within the population.

### How will Natural England use the findings?

In relation to its remit for promoting public understanding, conservation and enjoyment of the

natural environment, Natural England will use the findings to:-

- Inform its work, and that of other interested parties, to link it more closely to need.
- Evaluate the impact and effectiveness of this work.

The annual report presents the headline findings for the second year of fieldwork from March 2010 to February 2011.

Published alongside this report are:

- A technical report (NECR050) providing full details of the survey methodology including approaches to sampling, grossing and weighting and estimates of confidence intervals.
- Electronic data table viewer: interactive tool which allows detailed analysis of the MENE dataset.

A number of further reports including the year one annual report and the results of additional analyses of the MENE data are available from the Natural England website.

### Official Statistics

The information within this report is categorised as 'Official Statistics', and has been produced and published according to arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority. A document detailing Natural England's compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics is available separately on the Natural England website.

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**Keywords** - visits, engagement, natural environment, participation, motivations, barriers

#### Further information

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ISSN 2040-5545

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# Summary

This report summarises the headline findings from the second year of the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey. The survey collects detailed information on people's use and enjoyment of the natural environment, focusing on visits to the outdoors. Fieldwork took place between March 2010 and February 2011. Where appropriate, comparisons have been made with the first year of the survey undertaken between March 2009 and February 2010.

For the purposes of this survey the natural environment is defined as the green open spaces in and around towns and cities, as well as the wider countryside and coastline.

The survey was undertaken by TNS Research International on behalf of Natural England, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Forestry Commission.

## **An overview of visits to the natural environment (see Section 2 for more details):**

- The English adult population participated in an estimated 2.49 billion visits to the natural environment in 2010/11. This represents a 13 per cent decrease on the estimated 2.86 billion visits taken during 2009/10. This difference is statistically significant.
- The proportion of the English adult population taking a visit to the natural environment over the previous seven days during 2010/11 was 39 per cent. This is significantly lower than the proportion in 2009/10 (43 per cent).
- The average number of visits taken per adult over the survey period was 60; significantly lower than the average of 69 visits recorded during 2009/10. However this number varies greatly across England's regions, ranging from 98 in the South West to 27 in London.
- The frequency of visits taken to the natural environment varies greatly across the English population. While half of the adult population state that they normally visited the natural environment at least once per week (53 per cent), eight per cent had only made one or two visits and nine per cent of respondents had not taken a visit in the previous 12 months at all. These findings are not significantly different from those recorded in the 2009/10 survey.

## **Changes in engagement (see Section 3 for more details):**

- Visits were lower during every month of the 2010/11 survey, compared to the same month in the previous year. The greatest decreases in visits were recorded in March, August, November and December 2010.
- Between 2009/10 and 2010/11 the number of visits taken to farmland, mountain, hill and moorland and woodland increased, while the most significant decreases in visits were recorded for urban parks and other open spaces in towns and cities.
- While none of the activities undertaken during a visit showed increases compared to the first year of the survey, dog walking, playing with children and running experienced a smaller percentage decrease in visitor numbers than was recorded for other more discretionary activities such as eating and drinking out. This suggests that external factors such as the weather have less impact on propensity to participate in routine activities such as dog walking than more discretionary activities such as eating out, beach activities and picnics.
- The decrease in visit numbers was not consistent across all population groups. The largest decreases were recorded amongst the 16-24 and 65 and over age groups, members of the DE socio-economic group, unemployed people and members of the black and minority ethnic (BME) population. The number of visits taken increased slightly amongst the AB socio-economic group.

### **Who? A profile of people that do and don't visit (see Section 4 for more details):**

- The proportion of the total population taking visits in the last seven days decreased significantly from 43 per cent to 39 per cent between 2009/10 and 2010/11. The largest decreases were recorded amongst those aged 16-24, people in the DE socio-economic group, and those from the BME population.
- The population groups with the largest proportions taking visits to the natural environment included people aged between 45 and 64, those in employment, and those in the ABC1 socio-economic groups.
- Levels of participation were significantly lower than the overall population averages amongst the 65 and over groups, the BME population and members of the DE socio-economic groups.

### **Where? The destination of visits (see Section 5 for more details):**

- Just over half of visits to the natural environment were taken to the countryside (53 per cent), while 37 per cent were to green spaces within towns and cities. In total, 11 per cent of visits were taken in coastal locations of which seven per cent were taken to a green space in a seaside town and four per cent to another coastal location.
- The proportion of visits to countryside locations increased from 48 per cent in 2009/10 to 53 per cent in 2010/11. In contrast, the proportion of visits to green spaces in towns and cities decreased from 41 per cent in 2009/10 to 37 per cent in 2010/11.
- Visits by those living in the most deprived neighbourhoods, those in the DE socio-economic groups, and the BME population were more likely to be to urban destinations and to places closer to home.
- While parks in towns and cities continued to be the most visited location, representing 22 percent of all visits (558 million visits), these visits decreased from the levels recorded in 2009/10 when 24 per cent of all visits were taken to this type of location (679 million visits). Forests and woodlands received 13 per cent of all visits, an increased share from 11 per cent in 2010.
- As in the previous 12 months, two thirds of visits (66 per cent) were taken within two miles of the respondents home (or other start point e.g. their workplace or holiday accommodation) highlighting the importance of accessible green space that is close to home.
- Visits to coastal areas were more likely to be taken by car, while the majority of countryside visits were taken on foot by people living locally in rural or urban fringe areas.

### **What? A profile of visits (see Section 6 for more details):**

- The average visit to the natural environment lasted for just under 2 hours (1 hour 58 minutes). This finding is not significantly different from that found in the 2009/10 survey.
- Around half of all visits (51 per cent) involved walking with a dog, not significantly different from the proportion recorded in 2009/10.
- Although the average party size was 2.4, 53 per cent of visits were taken by an adult on their own. Children were present in the party for 22 per cent of visits.
- Expenditure was incurred during 25 percent of visits, with the average spend during these visits being around £30 per person. These results are not significantly different from those recorded during the 2009/10 survey.
- An estimated £17 billion was spent during visits to the natural environment during 2010/11. Although this figure is lower than the 2009/10 estimate of £20 billion, the difference is within statistical margins of error.

## **Why? Reasons for visiting and not visiting (see Section 7 for more details):**

- Exercising dogs, personal health and exercise, relaxing and unwinding, enjoying fresh air and pleasant weather and enjoying scenery were the most frequently cited reasons for taking visits to the natural environment.
- Motivations for visiting the natural environment are influenced by age - notably the likelihood that visits are taken for health or exercise, for fresh air or pleasant weather, to enjoy scenery, for peace and quiet, and to enjoy wildlife, increases as a person gets older.
- Those in the AB socio-economic group were motivated to visit the natural environment by the widest range of factors, including for health and exercise, to enjoy scenery, and for fresh air and pleasant weather.
- Infrequent visitors to the natural environment were most likely to cite being busy at work or poor weather as the main reasons for *not* being able to take visits to the natural environment more often. Poor health, old age or a disability were most likely to be mentioned by those who never visit the natural environment.

## **Other engagement with the natural environment (see Section 8 for more details):**

- The survey also recorded types of engagement with the natural environment that did not involve trips to green spaces away from home. Activities include time spent at home in the garden or watching nature programmes on television.
- The vast majority of the population took part in one or more of the activities, with sitting and relaxing in the garden and gardening the most frequently undertaken.
- The groups least likely to visit the natural environment (including 16 to 24 year olds, those in the DE social grades and members of the BME population) were also least likely to engage with it in other ways. Most notably, only 37 per cent of members of the BME population had sat and relaxed in their garden, compared to 66 per cent of those of White ethnicity. Those aged 16 to 24 were less likely to take part in gardening (24 per cent compared to 58 per cent aged 25 and over) or watching or listening to nature programmes on the television or radio (32 per cent compared to 55 per cent aged 25 or over).
- 49 per cent of the population strongly agreed that having open green spaces close to where they live is important, 41 per cent strongly agreed that spending time out of doors was an important part of their life and 34 per cent strongly agreed that they were concerned about damage to the natural environment.
- The more frequently people visit the natural environment, the more likely they are to appreciate it and to be concerned about environmental damage. Frequent visitors are also more likely to engage in pro-environmental behaviours such as recycling and preferring to buy seasonal and locally grown food. These results are consistent with those recorded in the 2009/10 survey.

## **Acknowledgements**

The TNS Research International project team would like to thank all the officers of Natural England who provided assistance in the administration and reporting of the second year of the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey. In particular, many thanks go to Hazel Thomas, Ben Nichols, Stephen Herbert, Alan Booth, Alison Hill and Erica Wayman.

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# 1 Introduction

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- 1.1 This report summarises the headline findings from the second year of the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey. The survey collects detailed information on people's use and enjoyment of the natural environment, focusing on visits to the natural environment. Fieldwork took place between March 2010 and February 2011.
- 1.2 The survey was undertaken by TNS Research International on behalf of Natural England, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Forestry Commission.
- 1.3 Where appropriate, comparisons are made with the first year of the survey where fieldwork was undertaken between March 2009 and February 2010.

## Background

- 1.4 Although there is a growing evidence base about the benefits that people derive from contact with the natural environment, there is a lack of information on how and why people currently engage with it.
- 1.5 A series of previous surveys were carried out by Government and its partners to track participation in leisure day visits. The leisure day visits survey series (undertaken in 1994, 1996, 1998, 2002 and 2005) collected information on the extent of participation in leisure day visits and provided estimates of the volume of visits. While these surveys included 'days out' in the countryside, they did not provide up-to-date and robust information on people's day to day use and enjoyment of the natural environment.
- 1.6 Natural England, Defra and the Forestry Commission therefore commissioned TNS Research International to undertake the MENE survey. This survey provides the most comprehensive dataset yet available on people's use and enjoyment of the natural environment. It includes information on visits to the natural environment (including short, close to home visits) as well as other ways of using and enjoying the natural environment. In addition, MENE is the first time a survey of this type has been conducted over consecutive years, allowing for greater confidence when tracking trends over time.

## Survey aims and objectives

- 1.7 This survey aims to provide information about the relationship between people and the natural environment. Whilst the main focus of the survey is on visits, it also seeks to capture other ways of using or enjoying the natural environment such as time spent in the garden and watching nature programmes on television.
- 1.8 The objectives of the survey are to:
  - provide estimates of the number of visits to the natural environment by the English adult population (16 years and over);
  - measure the extent of participation in visits to the natural environment and identify the barriers and drivers that shape participation;
  - provide robust information on the characteristics of visitors and visits to the natural environment;
  - measure other ways of using and enjoying the natural environment; and
  - identify patterns in use and participation for key groups within the population and at a range of spatial scales.

## Survey scope

- 1.9 The survey relates to engagement with *the natural environment*. By natural environment we mean all green open spaces in and around towns and cities as well as the wider countryside and coastline.
- 1.10 The main focus of the survey is on *visits to the natural environment*. By visits we mean time spent outdoors in the natural environment, *away from home and private gardens*. The results in sections two to seven relate to visits to the natural environment.
- 1.11 The survey also includes a smaller section of questions regarding engagement with the natural environment *other than that experienced during visits*. This includes activities such as time spent in private gardens, watching nature programmes on television and undertaking pro-environmental activities such as recycling. The results of these questions are included in section eight of this report.

## Structure of the report

- 1.12 This report presents the headline findings from the 2010/11 survey under the following sections. Where appropriate, comparisons are made with the results from 2009/10. Results are also presented by key population groups.

**Section 2: An overview of visits to the natural environment** – this summarises national and regional results for the proportion of the English adult population visiting the natural environment, and provides estimates of the total volume of visits during 2010/11.

**Section 3: Changes in engagement** – this section provides analysis and interpretation of results collected over the two years of the survey, and the changing volumes of visits taken by the English adult population.

**Section 4: Who? A profile of people that do and don't visit** – this section focuses in detail on the people that do and don't visit the natural environment and on the key differences and characteristics of these groups.

**Section 5: Where? The destination of visits** – this section provides an analysis of the destination of visits to the natural environment, and the mode of transport used.

**Section 6: What? A profile of visits** – the nature of visits to the natural environment is explored in this section. It includes the duration of the visit, activities undertaken, party composition and expenditure.

**Section 7: Why? Reasons for visiting or not visiting** – this section examines the motivations for visiting the natural environment and the benefits gained from doing so. It also includes an analysis of the barriers which prevent participation.

**Section 8: Other engagement with the natural environment** – this section summarises findings on other ways of enjoying and appreciating the natural environment.

### Appendices:

**Appendix 1: Survey scope and methods** – summarises survey scope, method, fieldwork and approach to data analysis.

**Appendix 2: Accuracy of survey results** – this provides a summary of the margins of error associated with key survey results and 'rules of thumb' to apply when interpreting the survey findings.

**Appendix 3: Definitions of socio-economic groups**



## Further publications from the survey

- 1.13 This report summarises the headline findings from MENE for 2010/11. Published alongside this report are:
- **Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment Technical Report** – which provides full details of the survey methodology for both the 2009/10 and 2010/11 surveys, including approaches to sampling, grossing and weighting, estimates of confidence intervals and the full questionnaire; and
  - **Electronic data table viewer** – an interactive tool which allows detailed analysis of the MENE dataset from 2009/10 and 2010/11.
- 1.14 A series of further outputs based on additional analysis of the MENE 2009/10 data are also available from the Natural England website<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/enjoying/research/monitor/default.aspx>

## 2 An overview of visits to the natural environment

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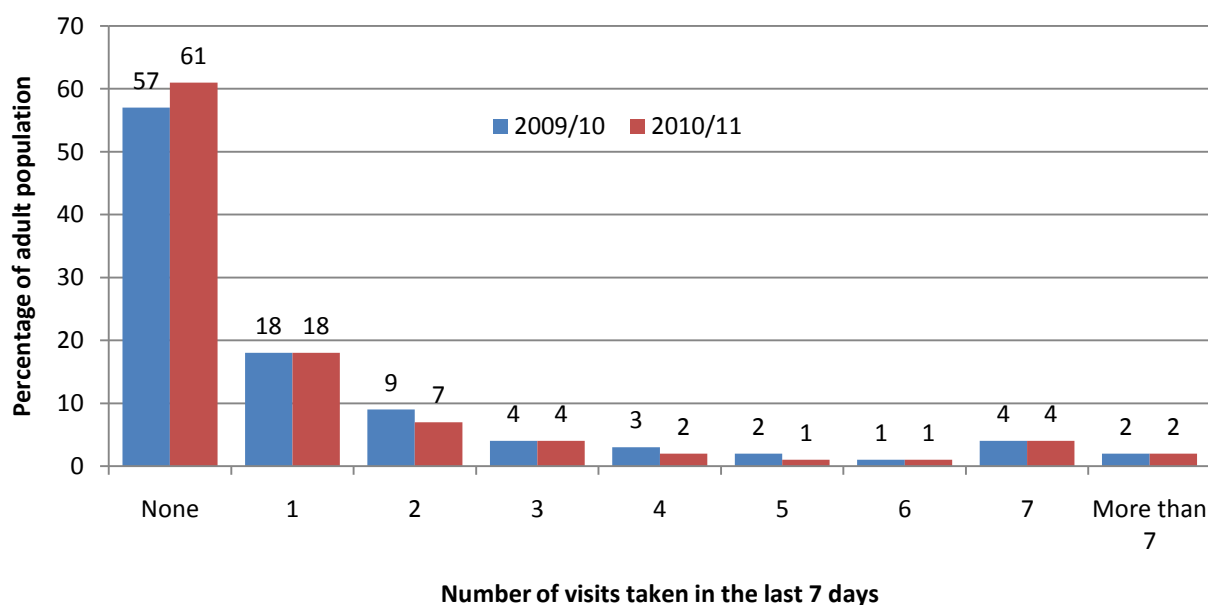
2.1 This section focuses on the frequency and volume of visits at national and regional level between March 2010 and February 2011. Comparisons are made with the key results from the 2009/10 survey.

### Headline results in this section

- The English adult population participated in an estimated 2.49 billion visits to the natural environment in 2010/11. This represents a 13 per cent decrease on the estimated 2.86 billion visits taken during 2009/10. This difference is statistically significant.
- The proportion of the English adult population taking a visit to the natural environment over the previous seven days during 2010/11 was 39 per cent. This is significantly lower than the proportion in 2009/10 (43 per cent).
- The average number of visits taken per adult over the survey period was 60; significantly lower than the average of 69 visits recorded during 2009/10. However this number varies greatly across England's regions, ranging from 98 in the South West to 27 in London.
- The frequency of visits taken to the natural environment varies greatly across the English population. While half of the adult population state that they normally visited the natural environment at least once per week (53 per cent), eight per cent had only made one or two visits and nine per cent of respondents had not taken a visit in the previous 12 months at all. These findings are not significantly different from those recorded in the 2009/10 survey.

## Frequency of visits

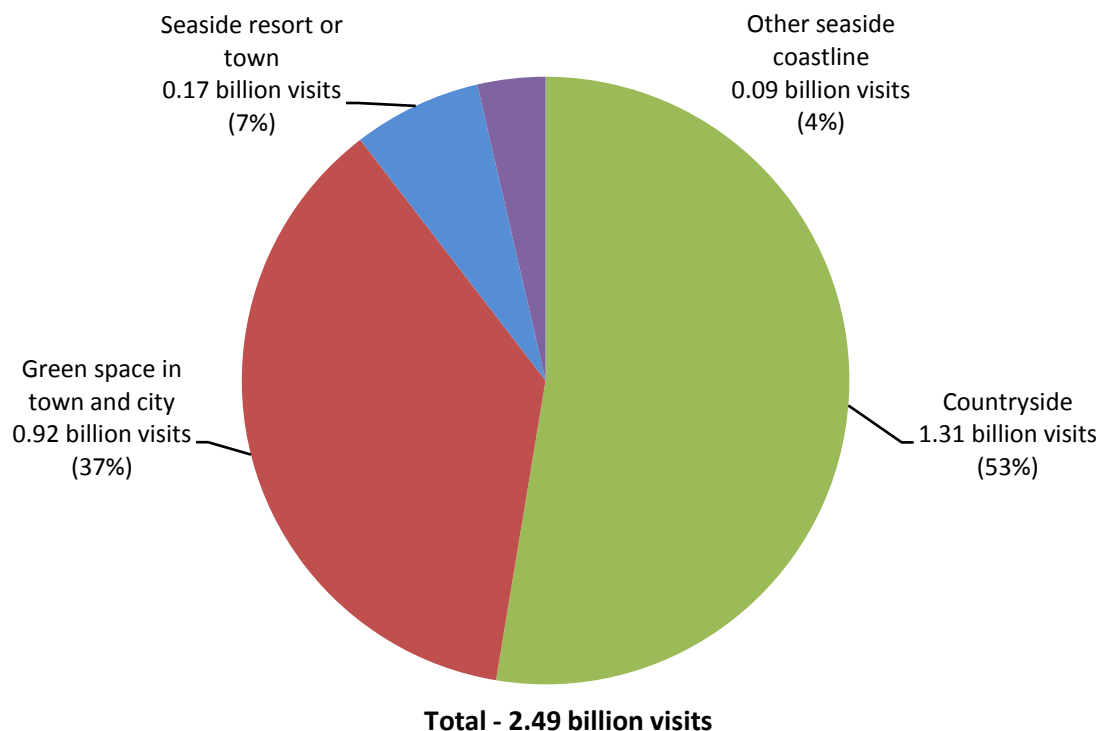
- 2.2 The survey records the number of visits taken per adult during the last seven days. This allows estimates of the total volume of visits taken in each week of the survey period to be calculated.
- 2.3 Between March 2010 and February 2011, 39 per cent of adults had visited the natural environment in the week prior to interview. 18 per cent had taken one visit while seven per cent had visited twice (Figure 2-1). Overall, six per cent had taken seven visits or more to the natural environment over the previous week. This equates to an average of 60 visits across the year by every adult in England.
- 2.4 During 2010/11 the proportion of adults visiting the natural environment in the week prior to interview (39 per cent), and the average number of visits taken per adult (60), was significantly lower than in 2009/10.



**Figure 2-1** Number of visits to the natural environment taken in the previous seven days (%)  
 Q1 How many times, if at all, did you make this type of visit? Base: All respondents, weekly questions  
 (2009/10 N=48,514; 2010/11 N= 46,099)

## Estimated volume of visits in the last year

2.7 It is estimated that between March 2010 and February 2011, the 41.7 million adults resident in England took a total of 2.49 billion visits to the natural environment<sup>2</sup>. Just over half of these visits (53 per cent or 1.31 billion) were to places in the countryside and just over a third (37 per cent or 0.92 billion) were taken to green spaces within a town or city. Seven per cent (or 0.17 billion) were taken to a green space in a seaside town or resort and four per cent (or 0.09 billion) to other seaside coastline areas (Figure 2-2).



**Figure 2-2** Volume of visits by main place visited (March 2010 to February 2011)

2.8 The 2.46 billion visits taken between March 2010 and February 2011 is 13 per cent less than the 2.86 billion visits taken between March 2009 and February 2010. The decline was most notable in visits to green spaces in towns and cities (a 20 per cent decrease) while the reduction in the volume of visits taken to the countryside was less considerable (a five per cent decrease). Overall, 17 per cent fewer visits were taken to seaside towns and resorts and other seaside coastline.

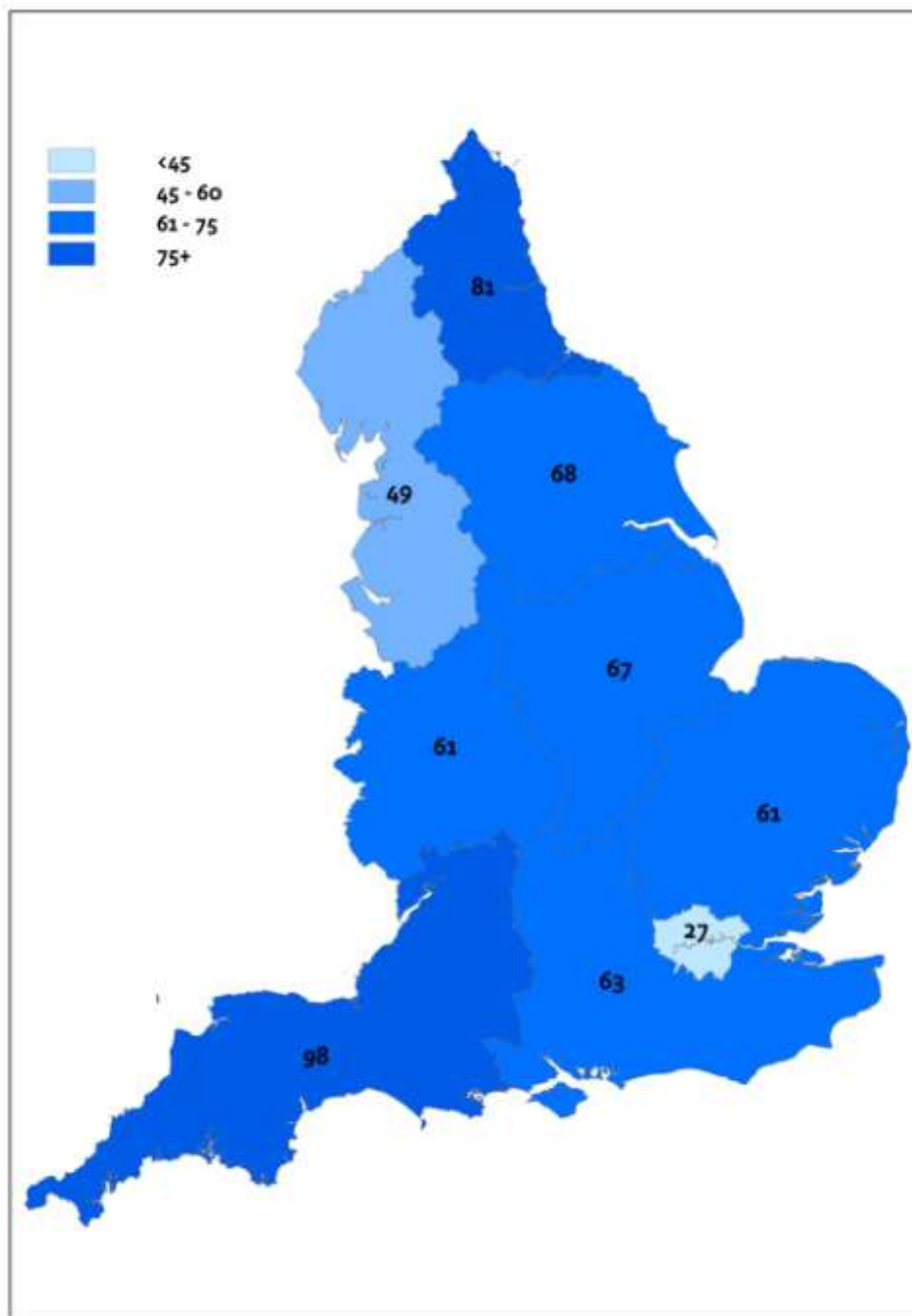
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<sup>2</sup> Taking account of margins of error, at the 95% confidence level estimated total visits range from 2.43 to 2.56 billion.

## Regional distribution of visits

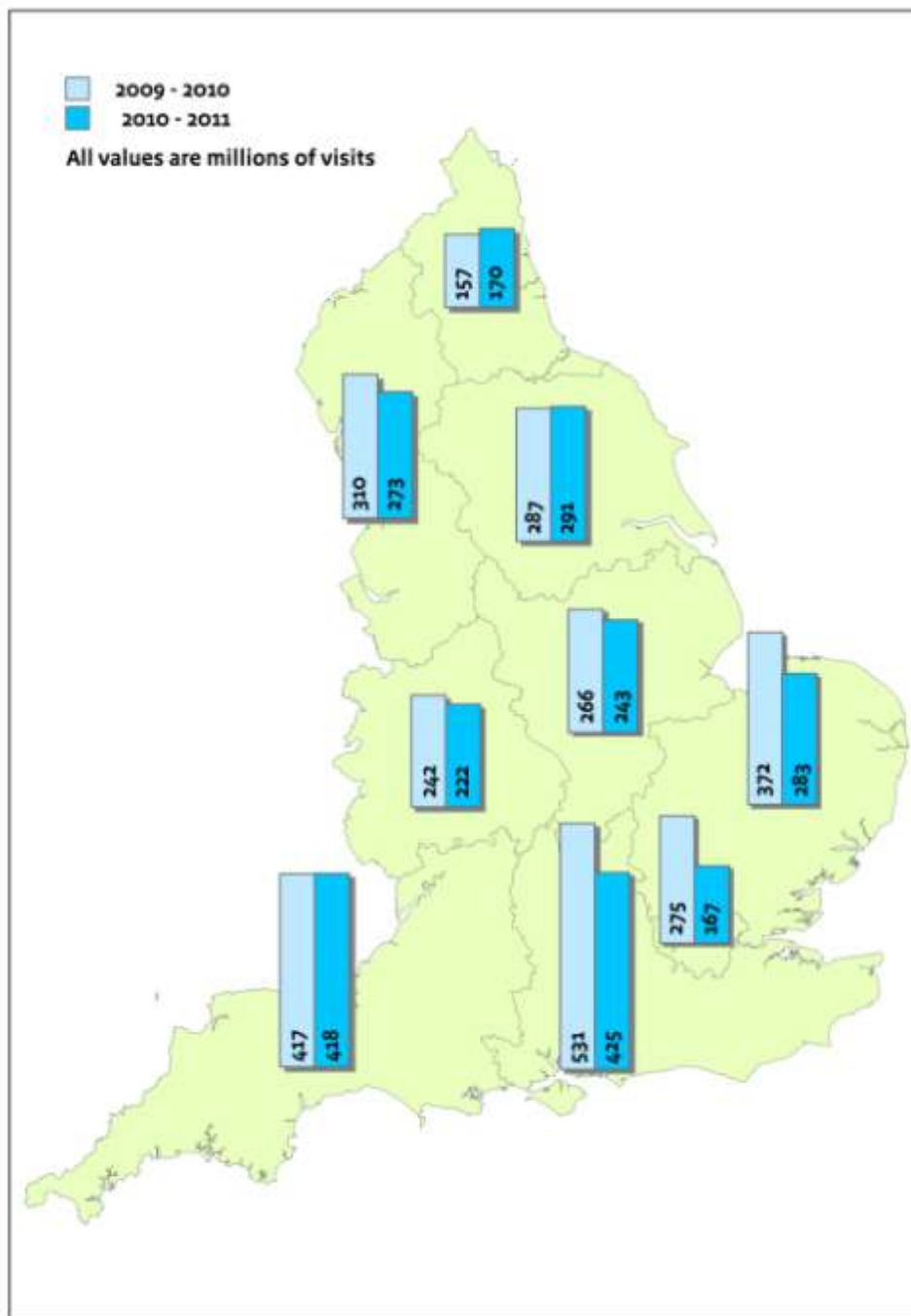
### Resident-based distribution

2.9 The average number of visits taken per adult over the 12 month period was 60. There was however considerable variation between regions (Figure 2-3). The average number of visits ranged from 98 visits by residents of the South West, to 27 visits by London residents. Residents of the West Midlands, East of England and the South East had very similar numbers of average visits to the national average of 60 (61, 61 and 63 respectively).



**Figure 2-3** Average number of visits per adult by residents of each region (March 2010 to February 2011)

2.10 Figure 2-4 illustrates the estimated total volume of visits to the natural environment taken by residents of England's regions. The volume of visits by residents in each region is likely to be influenced both by the size of the population in each region and the availability of accessible natural environment destinations.



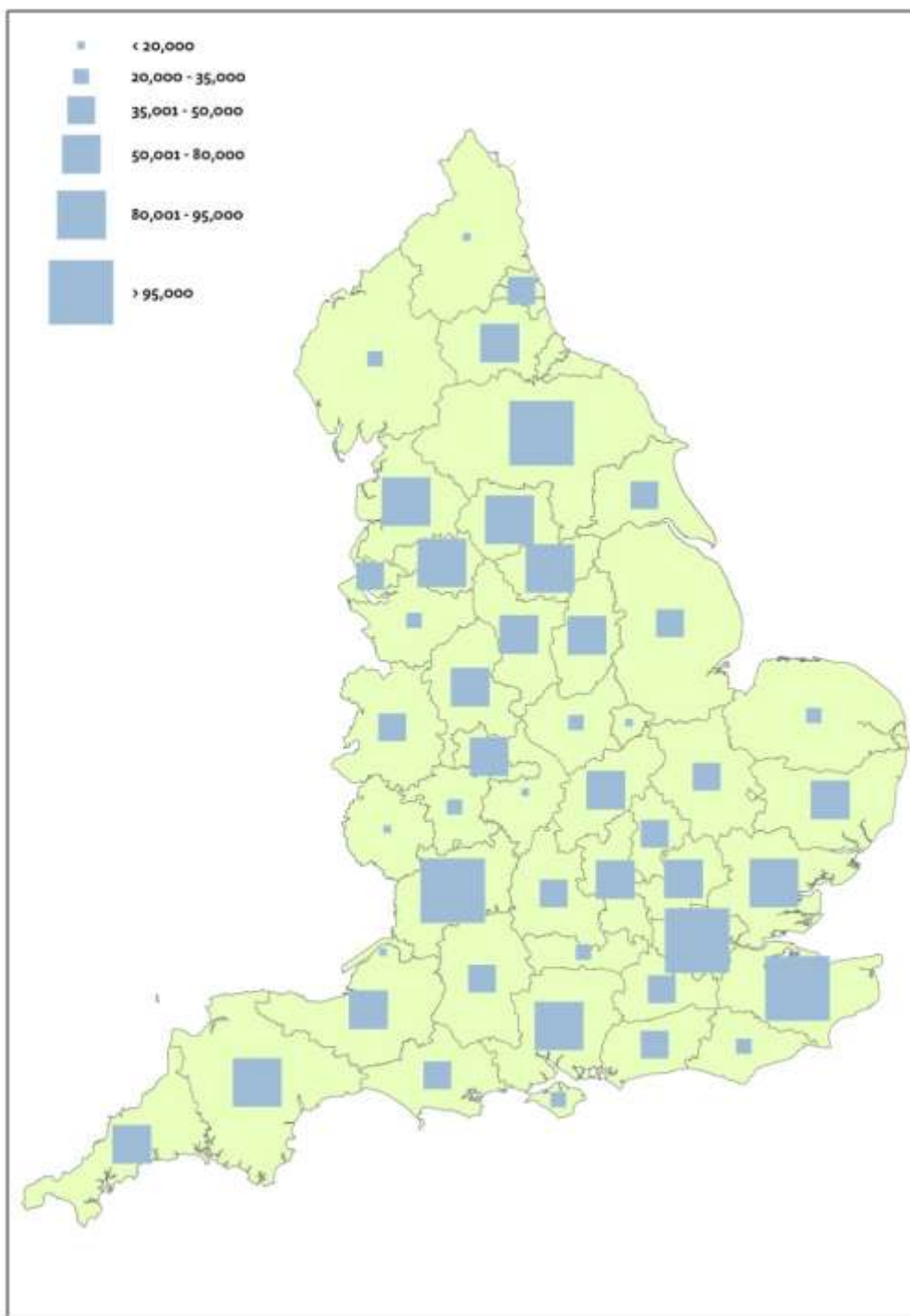
**Figure 2-4** Volume of visits taken by residents of English regions (March 2009 to February 2011)

2.11 Comparing the estimated volume of visits taken between the first two survey years suggests that the volume of visits taken has decreased in London, the South East, East of England, Midlands and North West, but has remained at a similar level or increased in the South West, the North East and Yorkshire and Humberside.

2.12 With two years of surveying completed, the overall sample size is now sufficient to allow analysis of the total volume of visits taken by the residents of England's counties, as

illustrated in Figure 2-5 overleaf. Rather than presenting results as absolute values they are shown as broad ranges, represented by the sizes of the squares.

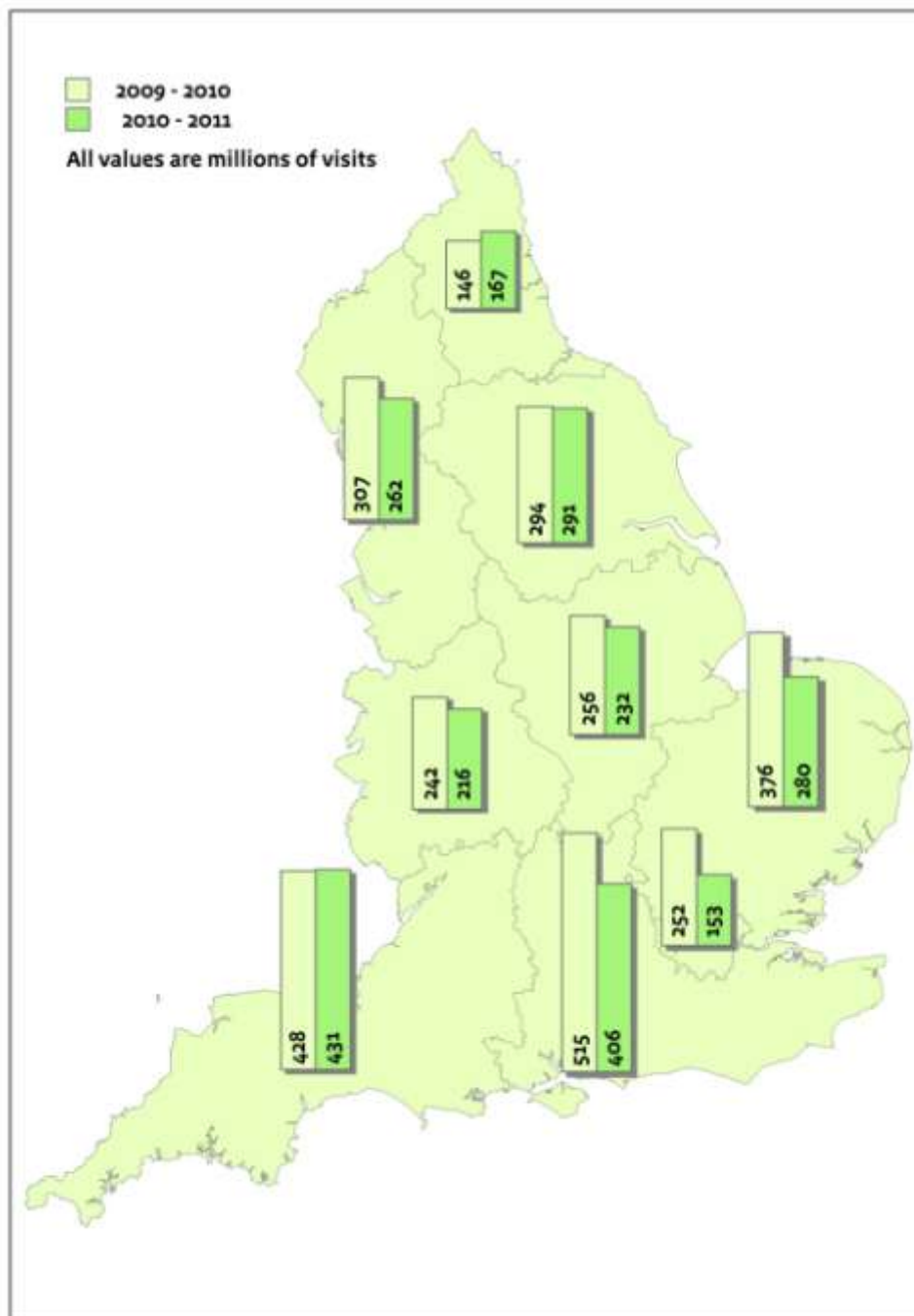
- 2.13 On completion of the third year of fieldwork, the increased sample size will allow for a greater level of reporting of results at this geographic level. As with the regional analysis, the total volume of visits by residents in each county is largely influenced by the size of the population but is also related to the availability of accessible natural environment destinations.



**Figure 2-5** Volume of visits taken by residents of English counties (cumulative March 2009 to February 2011)

## Destination-based distribution

- 2.14 In terms of regions as destinations for visits, the largest proportions of visits were taken to destinations in the South West (18 per cent of all visits) and the South East (17 per cent). The volume of visits to a regional destination is influenced by the population living within that region, as well as the availability of local natural environment destinations to attract visitors.
- 2.15 The volume of visits taken decreased most significantly in London, the South East and East of England but remained at a similar level or increased in the South West and North East.

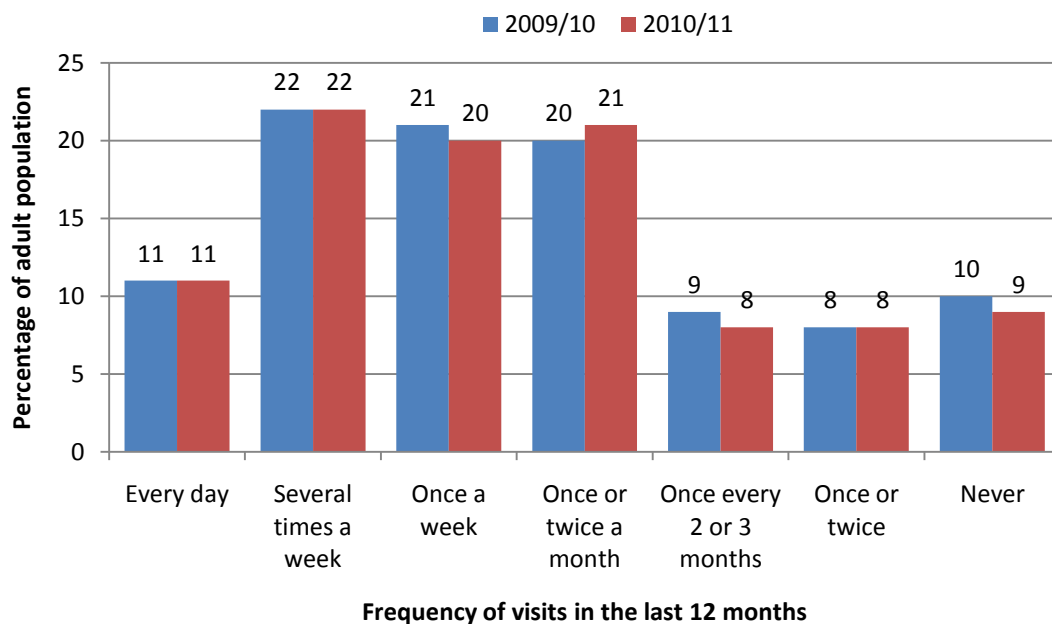


**Figure 2-6** Estimated volume of visits taken to destinations in each region (March 2009 to February 2011)

*Note: The sum of the estimated volume of visits to England's regions (2.44 billion) is less than total volume of visits taken in England (2.49 billion) as the destination of 2% of visits could not be coded to a region.*



- 2.16 The survey also contains a question asking respondents about how often they have typically visited the natural environment during the last 12 months. While the data collected from this question is less precise than that obtained when asking about the exact number of visits taken in the last seven days, it does provide a useful, broad measure of participation levels. The results of this question have also been used to categorise the population into groups typifying their frequency of engagement (see Section Four).
- 2.17 Between March 2010 and February 2011 just over half of the adult population of England (53 per cent) stated that they normally visited the natural environment at least once a week with 11 per cent of those claiming to visit on a daily basis (see Figure 2-7). Nine per cent reported that they had taken no visits during the last 12 months while a further eight per cent had made only one or two visits. As illustrated in Figure 2-7 these results are not significantly different from those recorded during the 2009/10 period.



**Figure 2-7** Frequency of visits to the natural environment (%)  
 Q17 Thinking about the last 12 months, how often on average have you spent your leisure time out of doors, away from home? Base: All respondents, monthly questions (2009/10 N=11,107; 2010/11 N= 10,630)

# 3 Changes in engagement

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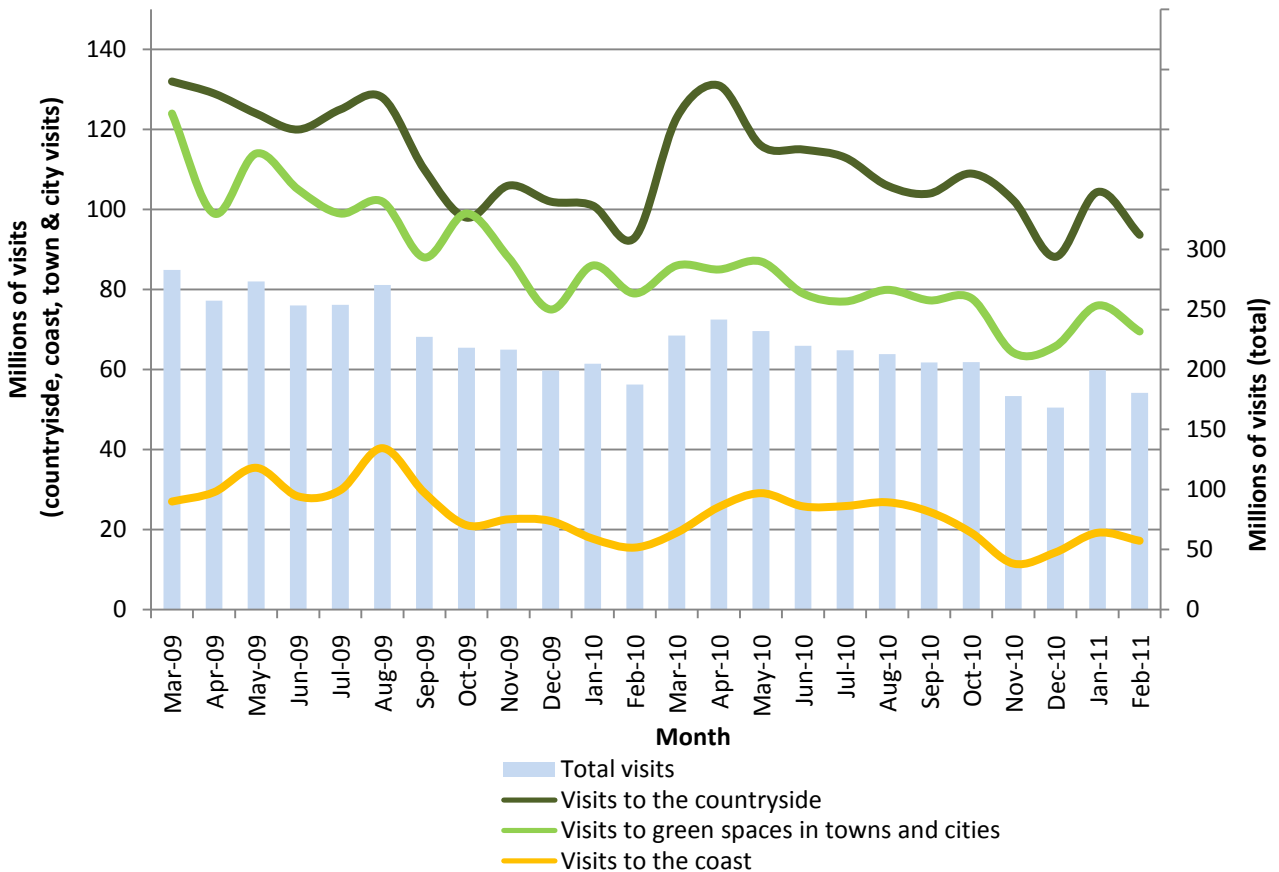
3.1 As described in the previous chapter, the estimated volume of visits taken to the natural environment between March 2010 and February 2011 was 13 per cent lower than the previous year. This section provides further analysis of the changing levels of engagement over the 2 years from March 2009 to February 2011.

## Headline results in this section

- Visits were lower during every month of the 2010/11 survey, compared to the same month in the previous year. The greatest decreases in visits were recorded in March, August, November and December 2010.
- Between 2009/10 and 2010/11 the number of visits taken to farmland, mountain, hill and moorland and woodland increased, while the most significant decreases in visits were recorded for urban parks and other open spaces in towns and cities.
- While none of the activities undertaken during a visit showed increases compared to the first year of the survey, dog walking, playing with children and running experienced a smaller percentage decrease in visitor numbers than was recorded for other more discretionary activities such as eating and drinking out. This suggests that external factors such as the weather have less impact on propensity to participate in routine activities such as dog walking than more discretionary activities such as eating out, beach activities and picnics.
- The decrease in visit numbers was not consistent across all population groups. The largest decreases were recorded amongst the 16-24 and 65 and over age groups, members of the DE socio-economic group, unemployed people and members of the black and minority ethnic (BME) population. The number of visits taken increased slightly amongst the AB socio-economic group.

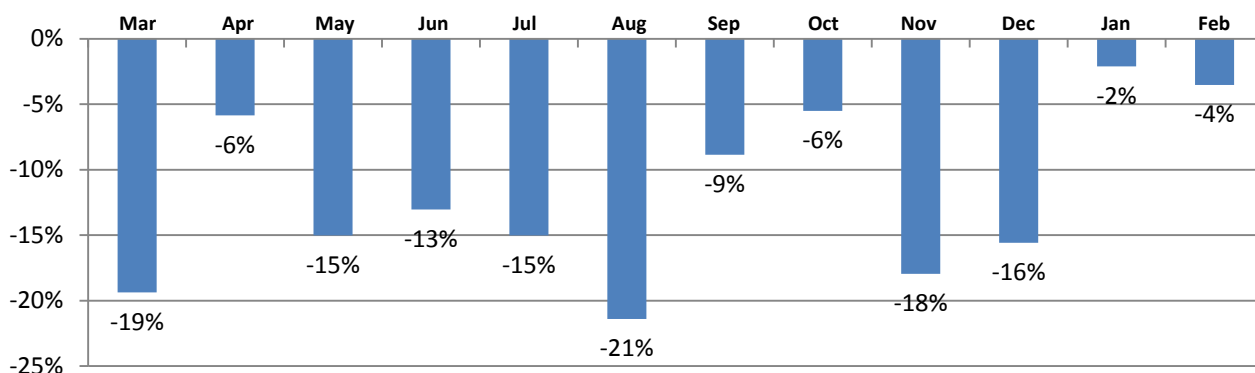
## Changes by month

3.2 During the two year period from March 2009 to February 2011, the highest monthly volumes of visits were recorded during March, May and August 2009 while the winter months received a lower volume of visits in both survey years. As Figure 3-1 illustrates, the pattern of visits overall (represented by bars) and to each of the main types of destination (represented by lines) was broadly similar with seasonal variations and a general downward trend over the two year period.



**Figure 3-1** Estimated monthly volume of visits to the natural environment by general type of place visited (March 2009 to February 2011)

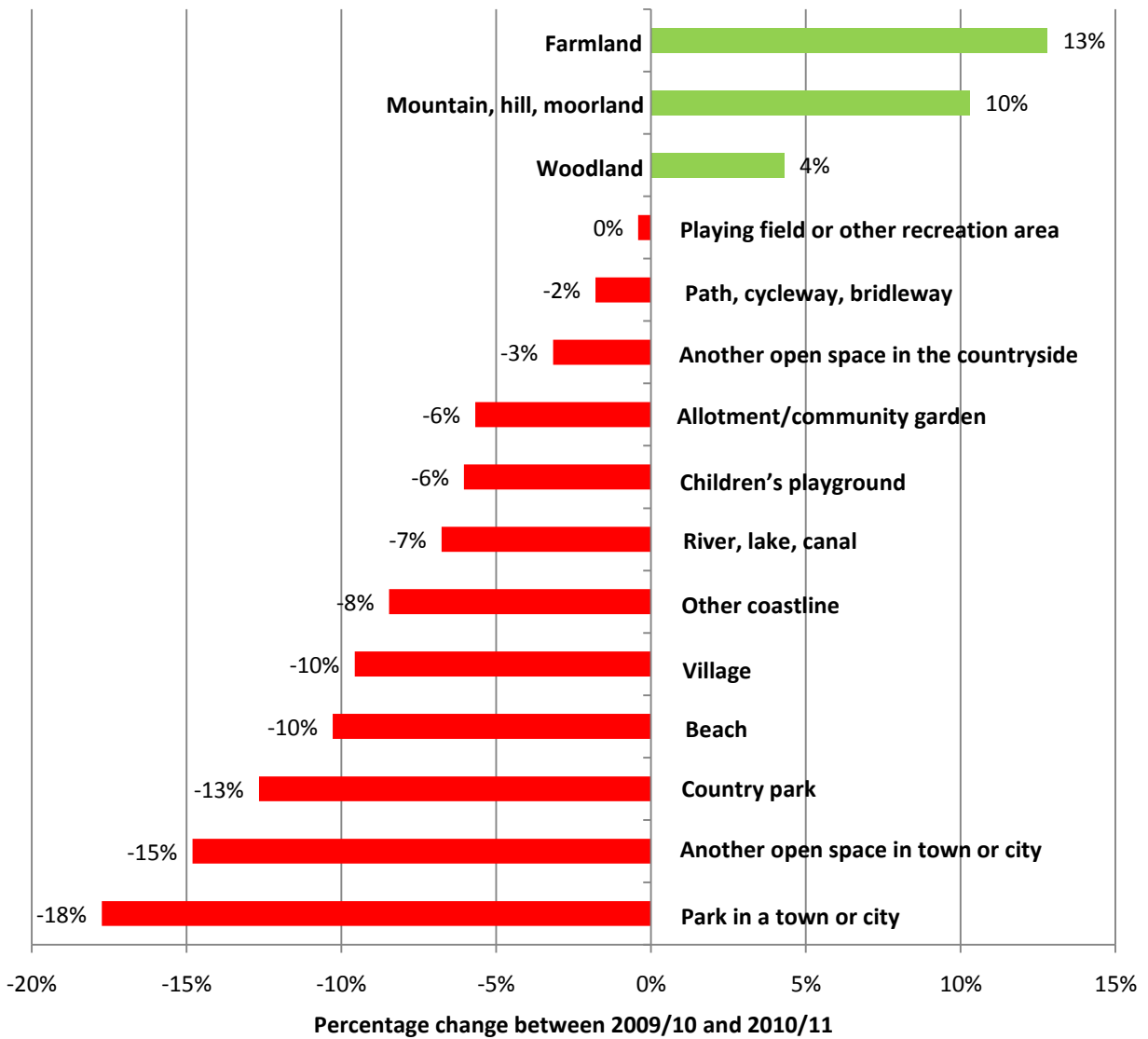
3.3 The volume of visits recorded between March 2010 and February 2011 was 13 per cent less than in the previous twelve months. However, Figure 3-2 illustrates that there were greater decreases in certain months, most notably in March, August and November. However, the volume of visits recorded in January and February 2011 were only marginally less than the equivalent months in 2010.



**Figure 3-2** Estimated difference in volume of visits to the natural environment by month, March 2009 to February 2010 period versus March 2010 to February 2011 period

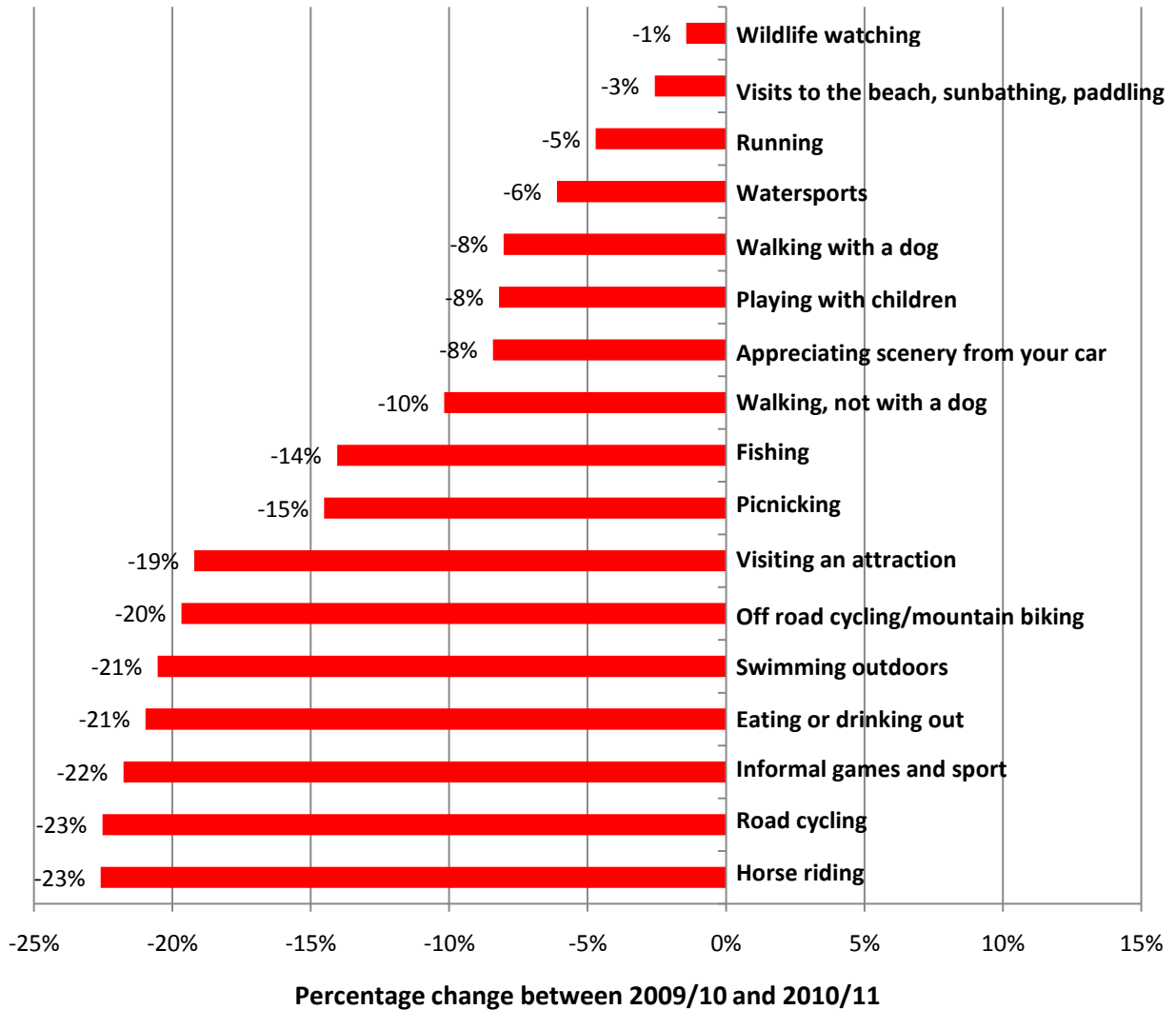
## Changes by place and activity

- 3.4 The decrease in visits varies by destination. The number of visits taken to green spaces in towns and cities decreased by 20 per cent, while 17 per cent fewer visits were taken to the coast and five per cent fewer visits were taken in the countryside.
- 3.5 These variations are reflected in the changes in volumes of visits taken to more specific types of place. As Figure 3-3 illustrates, the volume of visits taken to rural types of location (farmland, mountain/hill/moorland and woodland) increased while decreases were recorded for parks and other open spaces in towns and cities.
- 3.6 As a result of these variations in volume changes, the proportion of total visits taken to woodland and moorland destinations increased between the two survey periods while the proportion of visits taken to parks in towns and cities decreased. These changes are described in further detail in Section Five.



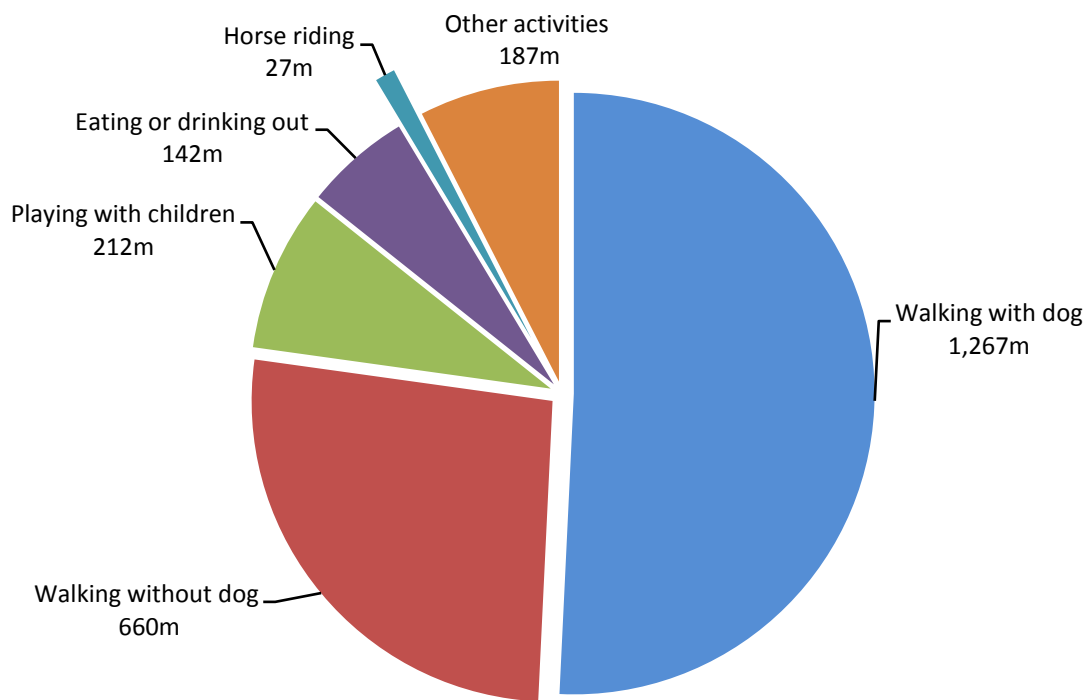
**Figure 3-3** Estimated difference in volume of visits to the natural environment by detailed type of place, March 2009 to February 2010 period versus March 2010 to February 2011 period

3.7 The volume of visits also varied by the activities undertaken during visits (Figure 3-4). In percentage terms, the downturn in participation was less than the overall decrease in visits between 2009/10 and 2010/11 (-13%) for a number of activities including wildlife watching, sunbathing and paddling, running, water sports, dog walking, playing with children, appreciating scenery by car and walking without a dog. However the percentage decrease was greater than this average for a number of activities including road cycling and horse riding.



**Figure 3-4** Estimated difference in volume of visits to the natural environment by activities undertaken, March 2009 to February 2010 period versus March 2010 to February 2011 period

3.8 The relative volume of visits for different activities should be borne in mind when considering percentages changes between the two 12 month periods. For example only a small proportion of all visits involved horse riding, while around half of visits taken involved walking with a dog (Figure 3-5). As such the smaller percentage decrease in participation in dog walking actually represents a much larger decrease in terms of the absolute volume of visits taken. Comparing the two 12 month periods, around 113 million fewer visits involving dog walking were taken compared to 8 million fewer visits involving horse riding.



**Figure 3-5** Volume of visits to the natural environment by activities undertaken, March 2010 to February 2011

- 3.9 Figure 3-6 overleaf illustrates variations in the volumes of visits for two of the most popular activities - walking with a dog and eating and drinking out. To facilitate comparison the results are presented as an index where the average monthly volume of visits involving each activity over the 24 month period is given a value of 1. Where the green and orange lines are at this level, levels of participation in visits involving dog walking and eating and drinking out were at or close to the two-year average. When the lines reach 1.5, levels of participation during that month were one and a half times greater than the overall two-year average. Likewise when the lines reach 0.5, levels of participation were half the two-year average during that month.
- 3.10 This comparison illustrates the significant level of variation in visits involving eating and drinking out with levels notably above average in the summer months but below average in the winter periods. By comparison there is less seasonal variation in levels of participation in walking with a dog, reflecting the need for this activity to be undertaken regularly regardless of weather conditions, daylight hours, etc.
- 3.11 This comparison also illustrates the greater decrease in levels of participation in visits involving eating and drinking out over the two year period with the trend line during the second 12 month period notably lower than in the first 12 months. By comparison, while participation in dog walking visits also decreased, the variation is much smaller.



**Figure 3-6** Estimated monthly volume of visits to the natural environment by visits involving dog walking and visits only including eating or drinking out. Indexed against 2 year average (March 2009 to February 2011)

3.12 To further understand variations in participation levels over the two year period, the activities asked about have been grouped into two categories as follows:

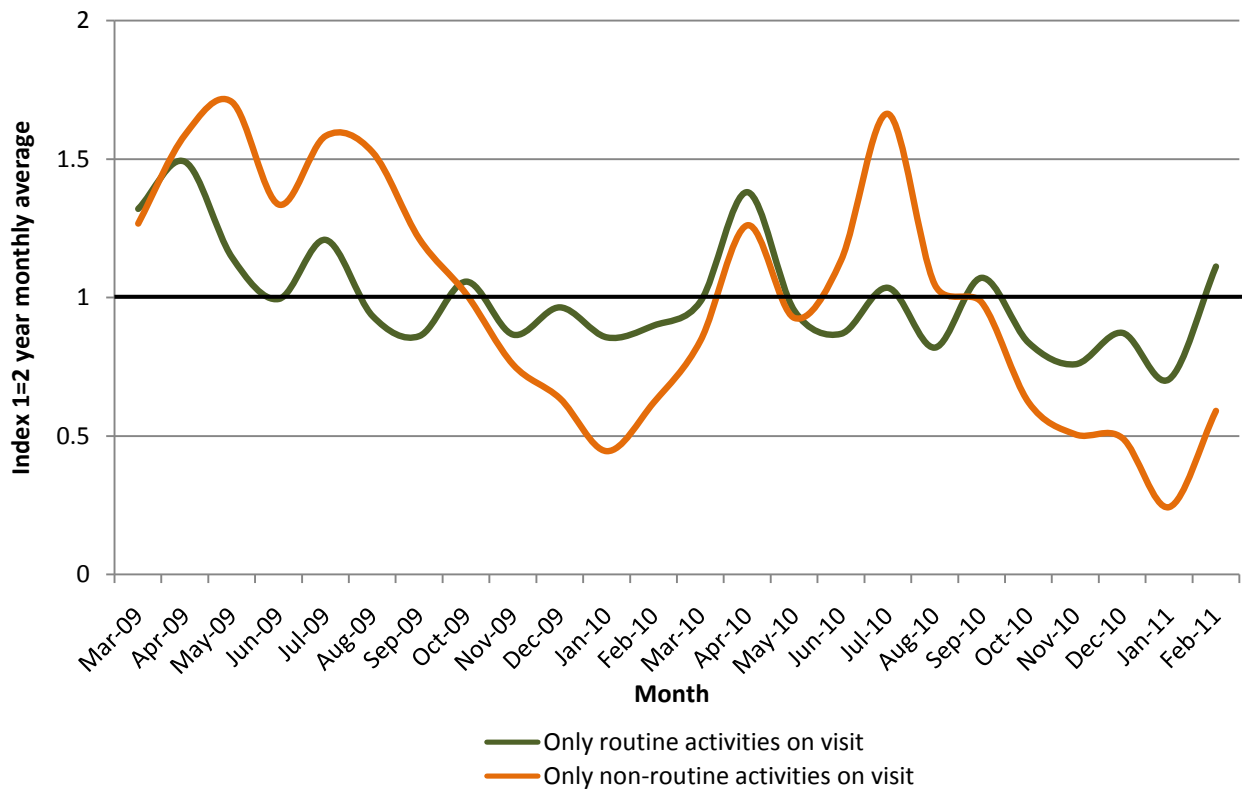
- *Routine* - those activities which can be considered as likely to be undertaken more routinely and with a purpose other than simply for pleasure (e.g. for health reasons, to exercise dog, to entertain children or to get somewhere). This group includes walking with a dog, walking not with a dog, playing with children, running and road cycling.
- *Non-routine* - these activities are less routine and more discretionary and more likely to be undertaken entirely for leisure purposes. This group includes wildlife watching, activities on a beach, watersports, fishing, picnicking, visiting attractions, off road cycling, swimming outdoors, eating and drinking out and horse riding.

3.13 During the March 2010 to February 2011 period, 78 per cent of visits taken *only* included those activities which were defined as routine while eight per cent *only* included activities considered as non-routine.

3.14 Between the March 2009 to February 2010 and March 2010 to February 2011 periods, the volume of visits taken only including routine activities decreased by 9% while the volume of visits including only non-routine activities decreased by 25%.

3.15 Figure 3-7 illustrates the changing volume of visits including only routine and only non routine activities (values are indexed against a two year average to facilitate comparison). The greater seasonal variation in visits only involving non-routine activities is apparent while visits which only include routine activities have a less clear seasonal pattern and have decreased less over the 2 year period.





**Figure 3-7** Estimated monthly volume of visits to the natural environment by visits only including routine activities and visits only including non-routine activities. Indexed against 2 year average (March 2009 to February 2011)

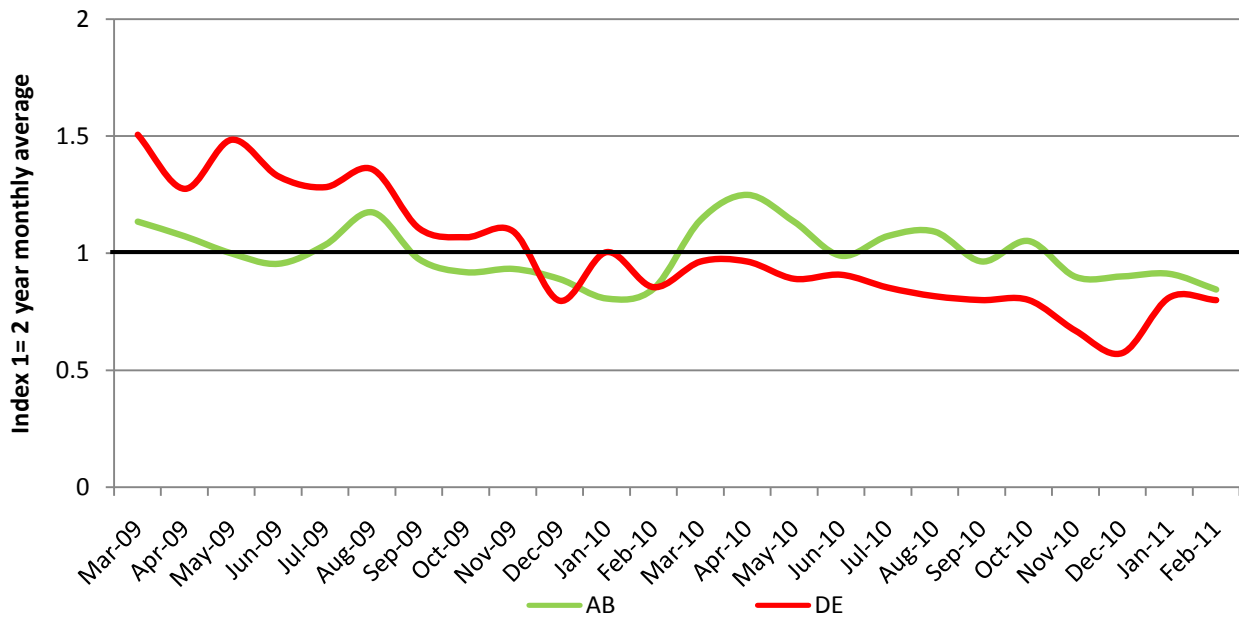
## Changes by population group

3.16 Changes in the volume of visits taken to the natural environment during the two year period also varied amongst demographic groups (Figure 3-8). The greatest decreases were recorded amongst those in the youngest and oldest age groups, members of the DE socio-economic group, unemployed people, and members of the BME population. Conversely, a slight increase in the volume of visits was recorded amongst the most affluent AB socio-economic groups.



**Figure 3-8** Estimated difference in volume of visits to the natural environment by age, socio-economic group, working status and ethnicity, March 2009 to February 2010 period versus March 2010 to February 2011 period

- 3.17 Figure 3-9 further illustrates the varying patterns of participation amongst those in the most affluent AB socio-economic groups and those classified as DEs. To facilitate comparison, indexed results are illustrated where 1 equates to the average monthly volume of visits over the two year period.
- 3.18 Given the significant year on year decrease in participation levels amongst DEs and increasing participation amongst ABs, analysis on the basis of these variables most clearly illustrates how trends can vary between population groups. The decreasing monthly volume of visits amongst DEs is clear, while the volume of visits taken by ABs varied by season but experienced much less fluctuation.



**Figure 3-9** Estimated monthly volume of visits to the natural environment by socio-economic group. Indexed against two year average (March 2009 to February 2011)

## 4 Who? A profile of people that do and don't visit

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4.1 This section provides a profile of people that do and don't visit the natural environment. It focuses on differences by age, gender, ethnicity and socio-economic group.

### Headline results in this section

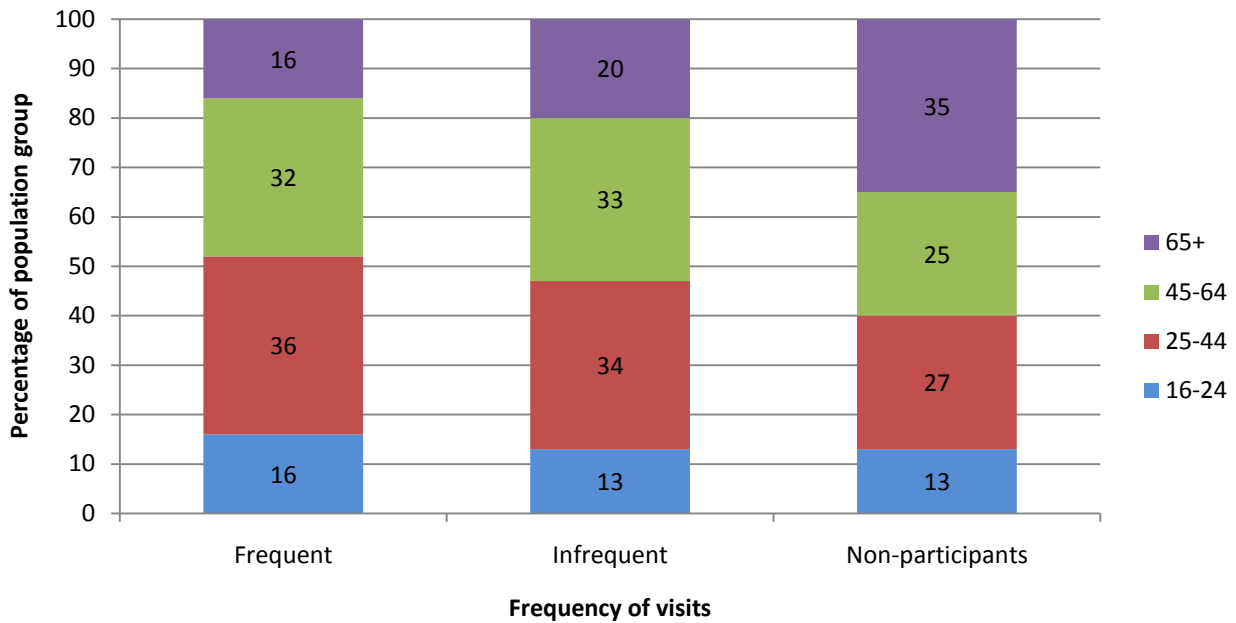
- The proportion of the total population taking visits in the last seven days decreased, from 43 per cent to 39 per cent between 2009/10 and 2010/11. The largest decreases were recorded amongst those aged 16-24, people in the DE socio-economic group, and those from the BME population.
- The population groups with the largest proportions taking visits to the natural environment included people aged between 45 and 64, those in employment, and those in the ABC1 socio-economic groups.
- Levels of participation were significantly lower than the overall population averages amongst the 65 and over groups, the BME population and members of the DE socio-economic groups.

### Participation in visits in the last 12 months

4.2 The English population can be divided into three broad groups according to their level of participation:

- **Frequent visitors** – those who state that on average they normally take visits to the natural environment at least once a week (53 per cent or around 22 million adults).
- **Infrequent visitors** – those who state that on average they normally visit once or twice a month or less often (37 per cent or around 16 million adults).
- **Non-participants** – those who state that they have not visited the natural environment in the last 12 months (9 per cent or around 4 million adults).

4.3 Just over a third (35 per cent) of those who did not take a visit to the natural environment in the last 12 months were aged 65 and over (Figure 4-1). 68 per cent of frequent visitors were between the ages of 25 and 64, with those aged between 25 and 44 the most likely to have frequently visited the outdoors in the last twelve months (36 per cent). These proportions are not significantly different from those recorded in the 2009/10 survey.



**Figure 4-1** Age profile by frequency of participation in visits to the natural environment (%)  
 Q17 Thinking about the last 12 months, how often on average have you spent your leisure time out of doors, away from home? (Base: Monthly questions. Frequent N=5,536; Infrequent N=3,996; Non-participants=1,098)

4.4 Retired people were amongst those who were more likely to never take a visit to the natural environment – 37 per cent compared to 21 per cent of those who take visits frequently, and 23 per cent of infrequent participants (Table 4-1). These findings are similar to those found during 2009/10.

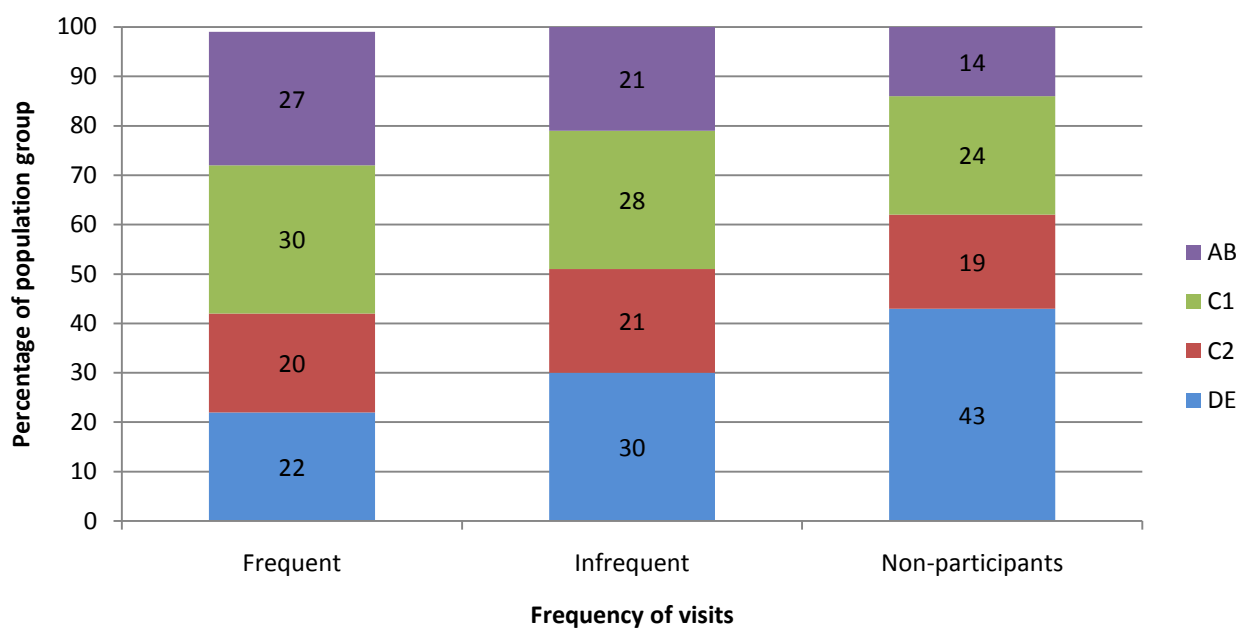
**Table 4-1** Working status profile and long term illness or disability by frequency of participation in visits to the natural environment (%)

Q17 Thinking about the last 12 months, how often on average have you spent your leisure time out of doors, away from home? (Base: Monthly questions. Frequent N=5,536; Infrequent N=3,996; Non-participants=1,098)

	Frequency of visits		
	Frequent %	Infrequent %	Non-participants %
<b>Working status</b>			
Working full time (30+ hours per week)	49	49	32
Working part time (less than 30 hours per week)	12	10	7
Retired	21	23	37
At school or full time higher education	6	5	5
Unemployed/not seeking work	12	13	19
<b>Long term illness and disability</b>			
Any long term illness or disability	13	19	36
No long term illness of disability	87	81	64

4.5 Socio-economic status is an important factor in determining levels of participation with the natural environment. The results from 2010/11 further confirm a relationship, with 27 per cent of frequent visitors in the AB socio-economic groups when they represent 22 per cent of the English population as a whole.

4.6 In contrast those in the DE socio-economic groups represent 28 per cent of the population but account for 43 per cent of those who never visit the natural environment. This finding is likely to be influenced by the relatively larger proportion of retired people within the DE groups, and the fact that retired people are less likely to visit the natural environment.



**Figure 4-2** Socio-economic profile by frequency of participation in visits to the natural environment (%)

Q17 Thinking about the last 12 months, how often on average have you spent your leisure time out of doors, away from home? (Base: Monthly questions. Frequent N=5,536; Infrequent N=3,996; Non-participants=1,098)

- 4.7 Almost a quarter of those who never visit the natural environment were from the BME population (24 per cent, see Table 4-2). Although this group represents 12 per cent of the English population, only a small proportion of those who visit on at least a weekly basis were from the BME population (eight per cent).
- 4.8 Analysis of participation using the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 (IMD)<sup>3</sup> reveals an association between levels of deprivation and propensity to visit the natural environment. 19 per cent of those in the bottom ten per cent IMD grouping never visit the outdoors, compared to five per cent of those in the top ten per cent.

<sup>3</sup> The IMD 2007 combines a number of social and economic indicators to give small geographic areas a single deprivation score. These scores are then ranked allowing the most and least deprived areas to be identified. For more details see URL:

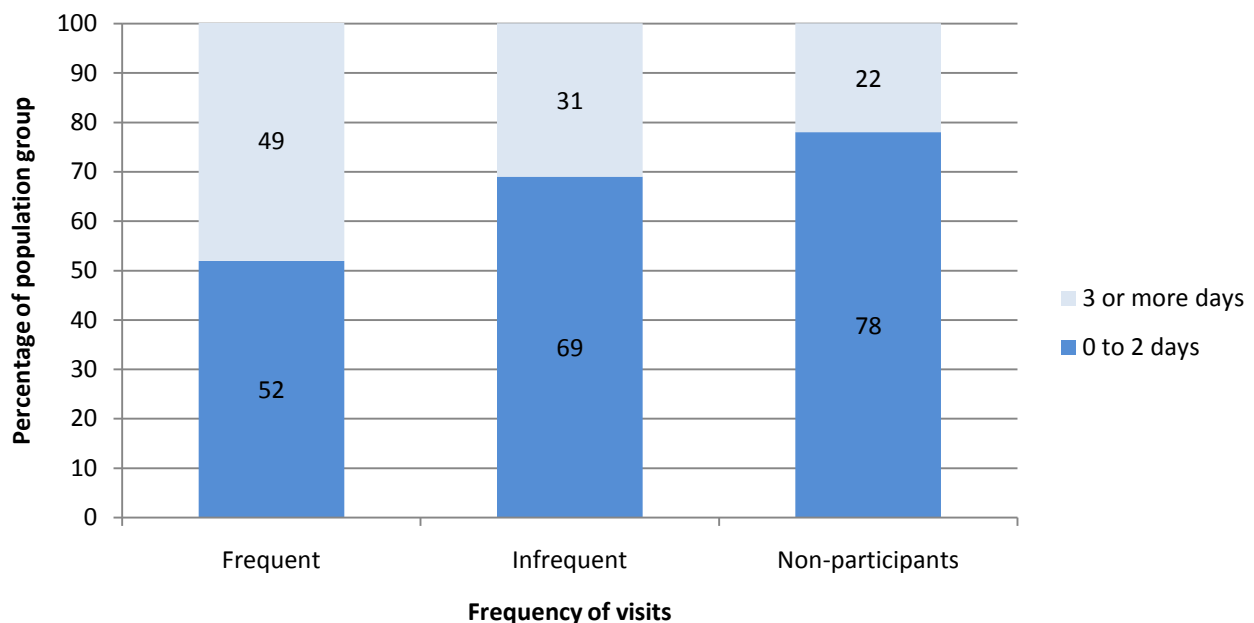
[www.communities.gov.uk/communities/neighbourhoodrenewal/deprivation/](http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/neighbourhoodrenewal/deprivation/)

**Table 4-2** Ethnicity and Index of Multiple Deprivation by frequency of participation in visits to the natural environment (%)

Q17 Thinking about the last 12 months, how often on average have you spent your leisure time out of doors, away from home? (Base: Monthly questions. Frequent N=5,536; Infrequent N=3,996; Non-participants=1,098)

	Frequency of visits		
	Frequent %	Infrequent %	Non-participants %
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
BME	8	17	24
White	91	83	75
<b>Index of Multiple Deprivation</b>			
Bottom 10%	9	12	19
Mid 11% to 89%	80	79	76
Top 10%	11	9	5

4.9 Figure 4-3 highlights an association between frequency of visits to the outdoors and levels of physical exercise. Almost half (49 per cent) of those who visited the natural environment frequently took part in at least 30 minutes of physical activity at least three times a week, compared to just 22 per cent of those who never visit the natural environment.



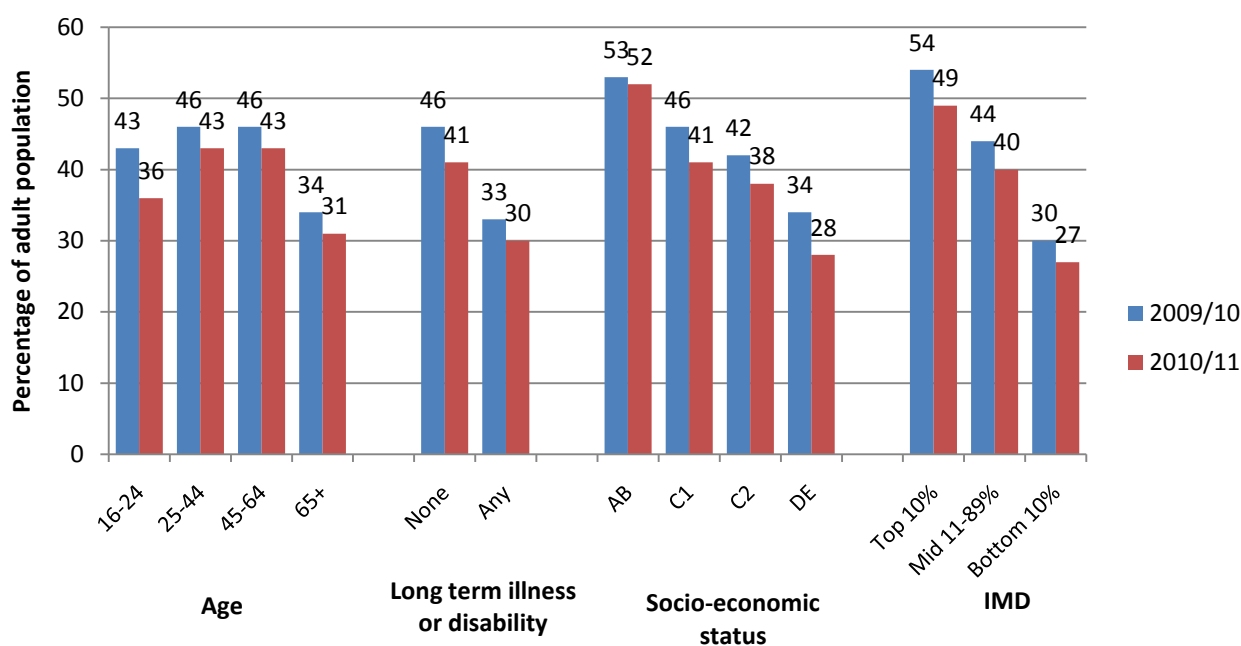
**Figure 4-3** Number of days in last week undertook 30 minutes of more of physical activity by frequency of participation in visits to the natural environment (%)

Q17 Thinking about the last 12 months, how often on average have you spent your leisure time out of doors, away from home? (Base: Monthly questions. Frequent N=5,536; Infrequent N=3,996; Non-participants=1,098)

4.10 Respondents were also asked about their visits to the natural environment in the week prior to being interviewed. The focus on the previous week improves the likelihood of respondents accurately recalling details of the visits they have taken.



- 4.11 Overall 39 per cent of the English population stated that they had taken at least one visit to the natural environment in the week prior to being interviewed <sup>4</sup>. This finding is significantly lower than the 2009/10 figure of 43 per cent. Analysis by demographic grouping (see Figure 4-4) highlights the population groups where the largest variations have taken place.
- 4.12 There is a relationship between age and participation in visits to the natural environment. Those in the youngest and oldest age groupings are least likely to have taken a visit to the natural environment in the last seven days. In total, 36 per cent of those aged 16 to 24 and 31 per cent of those aged 65 and over had taken a visit to the outdoors in the past seven days, compared to 43 per cent of those aged 25 to 64.
- 4.13 The largest decrease in visits taken to the natural environment in the last week was recorded in the 16 to 24 age group (36 per cent compared to 43 per cent in 2009/10).
- 4.14 The relationship between socio-economic status and participation is evident. 52 per cent of those in the AB socio-economic groups had visited the natural environment in the previous seven days compared to only 28 per cent of those in the DE groups.
- 4.15 The proportion of those in the DE social groups who had visited the natural environment in the previous seven days decreased from 34 per cent in the 2009/10 survey period to 28 per cent in the 2010/11 survey. The proportion of ABs who had visited in the previous week remained at a similar level to 2009/10.



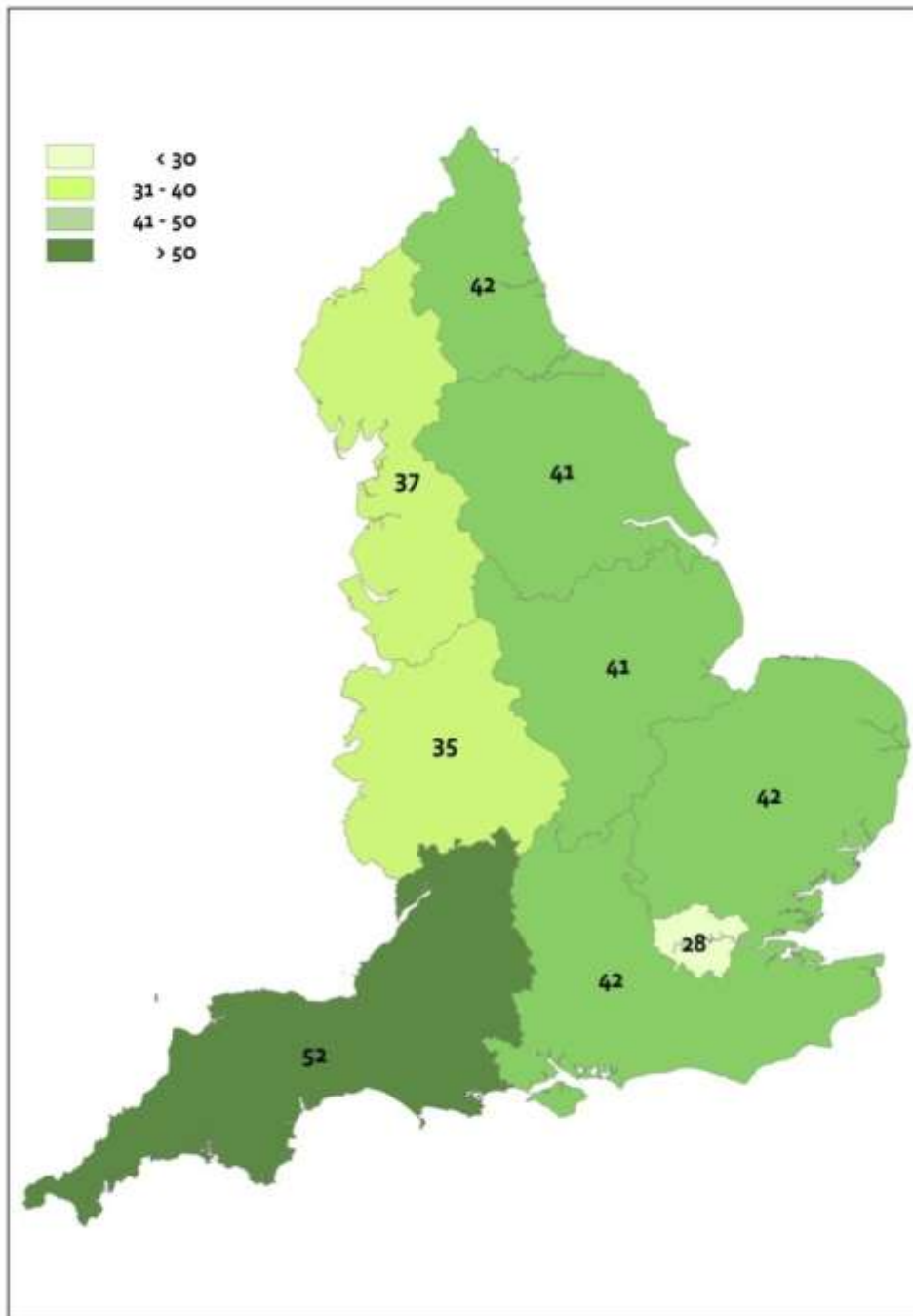
**Figure 4-4** Participation in visits to the natural environment in last week by age, long term illness and disability, socio-economic status and Index of Multiple Deprivation (% reporting at least one visit in the last week)

Q1 How many times, if at all, did you make this type of visit? Base: All respondents, weekly questions (2009/10 N=48,514; 2010/11 N= 46,099)

- 4.16 People living in the areas of greatest deprivation are those least likely to have visited the natural environment in the previous seven days (27 per cent of people in the bottom 10% of IMD areas), whilst those in the least deprived areas were significantly more likely to have made such a visit (49 per cent of people in the top 10% IMD areas).

<sup>4</sup> Taking account of margins of error, at the 95% confidence level the estimated percentage of the population taking visits ranges from 38.8 per cent to 40 per cent.

- 4.17 Participation also varies by ethnicity; 22 per cent of those from the BME population visited in the seven days prior to interview compared to 42 per cent of those from a White ethnic background.
- 4.18 Overall 26 per cent of those with no access to a car had taken a visit to the natural environment in the week prior to interview compared to 44 per cent of those who owned or had access to a car.
- 4.19 Figure 4-5 sets out the variations in levels of participation in visits to the natural environment during the week prior to interview amongst residents of each region. Levels of participation were highest in the South West (52 per cent) and lowest in London (28 per cent), the West Midlands (35 per cent) and the North West (37 per cent).



**Figure 4-5** Participation in visits to the natural environment in week prior to interview by residents of each region (%)

# 5 Where? The destination of visits

---

5.1 This section of the report focuses upon the destination of visits to the natural environment, including the type of place, distance travelled and mode of transport.

## Headline results in this section

- Just over half of visits to the natural environment were taken to the countryside (53 per cent), while 37 per cent were to green spaces within towns and cities. In total, 11 per cent of visits were taken in coastal locations of which seven per cent were taken to a green space in a seaside town and four per cent to another coastal location.
- The proportion of visits to countryside locations increased from 48 per cent in 2009/10 to 53 per cent in 2010/11. In contrast, the proportion of visits to green spaces in parks and cities decreased from 41 per cent in 2009/10 to 37 per cent in 2010/11.
- Visits by those living in the most deprived neighbourhoods, those in the DE socio-economic groups, and the BME population were more likely to be to urban destinations and to places closer to home.
- While parks in towns and cities continued to be the most visited location, representing 22 percent of all visits (558 million visits), these visits decreased from the levels recorded in 2009/10 when 24 per cent of all visits were taken to this type of location (679 million visits). Forests and woodlands received 13 per cent of all visits, an increased share from 11 per cent in 2010.
- As in the previous 12 months, two thirds of visits (66 per cent) were taken within two miles of the respondents home (or other start point e.g. their workplace or holiday accommodation) highlighting the importance of accessible green space that is close to home.
- Visits to coastal areas were more likely to be taken by car, while the majority of countryside visits were taken on foot by people living locally in rural or urban fringe areas.

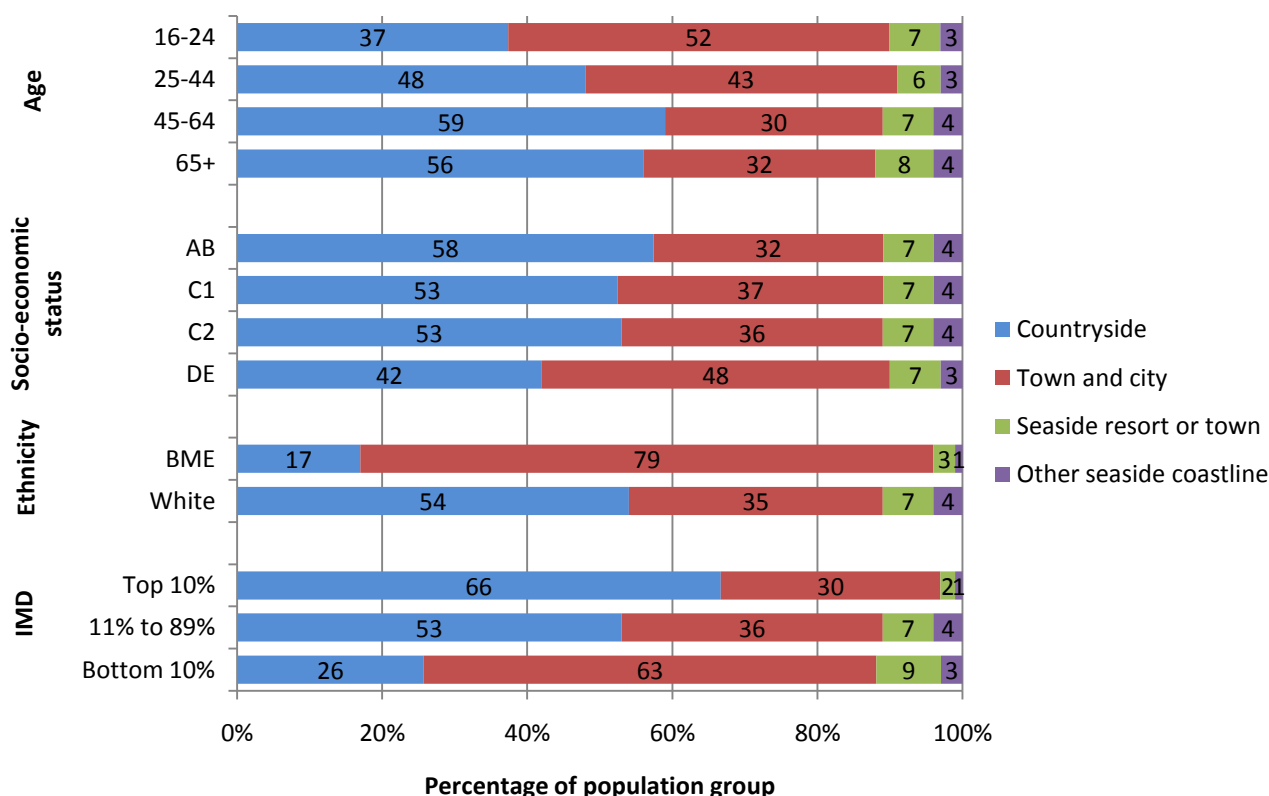
## Type of place visited

### General type of place visited

- 5.2 Respondents were asked about the type of place that they visited – whether it was the countryside, a green space in a town or city, a green space in a seaside town or another coastal location.
- 5.3 In 2010/11, just over half of visits to the natural environment taken by the adult population in England were to the countryside (53 per cent), equating to 1.31 billion visits. 37 per cent of visits were taken to a green space in an urban location (0.92 billion visits). 11 per cent of all visits (0.26 billion) were taken to coastal locations, with seven per cent of those to a green space in a seaside resort or town (0.17 billion visits) and four per cent (0.09 billion visits) to another coastal location.
- 5.4 The proportion of visits to coastal locations remained the same between the two survey periods. However, the proportion of visits taken to countryside locations increased from 49 per cent in 2009/10 to 53 per cent in 2010/11.
- 5.5 While there was little variation in levels of visits to the coast between different demographic groups, differences are evident in the profile of people who visited countryside and urban locations. Countryside locations were more likely to be visited by people aged 45 or over,

those in the AB social groups, the White population and those living in the top ten per cent IMD areas.

5.6 Conversely, those aged 16 to 24, in the DE social grades, the BME population and those living in the bottom ten per cent IMD areas were most likely to have visited a green space in a town or city.



**Figure 5-1** Type of place visited by age, socio-economic status, ethnicity and Index of Multiple Deprivation (%)

Q2 Which of the following best describes where you spent most of your time on this visit Base: All visits, weekly questions (N=47,825)

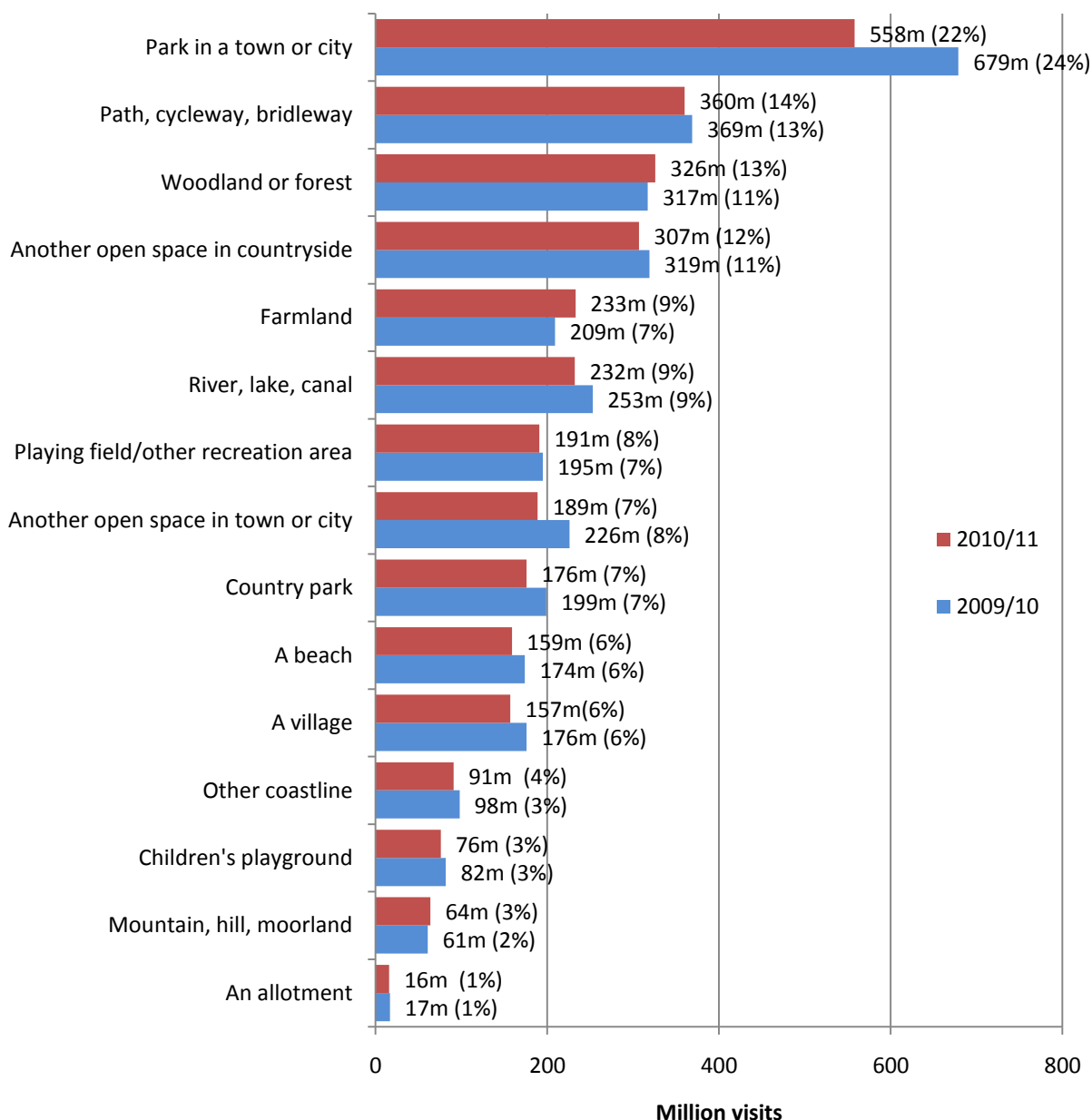
5.7 Visits to countryside locations were more commonplace amongst those who owned a dog (60 per cent of visits were taken to countryside locations), those who had undertaken a specified amount of physical activity three or more times in the previous week (55 per cent of visits) and those with access to a car (53 per cent of visits).

5.8 In contrast, those who did not own a dog, those undertaking fewer than three days of physical activity per week and those with no access to a car were more likely to visit a green space in urban locations (43, 41 and 59 per cent of visits taken respectively).

### Detailed type of place visited

5.9 As well as the general type of place visited, respondents were asked about the detailed type of destination for their visit. Figure 5-2 features all of the types of destination which accounted for at least one per cent of visits to the natural environment. It should be noted that respondents were asked to specify *all* of the types of place included in their visit and could select more than one of the answer options. Therefore in some cases, an individual visit is included in the total for more than one type of place. This means that the sum of the percentages can be more than 100 per cent.

5.10 Parks in towns and cities continued to be the most visited type of destination and were included in 22 per cent of all visits to the natural environment during 2010/11. This is equivalent to around 558 million visits. As shown below this represents a decrease of 18 per cent in the volume of visits recorded in the previous 12 months (679 million). See Section 3 for more details of changes in the volumes of visits taken to each type of place.



**Figure 5-2** Type of places visited – specific (volume of visits March to February 2009-10 and 2010-11 and percentage of total visits in this period)  
 Q5 Which of the following list of places best describes where you spent your time during your visit? Base: Random visit, weekly questions (2009/10 N=20,374; 2010/11 N=17,389)  
 Note: Sum of totals is more than 100% as visits could have included more than one type of place

5.11 Paths, cycleways or bridleways were used on 14 per cent of visits; 13 per cent of visits were to woodlands or forests (360 million and 326 million visits respectively). Farmland, rivers and lakes or canals received around 230 million visits (9 per cent), while playing fields and other recreation areas accounted for 191 million visits (8 per cent).

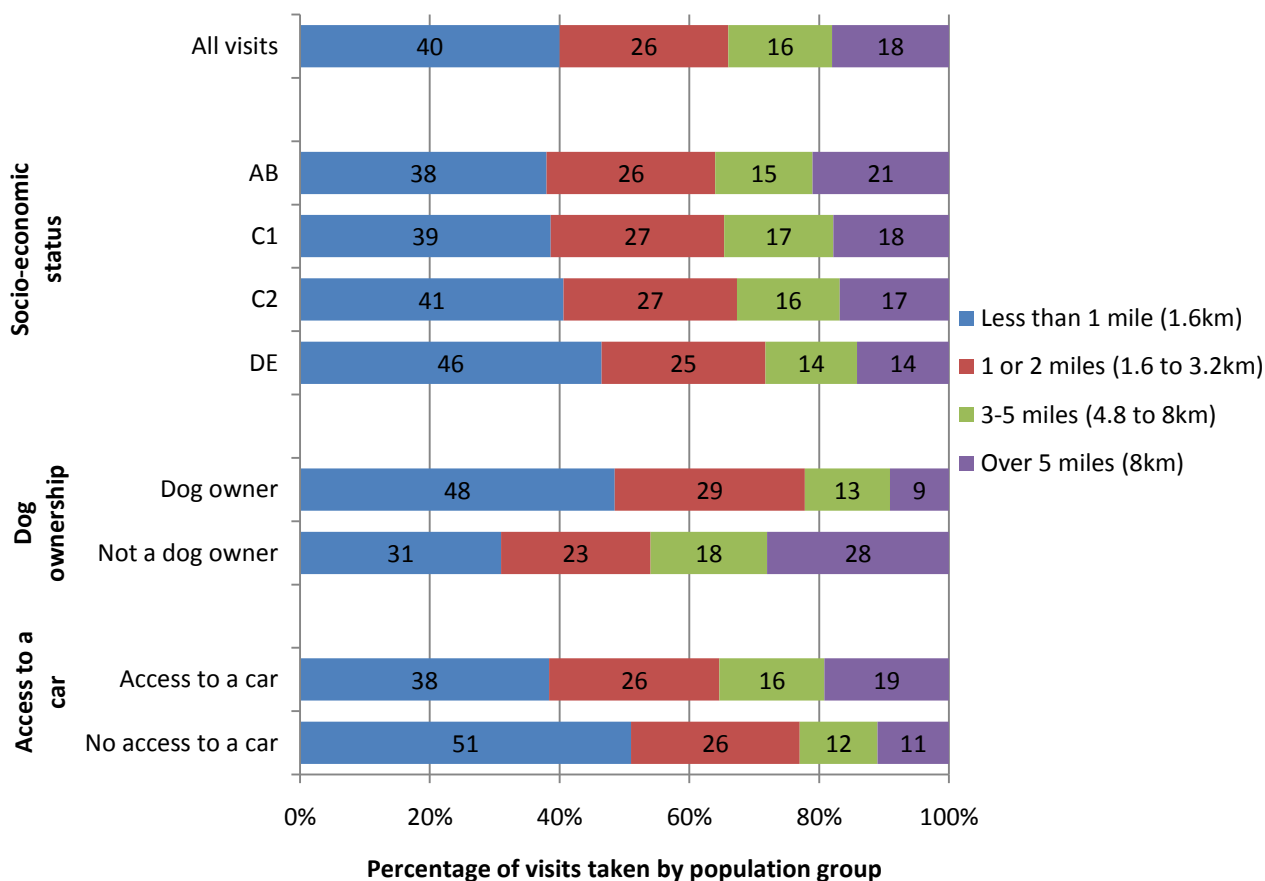
5.12 While the proportion of visits to the individual places shown on Figure 5-2 have remained similar between the two survey years, it is notable that volumes of visits have decreased for most types of destination. Woodland and forests, farmland and mountain, hill and moorland are the exception, with each showing a small increase (see Section 3 for further discussion of changes).

## Distance travelled to main destination

5.13 Respondents were asked how far they had travelled to reach their destination. Where more than one place was visited, or where there was no particular destination, respondents were asked about the place they spent most time or the place that was their final destination.

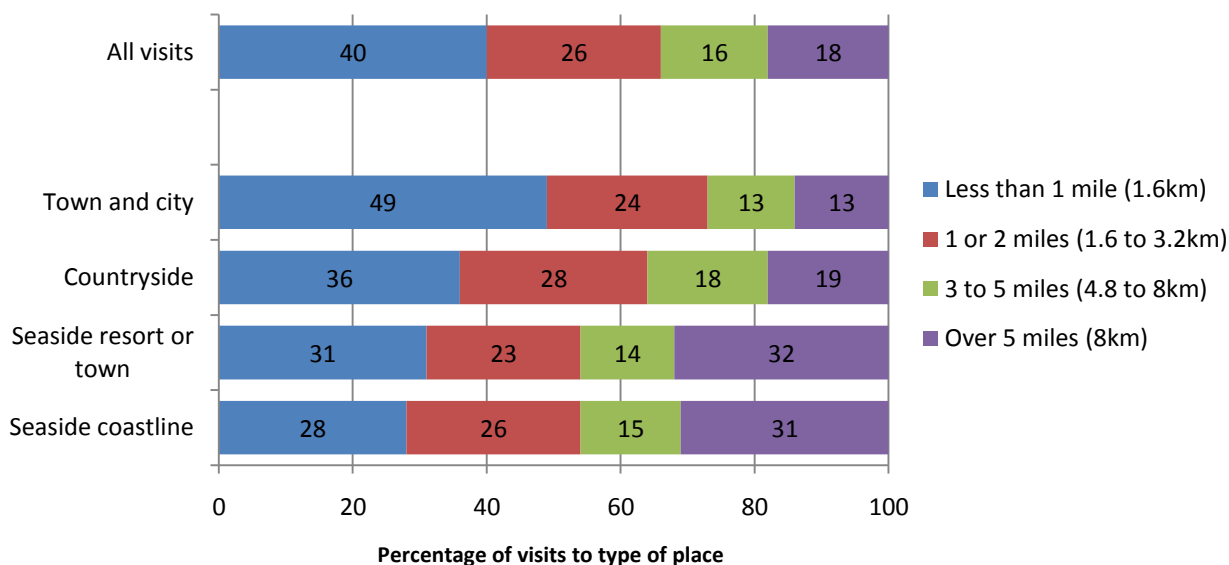
5.14 The main visit destination was within one mile (1.6 km) of the respondent's home (or other start point) for four out of ten visits. A further 26 per cent of visits took place within one to two miles (1.6 to 3.2 km). The majority of visits (82 per cent) took place within 5 miles (8 km) of the start point of the visit. These results are not significantly different from those recorded in the 2009/10 survey.

5.15 The majority of visits to the natural environment (94 per cent) started from the participant's home with the remainder being from someone else's home (2 per cent), from holiday accommodation (2 per cent) or from a workplace (1 per cent).



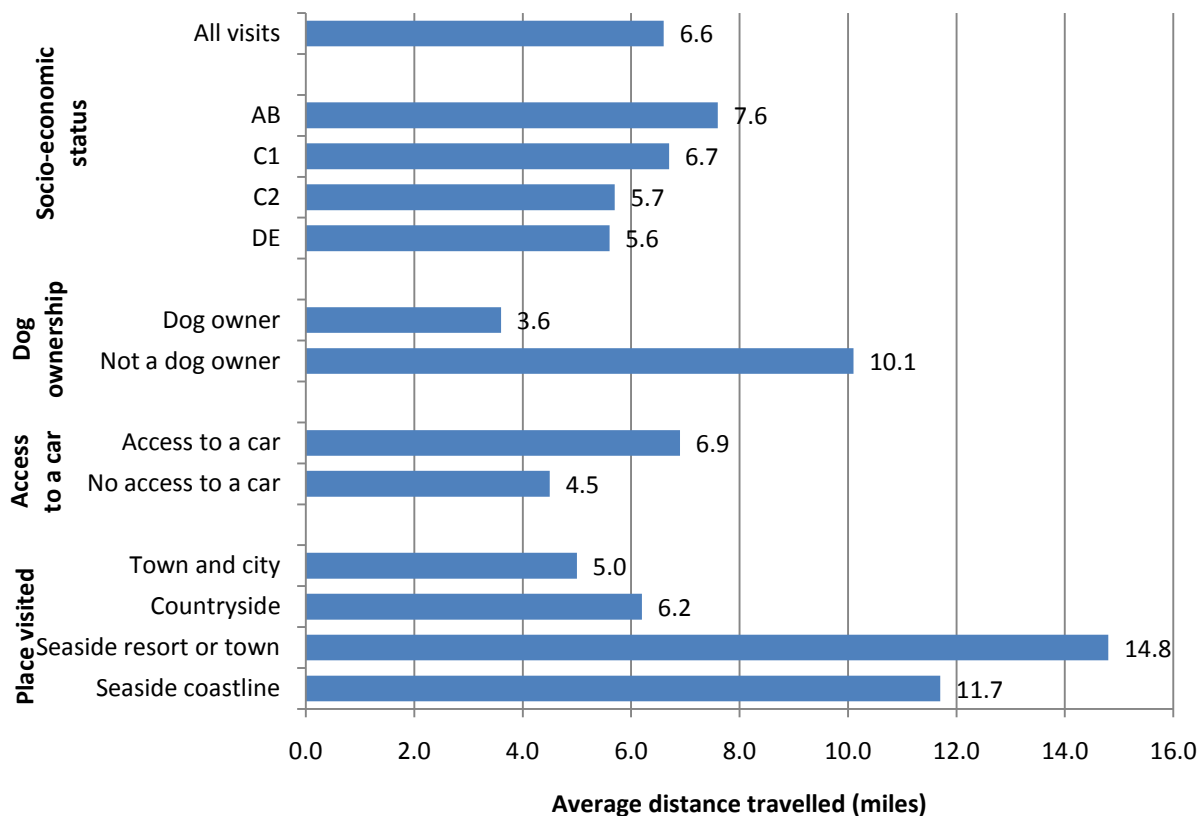
**Figure 5-3** Distance travelled by socio-economic status, dog ownership and car access (%)  
 Q8 Approximately how far did you travel to reach this place? Base: Random visit, weekly questions  
 (N=17,389)

- 5.16 Just under half of visits taken by those in the DE social grades were taken within one mile of their starting point (46 per cent), a significantly larger proportion than recorded amongst the more affluent AB social grades (38 per cent). Also 48 per cent of dog owners took visits within a mile of the start point compared to 31 per cent of people with no dog and 51 per cent of the visits taken by people with no car access were within a mile of the start point compared to 38 per cent amongst those with a car.
- 5.17 The distance of visits to the natural environment varied considerably according to destination (Figure 5-4). Around half of visits to green spaces in towns and cities involved journeys of less than one mile (49 per cent). Visits to coastal locations were more likely to involve a longer journey of 5 miles or more (32 per cent of visits to seaside resorts or towns, 31 per cent to other coastal areas).



**Figure 5-4** Distance travelled by place visited (%)  
 Q8 Approximately how far did you travel to reach this place? Base: Random visit, weekly questions (N=17,389)

- 5.18 Figure 5-5 below illustrates the average distances travelled. Overall the average was 6.6 miles but longer distances were travelled on visits taken by those in the AB socio-economic groups, those with access to a car and on visits to the coast.



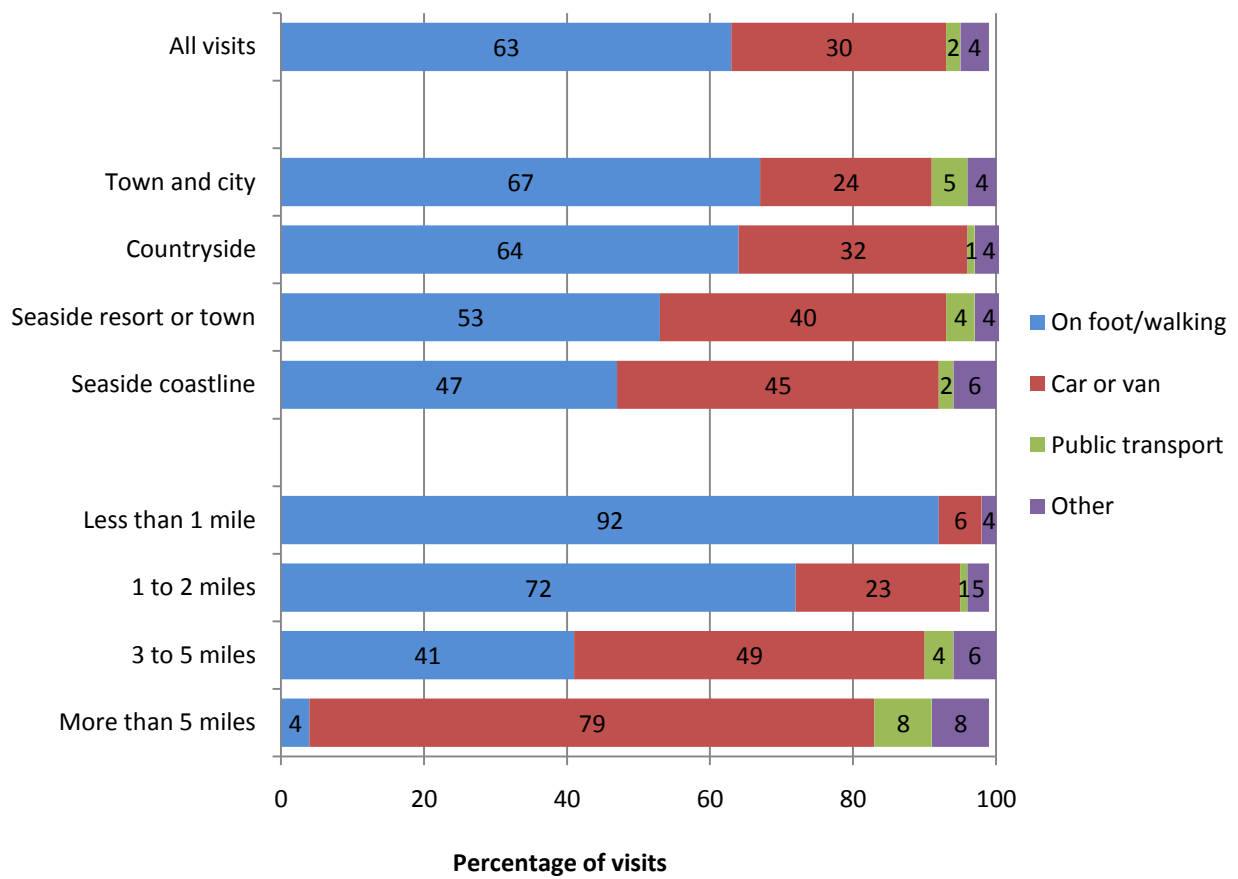
**Figure 5-5** Average distance travelled by socio-economic status, dog ownership, car access and place visited

Q8 *Approximately how far did you travel to reach this place?* Base: Random visit, weekly questions (N=17,389)

## Mode of transport

- 5.19 Respondents were asked about the main mode of transport used for their journey. The largest proportion of visits involved walking (63 per cent). A car or van was used in 30 per cent of visits and public transport was used for only 2 per cent of visits (Figure 5-6).
- 5.20 The vast majority of visits involving a journey of less than one mile were taken on foot (92 per cent) while 79 per cent of visits where the journey was 5 miles or more featured a car or van as the main mode of transport used. Urban locations were most likely to have been visited on foot (67 per cent). Seaside resorts or towns and other coastal areas were the type of place most likely to involve travelling by car (40 per cent and 45 per cent respectively).





**Figure 5-6** Mode of transport used on journey by place visited and distance travelled (%)  
 Q11 What form of transport did you use on this journey? Base: Random visit, weekly questions (N=17,389)

## 6 What? A profile of visits

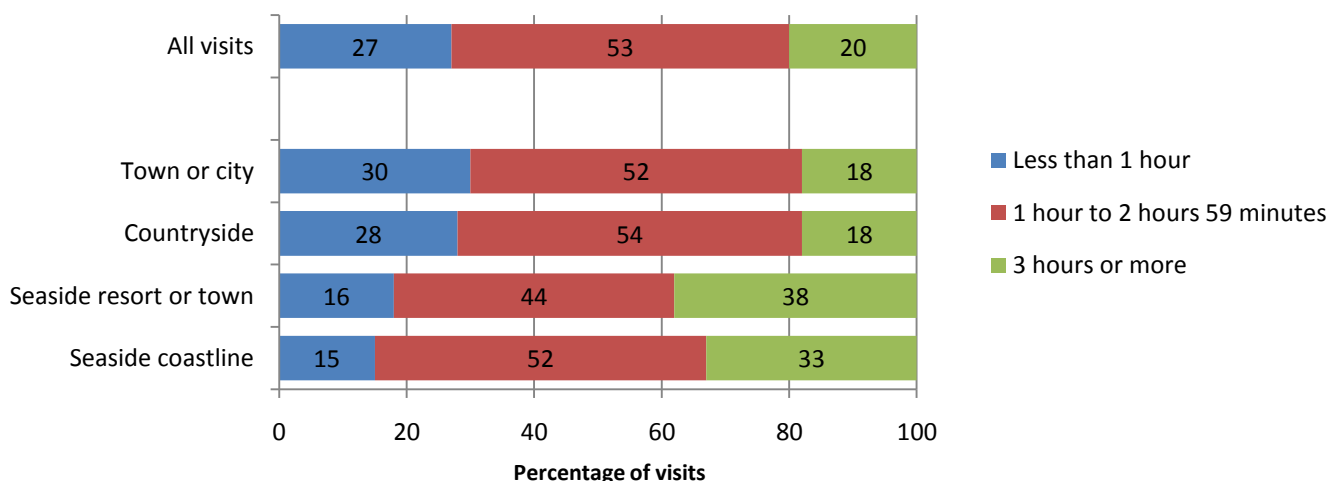
6.1 The characteristics of visits to the natural environment are considered in this section of the report. This includes an analysis of visit duration, the activities undertaken, group composition (including the presence of children) and money spent whilst on the visit to the natural environment.

### Headline results in this section

- The average a visit to the natural environment lasted for just under 2 hours (1 hour 58 minutes). This finding is not significantly different from that found in the 2009/10 survey.
- Around half of all visits (51 per cent) involved walking with a dog, not significantly different from the proportion recorded in 2009/10.
- Although the average party size was 2.4, 53 per cent of visits were taken by an adult on their own. Children were present in the party for 22 per cent of visits.
- Expenditure was incurred during 25 percent of visits, with the average spend during these visits being around £30 per person. These results are not significantly different from those recorded during the 2009/10 survey.
- An estimated £17 billion was spent during visits to the natural environment during 2010/11. Although this figure is lower than the 2009/10 estimate of £20 billion, the difference is within statistical margins of error.

### Duration of visits

6.2 The average duration of a visit to the natural environment in 2010/11 was just under two hours (1 hour, 58 minutes). 27 per cent of visits lasted less than 1 hour, while just over a half lasted between 1 hour and 2 hours 59 minutes (53 per cent). The remaining 20 per cent of visits were reported as lasting for 3 hours or longer.



**Figure 6-1** Duration of visits by place visited (%)  
Q3 How long did this visit last altogether? Base: All visits, weekly questions (N=47,825)

6.3 The duration of visits varied by the type of destination. Urban and countryside destinations were more likely to last less than an hour (30 per cent and 28 per cent respectively). This corresponds with the shorter distances travelled on visits to these locations and the prominence of walking as the main mode of transport. In contrast, 38 per cent of visits to seaside resorts or towns and 33 per cent of visits to other coastline areas lasted 3 hours or more.

- 6.4 Note that respondents often provided rounded estimates – such as, half an hour, an hour or two hours rather than a precise figure. These are then grouped more precisely into the categories described.

**Table 6-1** Distance travelled, mode of transport and activities undertaken by visit duration (%)  
 Q8 Which of these activities, if any, did you undertake? Base: All visits, weekly questions (N=47,825)

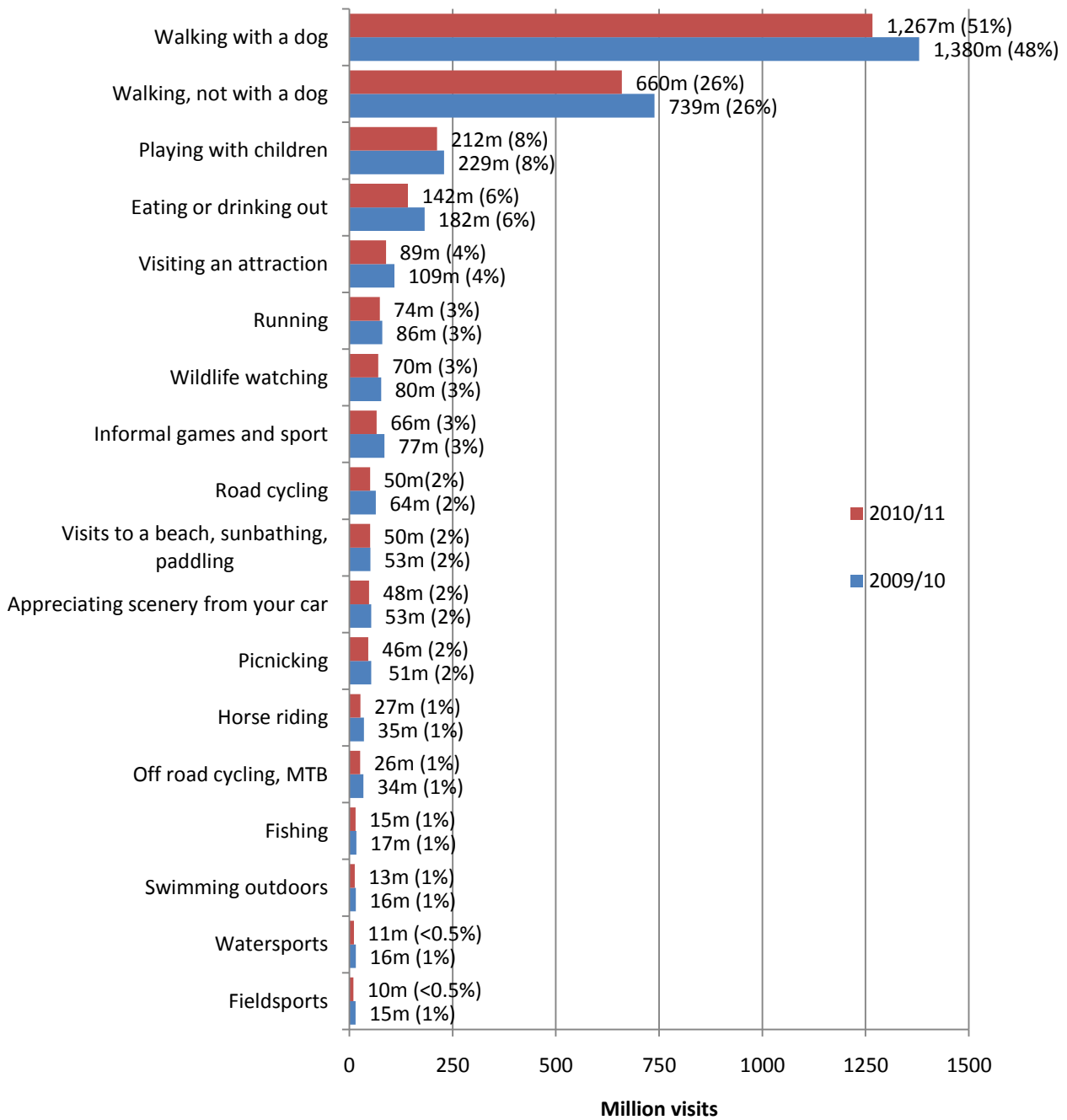
	Duration of visit		
	Less than 1 hour %	1 hour to 2 hours 59 minutes %	3 hours or more %
<b>Distance travelled</b>			
Less than 1 mile	58	40	17
1 or 2 miles	30	29	14
3 to 5 miles	8	19	17
Over 5 miles	5	12	52
<b>Transport used</b>			
On foot	86	66	26
Car or van	11	29	60
Public transport (rail or bus)	1	2	8
Other	2	4	7
<b>Activities undertaken*</b>			
Walking with a dog	73	54	13
Walking, not with a dog	17	27	37
Playing with children	3	9	14
Eating or drinking out	1	3	19
Visiting an attraction	<1	2	13

\*Note: The sum of activities undertaken percentages is less than 100% as some visits involved none of the activities shown in this table.

## Activities undertaken on visits

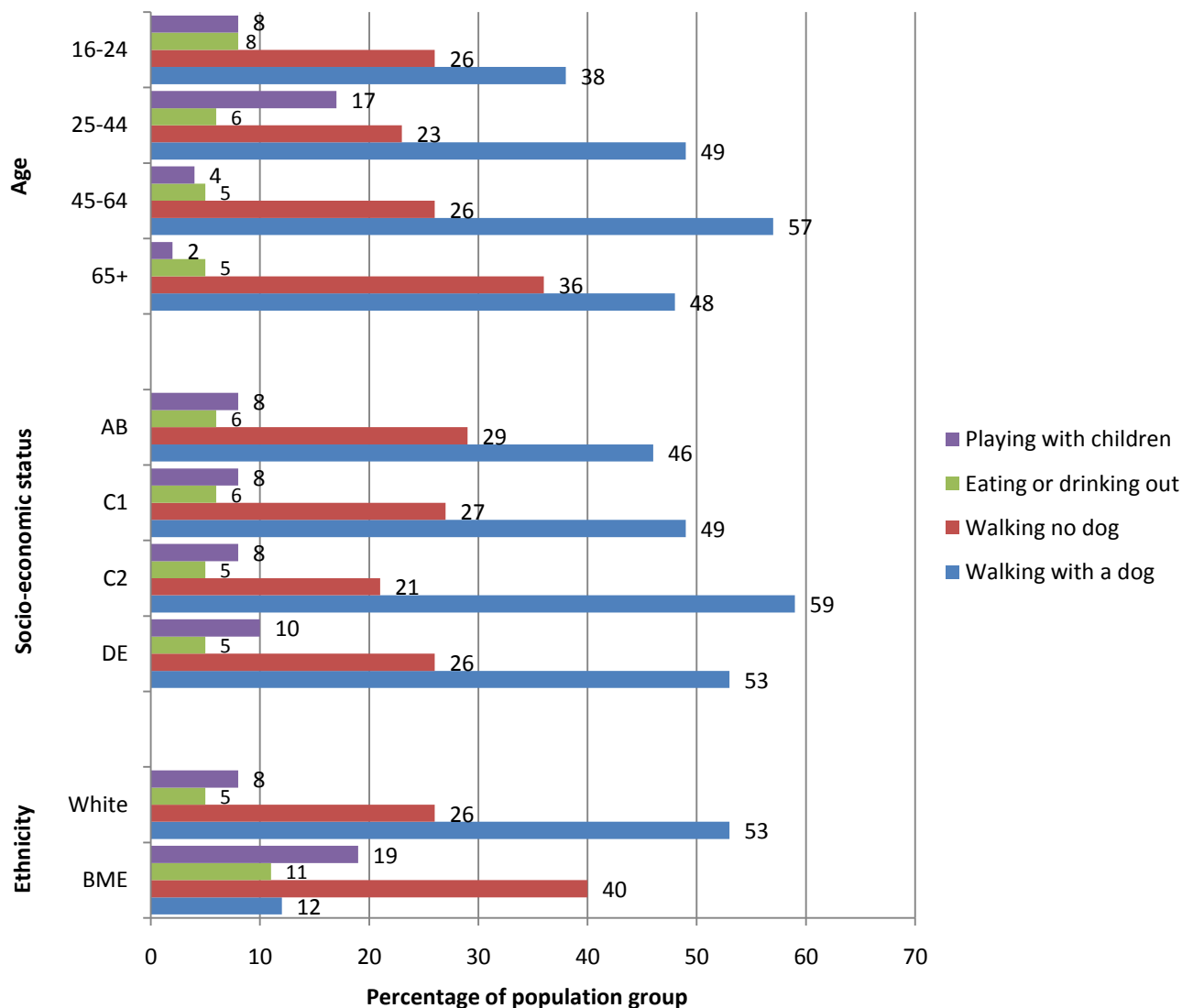
- 6.5 Walking emerged as the most popular activity on visits to the natural environment and was a selected activity on just over three-quarters of all visits (77 per cent or approximately 1.9 billion visits) during the 2010/11 survey period (Figure 6-2). Walking with a dog was undertaken on 51 per cent of all visits (approximately 1.3 billion visits). Walking without a dog is the second most frequently undertaken activity, featuring in 26 per cent or around 660 million visits over the 12 month period.
- 6.6 The profile of activities undertaken on visits in 2010/11 remained very similar to those undertaken in 2009/10. The only exception was walking with a dog which was undertaken in a slightly higher proportion of visits in 2010/11 (51 per cent) than in 2009/10 (48 per cent). More details on the changing volumes of activities undertaken are provided in Section 3.

6.7 It should be noted that respondents were asked to specify all of the activities undertaken during their visit and could select more than one of the answer options. Therefore, in some cases an individual visit is included in the total for more than one activity. This means that the sum of the percentages can be more than 100 per cent.



**Figure 6-2** Activities undertaken during visits (volume of visits March 2009 to February 2010/March 2010 to February 2011 and % of total visits in this period)  
 Q4 Which of these activities, if any, did you undertake? Base: All visits, weekly questions (2009/10 N=58,653; 2010/11 N=47,825)  
 Note: Sum of totals is more than 100% as visits could have included more than one activity

6.8 Further analysis highlights the variations in activities undertaken on visits taken by members of different population groups (Figure 6-3). Those aged 45 and over were more likely than other age groups to take visits that involved walking. Those in the BME population were more likely to have been on a visit that involved walking *without* a dog (40 per cent) or playing with children (19 per cent), while visits taken amongst the White population were more likely to have involved walking *with* a dog.



**Figure 6-3** Activities undertaken on visits by age, socio-economic status and ethnicity (%)  
 Q8 Which of these activities, if any, did you undertake? Base: All visits, weekly questions (N=47,825)

6.9 There are significant differences in the type of activities undertaken on visits to different types of destination (Table 6-2). Going for a walk with a dog is more popular in the countryside than in other areas, while walking without a dog is more likely to be undertaken at coastal destinations. Of the other main activities, playing with children was more likely to feature in urban areas and seaside resort or town visits, while eating or drinking out was most likely to take place at a seaside resort or town.

**Table 6-2** Activities undertaken on visits by type of place visited (%)

Q8 Which of these activities, if any, did you undertake? Base: All visits, weekly questions (N=47,825).

Note: Sum of totals is more than 100% as visits could have included more than one activity

	Type of place visited			
	Town or city %	Countryside %	Seaside resort or town %	Seaside coastline %
Walking with a dog	43	59	36	42
Walking not with a dog	29	24	34	32
Playing with children	12	6	11	7
Eating or drinking out	7	3	13	8
Sightsee, picnic, drive	3	3	8	7
Visiting an attraction	4	3	6	4
Wildlife watching	1	4	3	4
Informal games and sport	3	2	2	1
Horse riding	*	2	*	1
Off-road cycling or mountain biking	1	1	*	1
Picnicking	2	2	4	3
Road cycling	2	2	1	2
Running	4	3	1	2
Appreciating scenery from your car	1	2	5	4
Fieldsports	*	*	*	*
Fishing	*	1	1	2
Visits to a beach, sunbathing or paddling in the sea	*	*	19	16
Off-road driving or motorcycling	*	*	*	*
Swimming outdoors	*	*	2	2
Watersports	*	*	1	3

\*Note: Less than 0.5%

## Party composition

6.10 Just under half of the visits to the natural environment (47 per cent) were taken by an adult on their own (Table 6-3). Children were present during 22 per cent of all visits. The overall average party size was 2.4.

**Table 6-3** Party composition (row %)

Q13 How many adults aged 16 or over, including yourself, were on this visit? How many children aged under 16 were on this visit? Base: Random visits, monthly questions (N=3,973)

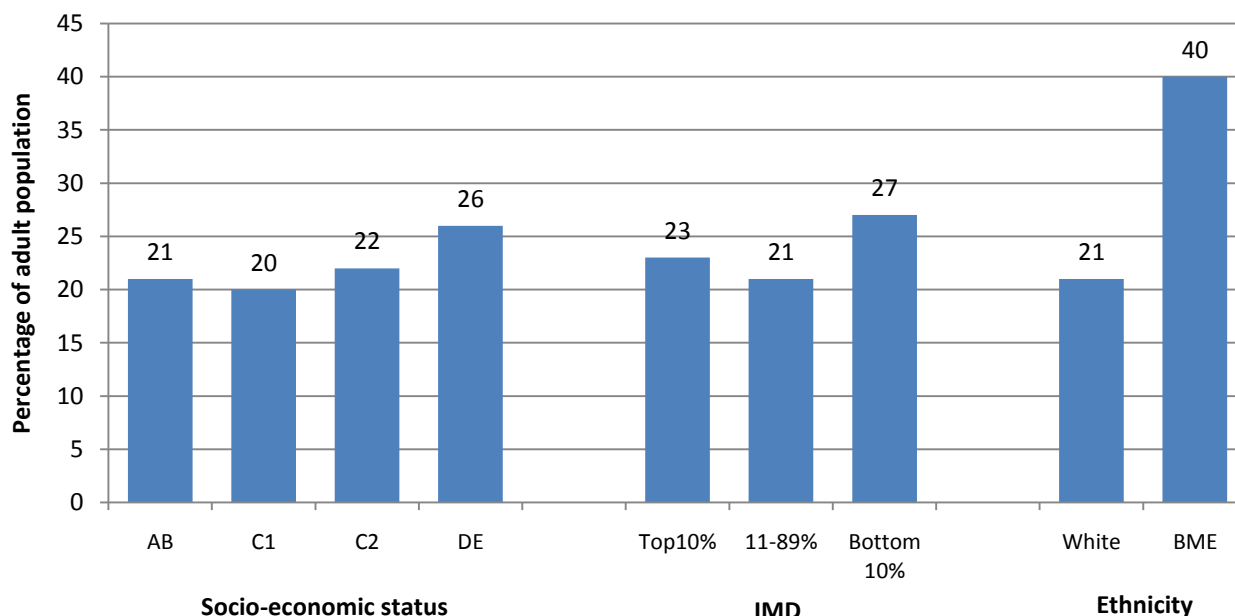
	None	1	2	3	4 +	Average
Adults (aged 16 and over)	-	55	32	5	7	1.9
Children (aged under 16)	78	10	8	2	2	0.5
Total party size	-	47	27	10	16	2.4

6.11 Visits which were more likely to be taken alone included those lasting for less than an hour (70 per cent), those involving walking with a dog (66 per cent), those taken within 1 mile of home (60 per cent) and those where the destination was reached on foot (60 per cent). The average party size was largest on visits lasting more than three hours (3.8 people) and visits which involved a journey of over 20 miles (4.3 people).

### Visits taken with children

6.12 Adults were accompanied by a child under the age of 16 years during 22 per cent of visits. This equates to around 548 million of the visits taken by adults. In total 58 per cent of the visits taken by adults who have children in their household were taken with a child or children in the party.

6.13 Children were more likely to be in the party on visits taken by members of the BME population. Here a child was present during four in ten visits (40 per cent) compared to 21 per cent of those from a White ethnic background.



**Figure 6-4** Percentage of visits taken accompanied by children (aged under 16) by socio-economic status, Index of Multiple Deprivation and ethnicity (%)

Q1 How many children under 16 were on this visit? Base: Random visits, monthly questions (N=3,973)

6.14 The presence of children in a party appears to have an impact on visit characteristics (Table 6-4). Parks in towns and cities and country parks were more likely to be visited when children were in the party. Travelling to destinations with children was also more likely to involve the use of a car or van (42 per cent compared to 30 per cent in adult only parties).

6.15 Visits where children were present also involved longer journeys. Twenty-five per cent of visits with children had journeys of more than five miles compared to 18 per cent of visits without children. In addition, 59 per cent of visits taken with children involved a journey of less than two miles compared to 67 per cent of those taken without children.

**Table 6-4** Activities undertaken, distance travelled, mode of transport and type of place visited by presence of children in party (%)

*Base: Random visits, monthly questions (N=3,973)*

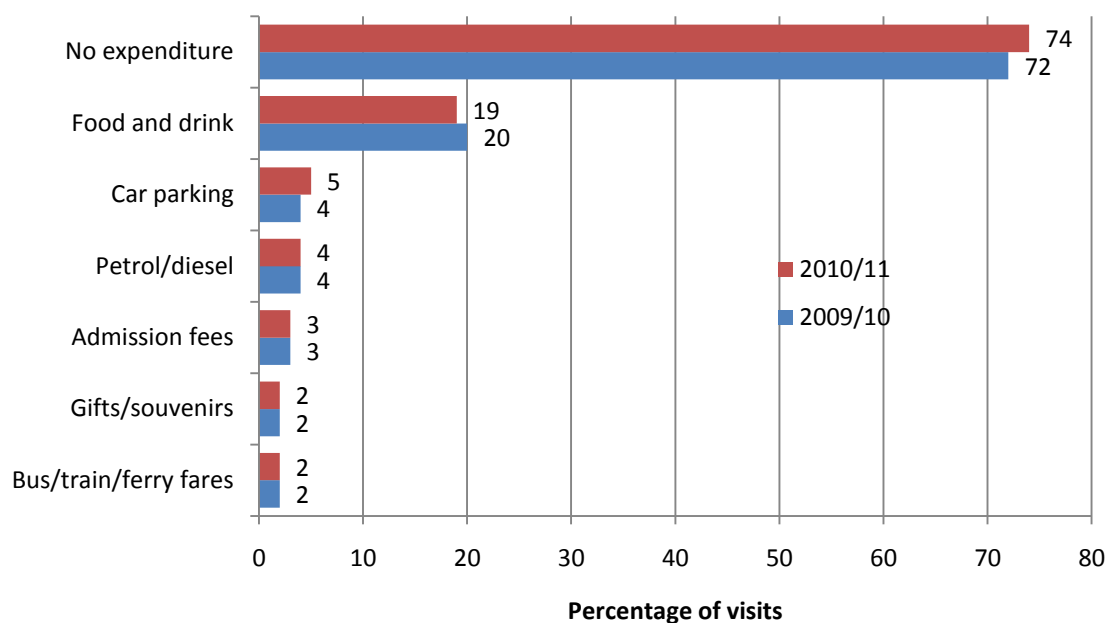
	Children under 16 in party %	No children under 16 in party %
<b>Activities undertaken</b>		
Walking with a dog	28	52
Walking, not with a dog	33	26
Playing with children	37	7
Eating or drinking out	9	6
Visiting an attraction	7	3
<b>Distance travelled</b>		
Less than 1 mile	38	40
1 or 2 miles	21	27
3 to 5 miles	16	16
Over 5 miles	25	18
<b>Transport used</b>		
On foot	53	64
Car or van	42	30
Public transport (rail or bus)	2	2
Other	4	4
<b>Type of place visited – general</b>		
Town and city	43	37
Countryside	44	53
Seaside resort or town	10	7
Seaside coastline	3	4
<b>Type of place visited – specific*</b>		
Park in a town or city	31	22
Children's playground	12	3
Woodland or forest	11	13
Country park	10	7
Beach	9	6
Paths, cycleway or bridleway	9	15

\*Note: The sum of specific places visited percentages is less than 100% as some visits did not include time spent in any of the places shown on this table.



## Expenditure during visits

- 6.16 Almost a quarter of visits to the natural environment involved expenditure (24 per cent). Expenditure was most likely to be incurred for food and drink which occurred on 19 per cent of all visits (Figure 6-5). Spending on other categories, such as car parking and fuel was restricted to a very small proportion of visits<sup>5</sup>. This profile of expenditure is similar to that recorded in the 2009/10 survey.



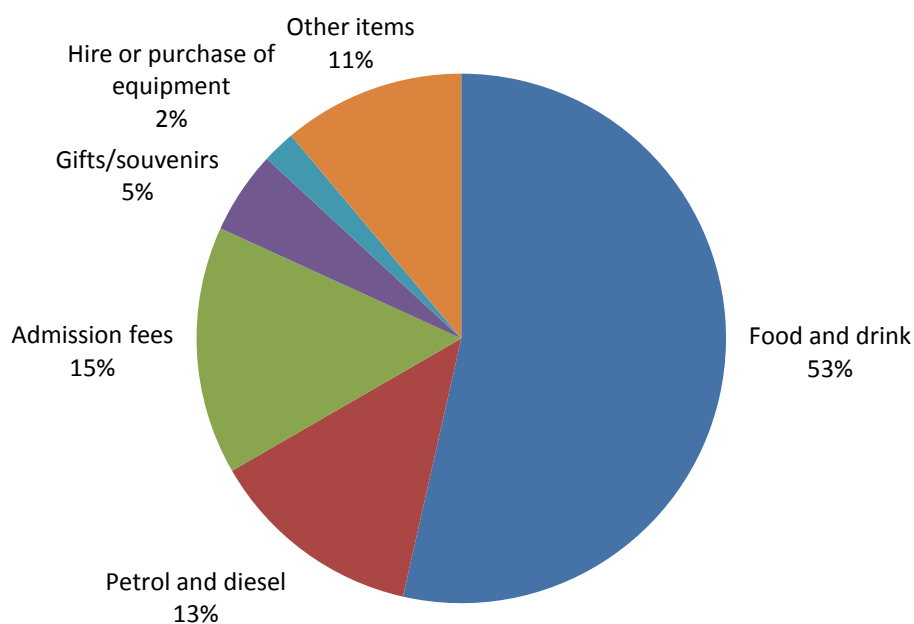
**Figure 6-5** Items purchased during visits to the natural environment (%)

Q15 During this visit did you personally spend any money on any of the items listed on the screen? Base: Random visit, monthly questions (2009/10 N=4,755; 2010/11 N= 3,973)

Note: Sum of totals is more than 100% as visits could involve expenditure on more than one item. No expenditure category includes 3% of don't know responses.

- 6.17 For every £1 spent on a visit to the natural environment, 53 pence was spent on food and drink with admission fees accounting for 15 pence (Figure 6-6).

<sup>5</sup> Respondents were asked about any expenditure incurred during their visit. Therefore, any money spent for the visit but not actually *during* it (for example, purchasing petrol the day before in preparation for the visit) was not included. However money spent during the visit on fuel which continued to be used after the visit was recorded.

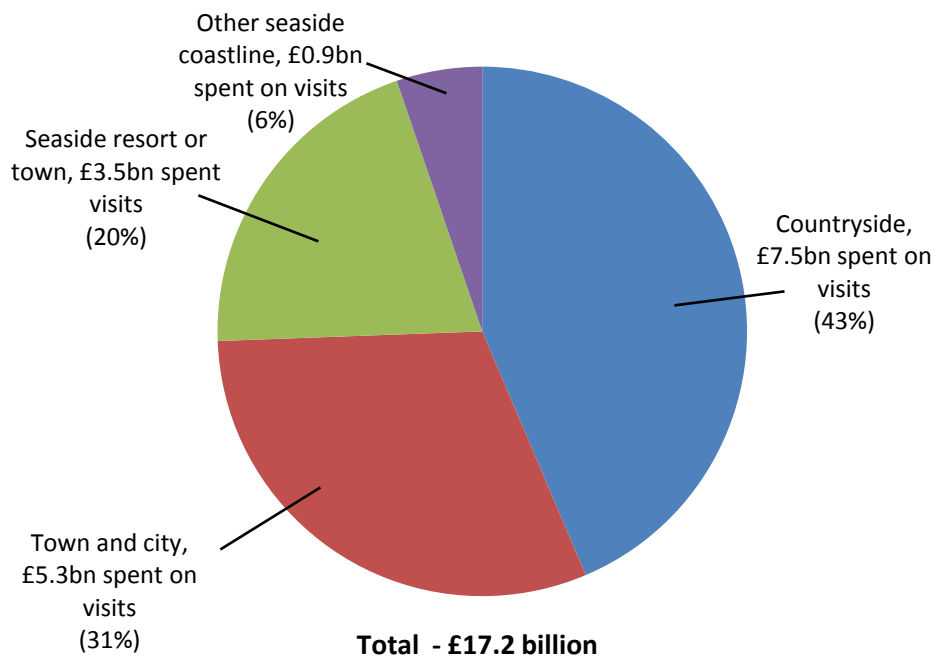


**Figure 6-6** Distribution of expenditure on visits by category of spend (%)

*Q15 During this visit did you personally spend any money on any of the items listed on the screen? Base: Random visit, monthly questions (N=3,973)*

- 6.18 During visits which involved expenditure, the average spend per person per visit was £29.69. Therefore, with an estimated 579 million visits involving expenditure, it is estimated that a total of around **£17.2 billion** was spent by people on visits taken to the natural environment between March 2010 and February 2011<sup>6</sup>.
- 6.19 While the average spend per person per visit was slightly higher in 2010/11 than in the previous year (£28.78), this difference is not statistically significant. Similarly, when all visits are considered, including those where there was no expenditure, the average spend per person per visit was £6.90, very similar to the average of £7.14 recorded in the 2009/10 survey. The difference between these averages is also not statistically significant.
- 6.20 The lower number of visits taken during 2010/11 means that the estimated total expenditure on visits taken in the 2010/11 period was lower than in the previous year (£17.2 billion compared to £20.4 billion in 2009/10). However this variation is also within statistical margins of error so should not be treated as significant.
- 6.21 Certain types of visits were more likely than others to incur expenditure. These included visits to seaside resorts and towns where 46 per cent of visits involved expenditure. Although only seven per cent of visits were to seaside towns, this type of destination accounted for around a fifth (20%) of all expenditure on visits expenditure (Figure 6-7). Longer visits in general were more likely to incur expenditure (59 per cent on visits of three hours or more) as were visits with children in the party (36 per cent) and those taken by infrequent visitors (50 per cent).

<sup>6</sup> Taking account of margins of error, at the 95% confidence level estimated total expenditure ranges from £14.3 billion to £20.2 billion.



**Figure 6-7** Distribution of expenditure on visits by destination type (%)

Q15 During this visit did you personally spend any money on any of the items listed on the screen? Base: Random visit, monthly questions (N=3,973)

# 7 Why? Motivations and barriers

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7.1 This section of the report focuses on motivations for visiting the natural environment, and how the barriers that prevent or hinder participation vary between population groups.

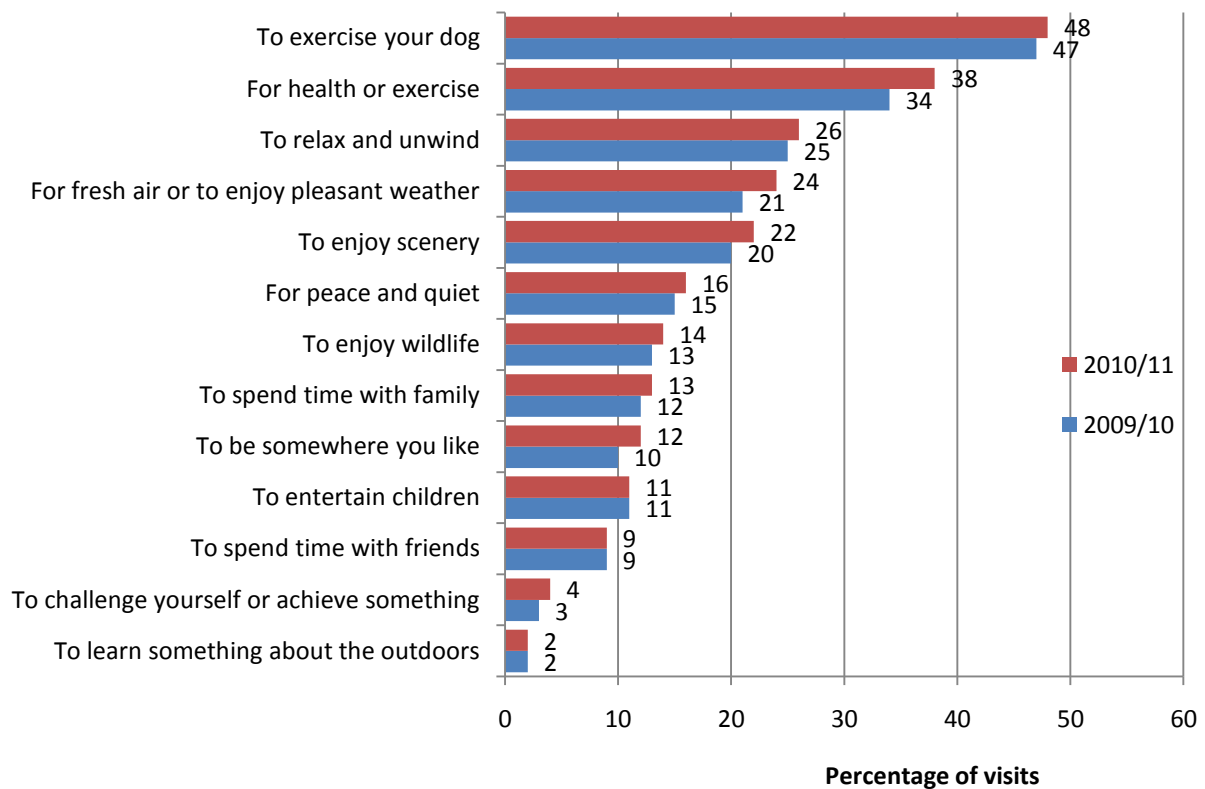
## Headline results in this section

- Exercising dogs, personal health and exercise, relaxing and unwinding, enjoying fresh air and pleasant weather and enjoying scenery were the most frequently cited reasons for taking visits to the natural environment.
- Motivations for visiting the natural environment are influenced by age - notably the likelihood that visits are taken for health or exercise, for fresh air or pleasant weather, to enjoy scenery, for peace and quiet, and to enjoy wildlife, increases as a person gets older.
- Those in the AB socio-economic group were motivated to visit the natural environment by the widest range of factors, including for health and exercise, to enjoy scenery, and for fresh air and pleasant weather.
- Infrequent visitors to the natural environment were most likely to cite being busy at work or poor weather as the main reasons for *not* being able to take visits to the natural environment more often. Poor health, old age or a disability were most likely to be mentioned by those who never visit the natural environment.

## Motivations for visits

7.2 As in 2009/10, exercising a dog was the most frequently cited motivation for visiting the natural environment in 2010/11 (48 per cent of visits, see Figure 7-1). The other popular reasons for taking a visit were for health and exercise (38 per cent), to relax and unwind (26 per cent), for fresh air or to enjoy pleasant weather (24 per cent) and to enjoy scenery (22 per cent).

7.3 Health or exercise, fresh air or pleasant weather and being somewhere a person liked were cited as motivating reasons in a higher proportion of visits than in 2009/10.



**Figure 7-1** Reasons for taking visits to the natural environment (%)

Q12 Which of the following, if any, best describe your reasons for this visit? Base: Random visits, monthly questions (2009/10 N=4,755; 2010/11 N=3,973)

Note: Sum of totals is more than 100% as visits could have been taken for more than one reason.

- 7.4 Women were more likely than men to mention most of the motivations shown in Figure 7-1 as a reason for taking visits to the natural environment. Most notably exercising a dog (51 per cent compared to 47 per cent of men) and/or to entertain children (14 per cent compared to nine per cent of men).
- 7.5 Motivations seem to be influenced by age; 43 per cent of people aged 45 and over visited the natural environment for health or exercise, compared to 31 per cent of those aged 44 and under. A similar pattern was recorded in relation to fresh air or pleasant weather (28 per cent and 20 per cent respectively), enjoying scenery (28 per cent and 18 per cent respectively), peace and quiet (19 per cent and 13 per cent respectively) and enjoying wildlife (18 per cent and 9 per cent respectively).
- 7.6 Those aged 25 to 44 were more likely to attribute their visit to the need to entertain children and/or spending time with family (20 per cent and 19 per cent respectively). Spending time with friends was more likely to be mentioned by 16 to 24 year olds (23 per cent).
- 7.7 As was the case in 2009/10, exercising a dog was mentioned as a motivation for 55 per cent of visits to the natural environment taken by those aged 45 to 64 years and was also a key motivation amongst those in the C2DE socio-economic groups.
- 7.8 Those in the ABC1 socio-economic groups were more likely to mention the following reasons as motivating factors for visiting the natural environment: health and exercise (41 per cent), to relax and unwind (29 per cent), and for fresh air or to enjoy pleasant weather (27 per cent).
- 7.9 Motivations vary depending on the type of place visited (Table 7-1). Visits to seaside resorts or towns were most likely to be taken to exercise a dog (33 per cent) or for peace and quiet

(33 per cent). Visits to this type of destination were more likely than other destinations to be taken to spend time with family (19 per cent) or to be somewhere a person liked to visit (18 per cent).

- 7.10 Other coastal areas shared the same main motivating factors as seaside towns. Another significant motivation for visiting these destinations was for health and exercise (35 per cent).
- 7.11 The main motivating factors for visiting the countryside were to exercise a dog (56 per cent) and for health and exercise (42 per cent). Exercising a dog (42 per cent) and entertaining children (15 per cent) were the motivations most likely to be mentioned for visits to green spaces in towns and cities.
- 7.12 Significant increases were recorded between survey years in the proportions of visits taken to the countryside for health or exercise (37 per cent in 2009/10 to 42 per cent in 2010/11) and to enjoy the scenery (from 23 per cent in 2009/10 to 28 per cent in 2010/11).

**Table 7-1** Reasons for taking visits to the natural environment by type of place visited (column %) Q12 Which of the following, if any, best describe your reasons for this visit? Base: Random visits, monthly questions (N=3,973)

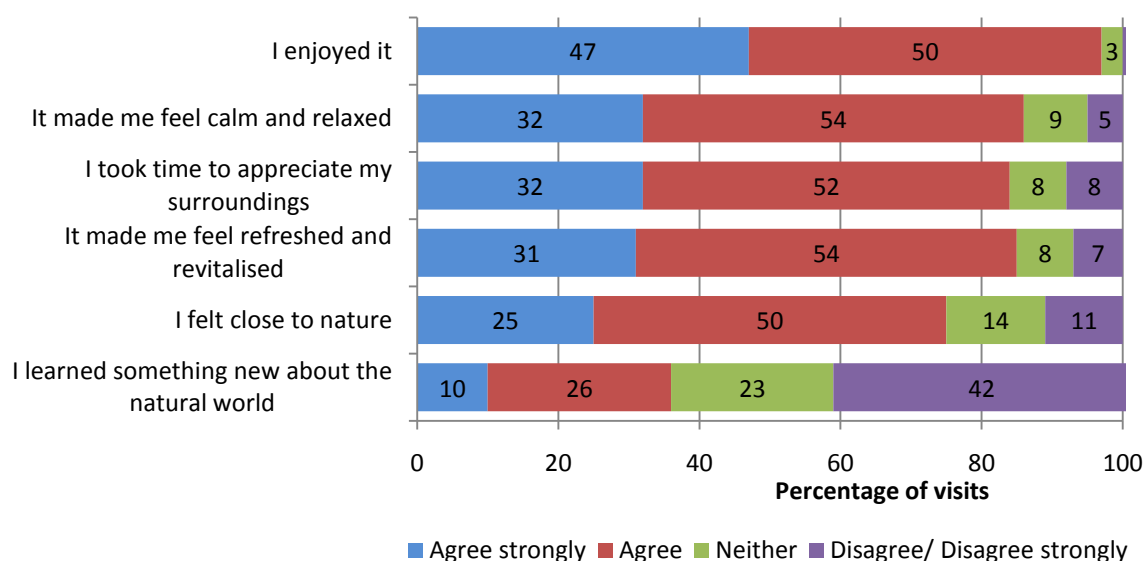
Note: Sum of totals is more than 100% as visits could have been taken for more than one reason.

	Type of place visited			
	Town or city %	Countryside %	Seaside resort or town %	Seaside coastline %
To exercise your dog	42	56	33	35
For health or exercise	33	42	29	43
To relax and unwind	22	28	33	33
For fresh air or to enjoy pleasant weather	18	28	30	30
To spend time with family	14	12	19	17
To enjoy scenery	13	28	28	25
To entertain children	15	9	15	6
To spend time with friends	12	7	11	13
For peace and quiet	13	19	17	17
To enjoy wildlife	7	19	9	15
To be somewhere you like	7	14	18	14
To learn something about the outdoors	1	3	3	1
To challenge yourself or achieve something	2	4	5	7
<i>Average number of reasons per visit</i>	2.0	2.7	2.5	2.6

## Outcomes of visits

7.13 To explore some of the benefits or outcomes that people may experience from a visit to the natural environment, respondents were asked about the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about their visit<sup>7</sup>.

7.14 In total 97 per cent of people stated that they enjoyed their visit to the natural environment (Figure 7-2). More than four fifths of respondents agreed that it made them feel calm and relaxed (86 per cent), that they took time to appreciate their surroundings (84 per cent) and that they felt refreshed and revitalised (85 per cent) and three quarters agreed that they felt close to nature (75 per cent). However, only 36 per cent of respondents agreed that they had learned something new about nature while on the visit.



**Figure 7-2** Outcomes of visits to the natural environment (%)

*E1 Thinking of this visit, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: Random visits, quarterly questions (N=1,297)*

*Note: Disagree and disagree strongly categories are aggregated as very small proportions provided the disagree strongly response.*

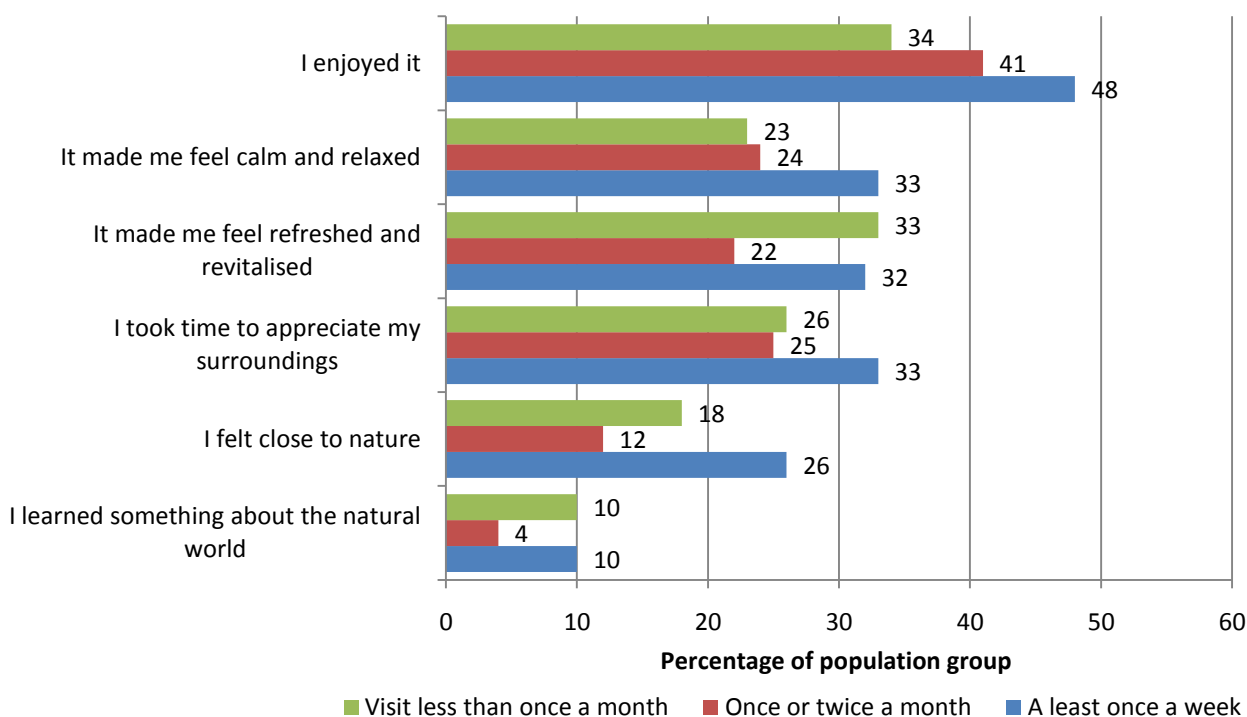
7.15 Further analysis focused on those 'agreeing strongly' with the various outcomes of visits to the natural environment, in order to establish whether there is variation within the population.

7.16 Those aged 55 and over were more likely than those in the younger age groups to indicate strong positive agreement with the outcomes shown above. This was particularly evident for the outcomes: it made me feel calm and relaxed (39 per cent and 29 per cent respectively), I took time to appreciate my surroundings (46 per cent and 26 per cent) and I felt close to nature (37 per cent and 19 per cent). A similar series of findings were recorded in the 2009/10 survey.

7.17 The extent to which visitors had a positive experience also seems to be associated with socio-economic status (this was also the case in the 2009/10 survey). Those in the ABC1 socio-economic groups were more likely than C2DEs to agree strongly with the following statements regarding the outcomes of their visit: I enjoyed it (51 per cent and 40 per cent respectively) and I took time to appreciate my surroundings (36 per cent and 27 per cent).

<sup>7</sup> This question was included in the survey during one week of fieldwork per quarter. As such sample sizes are smaller than for other questions and results are subject to wider margins of error.

- 7.18 Ethnicity was also a factor, with those in the BME population less likely than those in White ethnic groups to agree strongly with the statements. The difference was greatest for the outcomes: I took time to appreciate my surroundings (33 per cent and 17 per cent respectively), It made me feel calm and relaxed (33 per cent and 20 per cent), I enjoyed it (47 per cent and 33 per cent) and I felt close to nature (26 per cent and 12 per cent).
- 7.19 Overall, those who visited the natural environment on at least a weekly basis were most likely to record having a very positive experience (Figure 7-3). Those visiting once a week were more likely than other visitors to agree strongly that they enjoyed their visit and that they took time to appreciate their surroundings.



**Figure 7-3** Outcomes of visits to the natural environment by normal frequency of visits (% agreeing strongly with statements)

*E1 Thinking of this visit, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: Random visits, quarterly questions (N=1,297).*

- 7.20 Those who had been on visits to the countryside and coast were more likely to indicate that they had experienced a positive outcome than those who had been on visits to green spaces in urban areas (Table 7-2). Visits to seaside destinations were particularly likely to have had positive outcomes with 43 per cent of these visitors agreeing strongly that their visit made them feel calm and relaxed while around half of visitors to seaside resorts or towns agreed strongly with the outcome I took time to appreciate my surroundings (49 per cent).



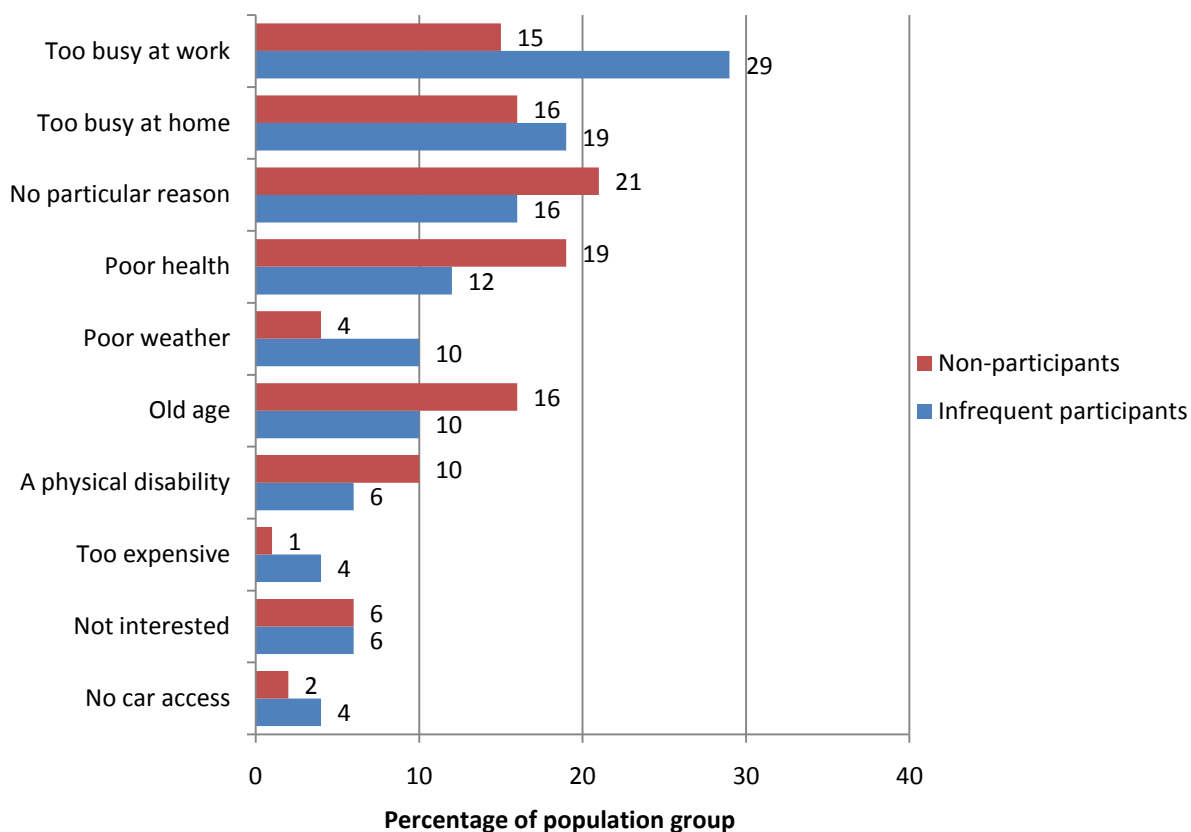
**Table 7-2** Outcomes of visits to the natural environment by place visited and duration of visit (% agreeing strongly with each statement)

*E1 Thinking of this visit, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: Random visits, quarterly questions (N=1,297)*

	<b>I enjoyed it</b>	<b>It made me feel calm and relaxed</b>	<b>It made me feel refreshed and revitalised</b>	<b>I took time to appreciate my surroundings</b>	<b>I felt close to nature</b>	<b>I learned something about the natural world</b>
<b>All visits</b>	47	32	31	32	25	10
<b>Type of place visited</b>						
Town or city	40	27	26	23	14	9
Countryside	49	33	32	35	30	8
Seaside resort or town	54	43	41	49	33	19
Seaside coastline	48	43	35	39	37	15
<b>Duration of visit</b>						
Less than 1 hour	48	39	33	35	30	11
1 hour to 2hrs 59 min	42	29	30	32	25	8
3 hours or more	53	31	30	31	20	11

## Reasons for not visiting

7.21 Respondents who had not taken any visits or who had only made infrequent visits to the natural environment were asked about their reasons for not participating. Those reasons provided by 3 per cent or more of respondents are included in Figure 7-4.



**Figure 7-4** Barriers to participation amongst infrequent and non-participants (%)

Q18 Why have you not spent any/more of your time out of doors? Base: Infrequent and non-participants, monthly questions (N=1,791 Infrequent 1,098 Non-participants)

Note: Sum of totals is more than 100% as respondents could specify more than one reason.

7.22 Being too busy at work and bad or poor weather were barriers more likely to be mentioned by infrequent participants as reasons for not visiting the natural environment more often (29 per cent and 10 per cent respectively). A significant proportion of respondents indicated that they had no particular reason for not participating more often (16 per cent), a lower proportion than recorded in the 2009/10 survey (21 per cent).

7.23 The main reasons expressed by non-participants were poor health (19 per cent) and old age (16 per cent). A fifth (21 per cent) stated that they had no particular reason and six per cent claimed that they were not interested in visiting the natural environment. Combined together, this suggests that 27 per cent had no particular motivation to visit the natural environment, a figure equal to that recorded in 2009/10.

**Table 7-3** Reasons for not visiting the natural environment more often by survey year (row %) Q18 Why have you not spent any/more of your time out of doors? Base: Infrequent and non-participants, monthly questions (2009-10 N=3,121; 2010-11 N=2,889)  
 Note: Sum of totals is not 100% as the table does not include all of the reasons that could be provided and respondents could specify more than one reason.

	Reason for not spending more time out of doors		
	2009/10 %	2010/11 %	Difference
Too busy at work	27	24	-3
Too busy at home	18	18	-
No particular reason	16	17	+1
Poor health	14	15	+1
Old age	12	12	-
Physical disability	8	8	-
Bad/poor weather	8	8	-
Not interested	6	6	-
No car access	3	3	-
Too expensive	4	3	-1

- 7.24 As shown in Table 7-3, the proportion of infrequent visitors and non-participants mentioning the various barriers to visiting the natural environment more often, or at all, remained very similar between the 2009/10 and 2010/11 surveys.
- 7.25 Notably, there were no significant differences in the barriers attributed to non or infrequent participation amongst the groups recorded as visiting less often in 2010/11. This includes 16 to 24 year olds, those in the DE socio-economic groups and members of the BME population.
- 7.26 In both years of the survey, men were more likely than women to cite being too busy at work as a reason for not visiting the natural environment more than they currently do or at all (31 per cent and 18 per cent respectively). On the other hand, a higher proportion of women mentioned poor health, old age or a disability.
- 7.27 Differences in the barriers more common to the various age groups were evident (see Table 7-4). Younger respondents aged 16-24 were most likely to cite a lack of interest (36 per cent), while 25 to 44 year olds were most likely to mention being busy at work or at home (39 per cent and 27 per cent respectively). Unsurprisingly, a higher proportion (86 per cent) of those aged 65 and over mentioned poor health, old age or a disability.
- 7.28 Members of the BME population were more likely to mention a lack of interest (30 per cent), being busy at work (30 per cent) and being busy at home (28 per cent), while poor health, old age or a disability were more likely to be mentioned by members of the White ethnic population (41 per cent).

**Table 7-4** Reasons for not visiting the natural environment more often by sex, age, socio-economic status and ethnicity profile (row %)

Q18 Why have you not spent any/more of your time out of doors? Base: Infrequent and non-participants, monthly questions (N=2,869)

Note: Sum of totals is not 100% as the table does not include all of the reasons that could be provided and respondents could specify more than one reason.

	Reason for not spending more time out of doors			
	Too busy at home %	Too busy at work %	No particular reason or not interested %	Poor health, old age or physical disability %
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	17	31	24	28
Female	18	18	22	40
<b>Age</b>				
16-24	18	24	39	4
25-44	27	39	29	5
45-64	21	31	19	26
65+	6	3	17	86
<b>Socio-economic status</b>				
AB	21	32	11	28
C1	20	31	12	26
C2	19	30	11	30
DE	14	14	10	45
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
BME	28	30	30	10
White	15	23	22	41

# 8 Other engagement with the natural environment

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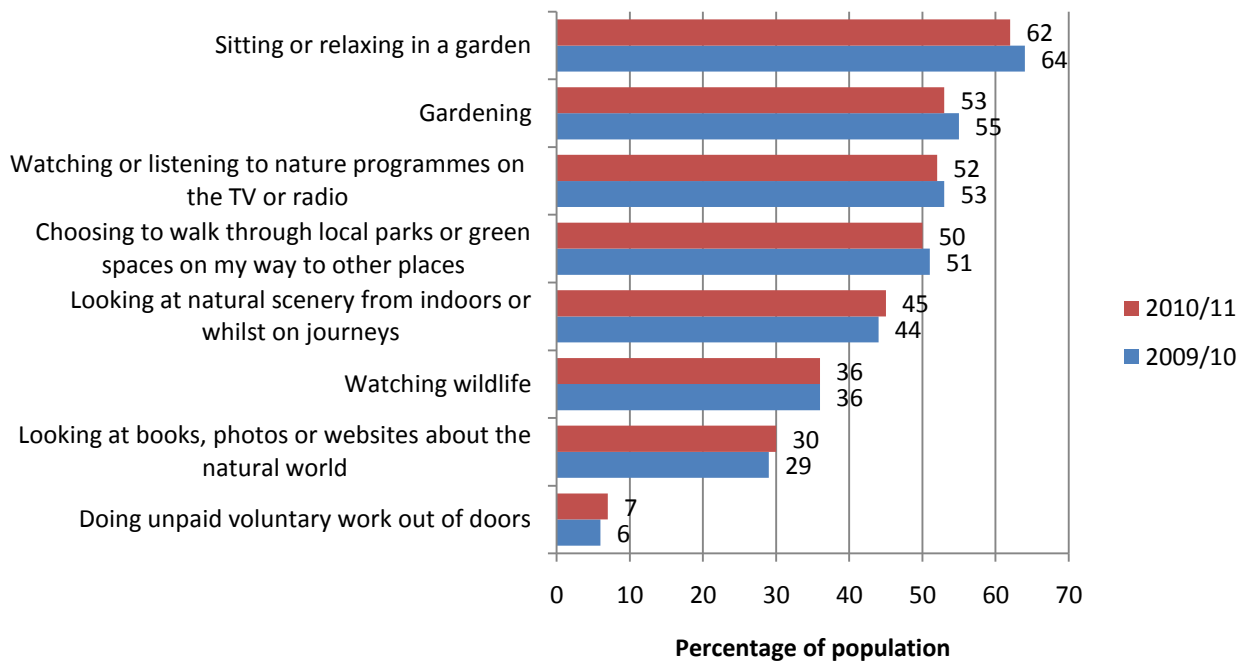
8.1 A series of questions were included in the survey to capture the other ways in which people enjoy and appreciate the natural environment. These include questions about other activities that people enjoy, attitudes towards the natural environment and questions about how people try to protect the environment. This section of the report summarises the key findings from these questions.

## Headline results in this section

- The survey also recorded types of engagement with the natural environment that did not involve trips to green spaces away from home. Activities include time spent at home in the garden or watching nature programmes on television.
- The vast majority of the population took part in one or more of the activities, with sitting and relaxing in the garden and gardening the most frequently undertaken.
- The groups least likely to visit the natural environment (including 16 to 24 year olds, those in the DE social grades and members of the BME population) were also least likely to engage with it in other ways. Most notably, only 37 per cent of members of the BME population had sat and relaxed in their garden, compared to 66 per cent of those of White ethnicity. Those aged 16 to 24 were less likely to take part in gardening (24 per cent compared to 58 per cent aged 25 and over) or watching or listening to nature programmes on the television or radio (32 per cent compared to 55 per cent aged 25 or over).
- 49 per cent of the population strongly agreed that having open green spaces close to where they live is important, 41 per cent strongly agreed that spending time out of doors was an important part of their life and 34 per cent strongly agreed that they were concerned about damage to the natural environment.
- The more frequently people visit the natural environment, the more likely they are to appreciate it and to be concerned about environmental damage. Frequent visitors are also more likely to engage in pro-environmental behaviours such as recycling and preferring to buy seasonal and locally grown food. These results are consistent with those recorded in the 2009/10 survey.

## Other activities involving the natural environment

- 8.2 Overall, 92 per cent of the population undertook one or more of the activities listed overleaf (Figure 8-1).
- 8.3 In total, 62 per cent of the adult population engaged with the natural environment by sitting or relaxing in their garden (Figure 8-1), around half took part in gardening (53 per cent), while half walked through local parks or green spaces on their way to other places (50 per cent). These figures are all very similar to those recorded in 2009/10.
- 8.4 Many people also chose indirect or passive ways of enjoying the natural environment. In total 52 per cent listened to a nature programme on the radio or watched one on television, while 45 per cent looked at natural scenery from the indoors or on a journey. In addition, three in ten people looked at books, photos or websites relating to the natural world (30 per cent).

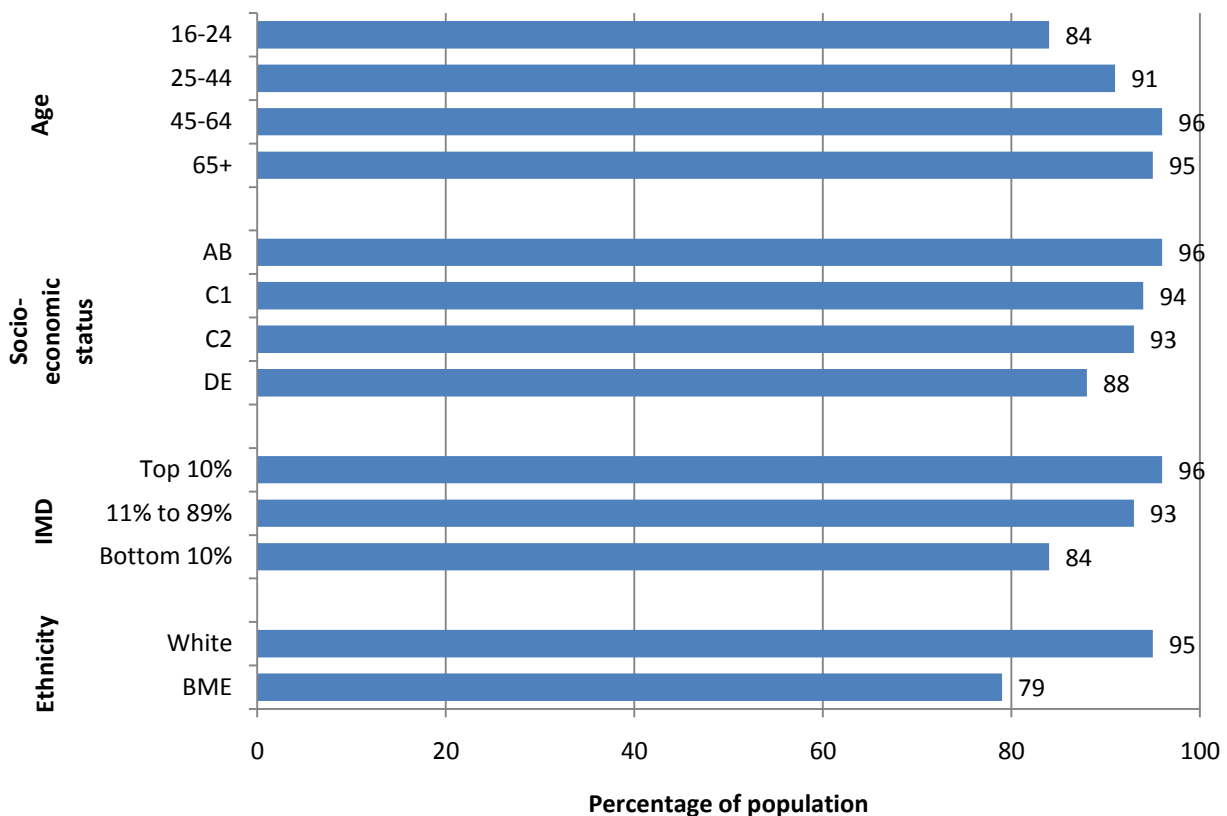


**Figure 8-1** Other activities involving the natural environment (%)

*E3 Which of the following activities involving the natural environment do you take part in? Base: All respondents, quarterly questions (2009/10 N=3,549; 2010/11 N=3,568)*

*Note: Sum of totals is more than 100% as respondents could have undertaken more than one activity.*

- 8.5 Women were more likely than men to take part in a number of the activities, including sitting or relaxing in the garden (66 per cent and 58 per cent respectively), walking through local parks or green spaces (53 per cent and 47 per cent) and looking at natural scenery indoors or on a journey (48 per cent and 42 per cent).
- 8.6 Participation in the activities shown in Figure 8-1 generally increased with age. Those aged 45 and older were especially likely to take part in sitting or relaxing in the garden (67 per cent compared to 56 per cent amongst younger age groups) and watching or listening to nature programmes on the television or radio (61 per cent compared to 41 per cent amongst younger age groups).
- 8.7 Members of the White ethnic population were more likely than members of the BME population to take part in all of these activities, with the greatest difference between these groups recorded for sitting or relaxing in the garden (66 per cent and 37 per cent respectively) and walking through local parks or green spaces en route elsewhere (53 per cent and 29 per cent).
- 8.8 Levels of participation were highest amongst residents of rural areas (98 per cent), those aged 45 and over (95 per cent) and members of the AB socio-economic groups (96 per cent). While still demonstrating high engagement levels, those aged 16 to 24 (84 per cent), members of the DE socio-economic group (88 per cent) and members of the BME population (79 per cent) were less likely to be engaged with the natural environment through these activities (Figure 8-2).
- 8.9 While overall participation in these activities remained at similar levels to the 2009/10 survey for most population groups, it is notable that they decreased amongst the BME population from 88 to 79 per cent in the 2010/11 survey.



**Figure 8-2** Participation in other activities involving the natural environment by age, socio-economic status, Index of Multiple Deprivation and ethnicity (%)

*E3 Which of the following activities involving the natural environment do you take part in? Please choose everything you do, both regularly and occasionally. Base: All respondents, quarterly questions (N=3,568)*

8.10 Those who never visited the natural environment were also less likely to engage with the outdoors in other ways. However, almost three-quarters did one or more of the activities in Table 8-1. Sitting or relaxing in the garden (40 per cent) and/or gardening (34 per cent) were the most frequently mentioned activities. The largest variation between frequent and infrequent visitors to the natural environment related to choosing to walk through local parks and green spaces on the way to other places. This was mentioned by 63 per cent of frequent visitors and 41 per cent of infrequent visitors.

8.11 It should be noted that some people who stated that their leisure time spent away from the home was never normally spent outdoors indicated that they sometimes chose to walk through local green spaces on their way to places or that they spent time wildlife watching. It may be that this participation occurs outside of leisure time (for example passing through a park when walking to work) and wildlife watching could be undertaken from the individual's garden or even from indoors.

**Table 8-1** Other activities involving the natural environment by frequency of participation in natural environment visits (column %)

*E3 Which of the following activities involving the natural environment do you take part in? Please choose everything you do, both regularly and occasionally. Base: All respondents, quarterly questions (N=3,586)*

	Frequency of natural environment visits		
	Frequent %	Infrequent %	Non-participants %
Any undertaken	96	92	76
Sitting or relaxing in a garden	66	62	40
Choosing to walk through local parks or green spaces on my way to other places	63	41	12
Gardening	59	50	34
Watching or listening to nature programmes on the TV or radio	55	50	37
Looking at natural scenery from indoors whilst on journeys	51	42	25
Watching wildlife (including bird watching)	41	32	21
Looking at books, photos or websites about the natural world	35	27	16
Doing unpaid voluntary work out of doors	9	5	2

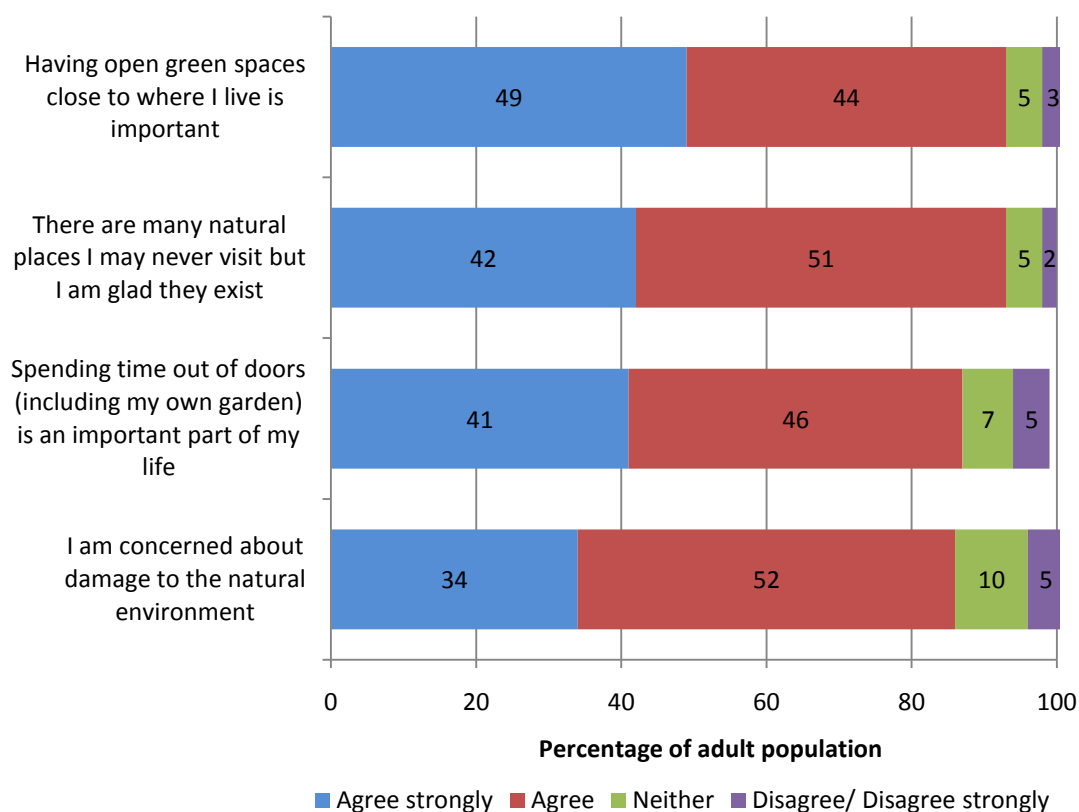
8.12 Only two per cent of the English adult population indicated that they never visited the natural environment and that they had also not undertaken any of the other forms of engagement with the natural environment featured in Table 8-1.

## Attitudes to the natural environment

8.13 To provide further insight, respondents were presented with a series of statements which were designed to elicit their general attitudes towards the environment and its relative importance in their lives. For each statement, a five-point scale from 'agree strongly' to 'disagree strongly' was used. In Figure 8-3 below the 'disagree' and 'disagree strongly' categories have been combined because of the relatively small proportions selecting these options.

8.14 The highest level of agreement was with the statement having green spaces close to where I live is important, where 49 per cent of the population agreed strongly and a further 44 per cent agreed with this statement.



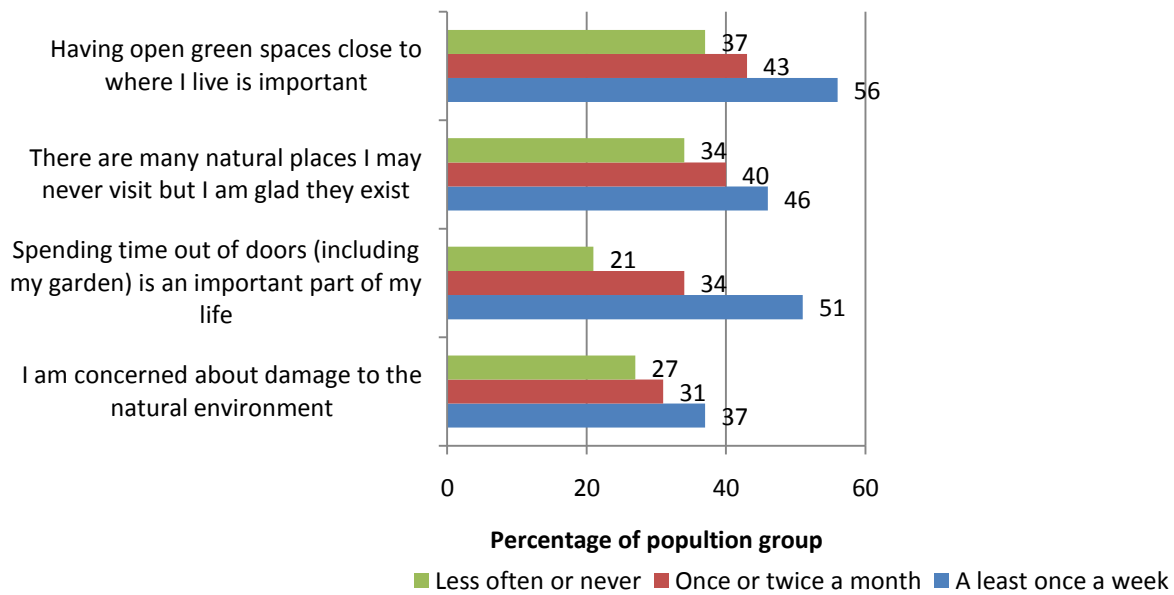


**Figure 8-3** Attitudes to the natural environment (%)

*E2 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: All respondents, quarterly questions (N=3,586)*

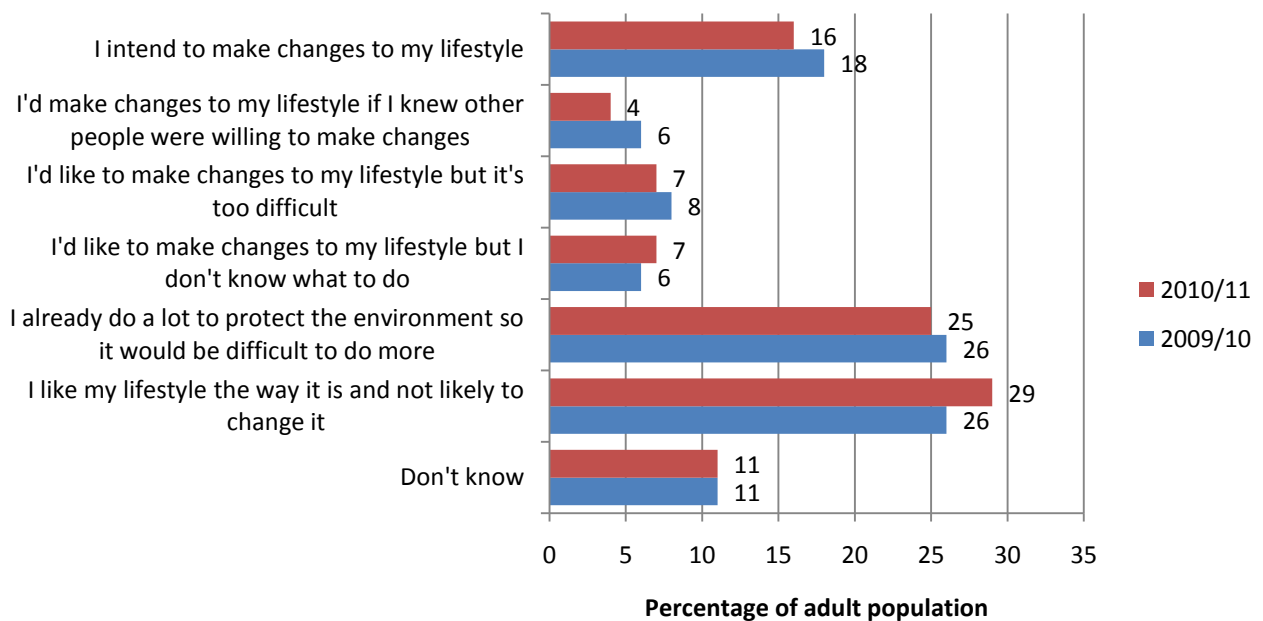
*Note: Disagree and disagree strongly categories are aggregated as very small proportions provided the disagree strongly response.*

- 8.15 While agreement with I am concerned about damage to the natural environment was high (86 per cent), the proportion agreeing strongly that they were concerned about the natural environment was lower than for any of the other statements (34 per cent). Those aged 45 to 54 were most likely to agree strongly with this statement (40 per cent).
- 8.16 As in 2009/10, proportions agreeing strongly with all of the statements were generally higher amongst older age groups, those in higher socio-economic groups and amongst those with a White ethnic background. In addition, the more often a person visits the natural environment, the more likely they were to express agreement with the various statements in Figure 8-4. In particular those who visited the outdoors at least once a week were more likely to agree strongly with the statements: spending time out of doors is an important part of my life (51 per cent) and having green spaces close to where I live is important (56 per cent).



**Figure 8-4** Attitudes to the natural environment by frequency of visits to the natural environment (% agreeing strongly with statements)  
 E2 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: All respondents, quarterly questions (N=3,586)

8.17 Respondents were also asked about the extent to which they were willing or able to change their current behaviour to address environmental concerns (Figure 8-5). A quarter felt that it would be difficult for them to do more to protect the environment (25 per cent), while a further 29 per cent indicated that they liked their lifestyle and were unwilling to change. Just 16 per cent of the population expressed their intention to make changes to their lifestyle. The responses provided in the 2010/11 survey are not significantly different from those obtained in the 2009/2010 survey.



**Figure 8-5** Changing lifestyle to protect the natural environment (%)  
 E5. Which of these statements best describes your intentions? Base: All respondents, quarterly questions (2009/10 N=3,549; 2010/11 N=3,586)

8.18 Those aged 65 and over were more likely than those in younger age groups to believe they are doing as much as they can for the environment (33 per cent and 24 per cent respectively) or to state that they were happy with their lifestyle and did not want to change it (41 per cent and 26 per cent). By comparison, younger respondents aged under 35 were more likely than those in the older age groups to indicate that they intended to make changes to their lifestyle (22 per cent and 14 per cent).

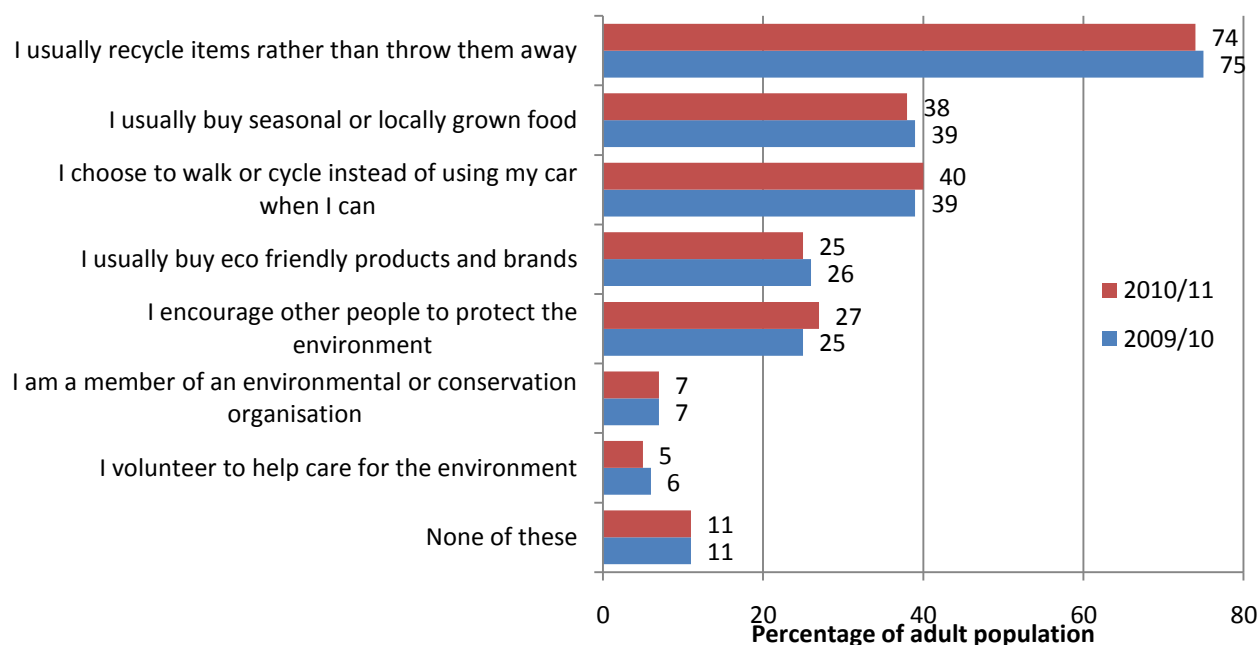
8.19 Variations by ethnicity were evident with members of the White population more likely than members of the BME population to intend keeping their lifestyle as it was (30 per cent and 19 per cent respectively) and/or to be of the opinion that they already did enough for the environment (27 per cent and 14 per cent). Almost a quarter of the BME population (24 per cent) intended to make changes to their lifestyle compared to just 15 per cent of the White population. These findings are very similar to those from the 2009/10 survey, and demonstrate an on-going commitment from a quarter of the BME population to lifestyle change.

**Table 8-2** Future intentions by sex, age, socio-economic status and ethnicity (row %)  
*E5. Which of these statements best describes your intentions? Base: All respondents, quarterly questions (N=3,586)*

	Like lifestyle the way it is and not likely to change %	Would like to make changes but don't know what to do or too difficult %	Would make changes if knew other people were willing to make changes %	Intend to make changes to protect the natural environment %	Already do a lot – would be difficult to do more %	Don't know
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	31	13	5	17	23	11
Female	27	15	4	15	27	11
<b>Age</b>						
16-24	29	14	4	20	16	16
25-44	21	17	6	21	22	13
45-64	30	13	5	15	30	7
65+	41	9	1	5	33	11
<b>Socio-economic status</b>						
AB	28	14	5	18	28	7
C1	27	15	4	17	26	11
C2	31	12	5	17	26	10
DE	30	15	4	12	22	17
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
BME	19	18	6	24	14	19
White	30	13	4	15	27	10

## Pro-environmental behaviours

8.20 MENE also examined whether people were actively engaged in pro-environmental behaviours.



Note: Sum of totals is more than 100% as respondents could have undertaken more than one activity.

**Figure 8-6** Pro-environmental behaviours

*E4 Which of the following environment related activities do you do? Base: All respondents, quarterly questions (2009/10 N=3,549; 2010/11 N=3,586)*

8.21 In total, 89 per cent of the population undertook one or more of the pro-environmental behaviours specified in Figure 8-6. Three quarters (74 per cent) said that they usually recycled items rather than throwing them away, while 40 per cent chose to walk or cycle instead of using their car. Furthermore, 38 percent of people stated that they usually bought seasonal or locally grown food. The proportions undertaking each of the pro-environmental behaviours were very similar to 2009/10.

8.22 As shown in Table 8-3 overleaf there is a relationship between the frequency of visit to the natural environment and the practice of pro-environmental behaviours. Frequent visitors are significantly more likely to undertake these activities than non visitors.

8.23 It is also interesting to note the relationships between the pro-environmental behaviours undertaken and attitudes towards changing behaviour, as illustrated in Table 8-4. This analysis illustrates the very high levels of participation in pro-environmental activities amongst those who state that they already do a lot and would find it difficult to do more. However in contrast, those who state that they would like to make changes but are prevented from doing so by a barrier such as a lack of knowledge, are less likely to currently undertake any of the activities asked about.

**Table 8-3** Pro-environmental behaviours by frequency of natural environment visits (column %)  
*E4 Which of the following environment related activities do you do? Base: All respondents, quarterly questions (N=3,586)*  
*Note: Sum of totals is more than 100% as respondents could have undertaken more than one activity.*

	Frequency of natural environment visits			
	All adults %	Frequent %	Infrequent %	Non-participants %
<b>Any undertaken</b>	89	93	88	66
Usually recycle items rather than throw them away	75	80	75	51
Choose to walk or cycle instead of using my car when I can	39	48	33	14
Usually buy seasonal or locally grown food	39	44	36	21
Encourage other people to protect the environment	25	29	23	14
Usually buy eco-friendly products and brands	26	29	24	12
Member of an environmental or conservation organisation	7	9	5	2
Volunteer to help care for the environment	6	7	4	4

**Table 8-4** Pro-environmental behaviours by attitude to changing behaviour (column %)  
*E4 Which of the following environment related activities do you do?*  
 Note: Sum of totals is more than 100% as respondents could have undertaken more than one activity.

	Attitude to changing behaviour to address environmental concerns			
	I already do a lot – it would be difficult to do more	I intend to make changes to my lifestyle	I like my lifestyle the way it is and am not likely to change it	I would like to make changes but don't know what to do/ it's too difficult/ I would if other people did %
<b>Any undertaken</b>	97	92	92	81
Usually recycle items rather than throw them away	84	75	79	77
Choose to walk or cycle instead of using my car when I can	48	43	36	37
Usually buy seasonal or locally grown food	53	39	39	35
Encourage other people to protect the environment	36	29	23	22
Usually buy eco-friendly products and brands	39	31	21	21
Member of an environmental or conservation organisation	10	8	7	5
Volunteer to help care for the environment	8	8	4	4

## 9 Conclusion

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- 9.1 The second year of the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment has recorded an overall decrease in the volume of visits taken to the natural environment by the English adult population. The scale of the decrease between the two years is significant, equating to a 13 per cent decrease or 350 million fewer visits.
- 9.2 However, it is notable that the changing level of visit-taking differs across population groups and by type of place visited. Identifying these changes during the first two years of MENE, highlights the importance of continuously measuring engagement levels.
- 9.3 The decreases are largest amongst those in the least affluent socio-economic groups, the youngest and oldest age groups, unemployed people and members of the black and minority ethnic groups. In terms of types of place visited, the most significant decreases were recorded for urban green spaces such as parks. Conversely, the volume of visits taken by the most affluent socio-economic groups has increased while visits taken to certain, typically more rural locations such as woodland remained at similar levels or increased.
- 9.4 The results of the third year of the survey will provide further understanding of emerging trends and the impacts of external factors such as the economy or weather on engagement with the natural environment. The increasing sample size will also permit further analysis amongst some of the key groups of interest, and will extend the possibilities for precisely mapping participation across England at a local level, and to areas such as designated landscapes.

# Appendix 1 Summary of survey scope and methods

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## Survey scope

The main focus of the survey is on time spent visiting the natural environment. MENE collects details of both visits to the natural environment such as days out to the coast and countryside and more routine trips taken close to home for purposes such as dog walking or exercise, including those visits to urban green spaces.

The methods used in MENE were developed through a scoping study undertaken in 2007. This study involved consultations with users to ensure that their information needs were taken into account; qualitative research with members of the public to test their understanding of potential questionnaire wording options; and the piloting of a range of quantitative data collection approaches using online, telephone and face-to-face methodologies.

The scoping study informed the wording of the introductory text used in the survey (see below).

*Now I am going to ask you about occasions in the last week when you spent your time out of doors.*

*By out of doors we mean open spaces in and around towns and cities, including parks, canals and nature areas; the coast and beaches; and the countryside including farmland, woodland, hills and rivers.*

*This could be anything from a few minutes to all day. It may include time spent close to your home or workplace, further afield or while on holiday in England.*

*However this **does not include**:*

- *routine shopping trips; or*
- *time spent in your own garden.*

This description aims to ensure that survey respondents are clear that visits to the natural environment taken in both urban and rural locations are of interest and that there is no upper or lower time limit on the duration of the visit. Respondents are informed that routine shopping trips and time spent in the garden are not included in the definition of a visit. Interviewers are also provided with further guidance to offer respondents who may be uncertain of what is and is not included within the definition of a visit.

In comparison to previous leisure visits surveys, the broader scope of this survey provides a more complete picture of engagement with the natural environment including accurate representation of levels of activity in close to home, informal visits, other forms of engagement with nature at home and pro-environmental behaviours. The collection of this data provides numerous new opportunities for analysis and developing a more informed understanding of how the population of England uses and enjoys the natural environment.

## Survey method

The 2007 scoping study also aimed to identify the most appropriate survey methods to adopt in a study which aimed to measure participation in visits to the natural environment amongst the English adult population. Pilot surveys were undertaken using online, telephone and face-to-face approaches, allowing a direct comparison of the results obtained using each method. The study



concluded that an in-home survey method was the most appropriate and that the inclusion of a series of questions on a weekly basis in a face-to-face consumer omnibus survey would represent the most cost effective approach for a future study.

The survey involves weekly waves of interviewing on the TNS-RI in-home Omnibus Survey with respondents asked about visits taken in the seven days preceding the interview. In each wave, interviews are undertaken with a representative sample of the English adult population (aged 16 and over) with a sample of at least 800 achieved across 100 sample points.

The number of visits taken in each of the seven days and key details of these visits (type of place visited, duration of visit, activities undertaken) are recorded<sup>8</sup>. One of the visits taken is then randomly selected and the respondent is asked to provide more details on this single visit including type of place visited, specific location visited, distance travelled, where the visit started from and modes of transport used.

While the majority of survey questions are included in every weekly wave of the survey, some are asked on a monthly basis. A series of questions regarding other forms of engagement with the natural environment, such as watching nature programmes on television and engagement in pro-environmental activities such as recycling, are asked on a quarterly basis.

## Fieldwork

Fieldwork for Year 1 of MENE commenced in March 2009 and ran until February 2010. Year 2 fieldwork continued immediately without any break, running from March 2010 to February 2011.

During the 2010/11 survey period 46,099 interviews were undertaken allowing the key details of 47,825 visits to be collected, and more detailed information from 17,389 visits to be gathered. In comparison, the 2009/10 survey collected 48,514 interviews, with key details taken for 58,653 visits and further detailed information taken for 20,374 visits.

## Analysis

Sample sizes are much larger than those obtained in previous leisure visits surveys, providing the opportunity to analyse results at both a national level and at smaller geographic areas. Results can also be analysed for key groups within the population such as specific age groups, members of ethnic minorities and residents of particular types of geographic areas (for example, urban or rural). Also, the large sample of visits recorded in the survey facilitates analysis of results on the basis of a wide range of visit characteristics such as activities undertaken and places visited. The application of grid references (geocodes) to visit destinations provides opportunities for the mapping of results and the identification of visits taken to different types of place including designated areas.

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<sup>8</sup> The number of visits a respondent could be asked about was capped at 10 to avoid an excessively long interview duration. Over the course of the year, 1% of respondents reported taking more than this maximum number of visits. Weighting procedures have taken account of this maximum allowance - see technical report for further details.

## Presentation of results

It should be noted that in some of the figures and tables included in this report the results do not total to 100 per cent. This can be due to a number of reasons as follows:

- Results are rounded to the nearest whole number. Therefore in some cases the totals of the rounded results may equal 99 per cent or 101 per cent.
- In some questions respondents could provide more than one response (“multiple choice” - for example, the activities they have done during a visit). In these cases the total of percentages may be well over 100 per cent.
- In some figures and tables results relating to only some of the answer options are included. In these cases the percentages illustrated will total less than 100 per cent.

It should also be noted that all of the averages included in the report are calculated as mean scores.

A Technical Report is available from the Natural England website providing full details of survey methods including the full questionnaire.

## Appendix 2 Accuracy of survey results

The following provides a summary of the margins of error associated with certain key results and 'rules of thumb' to apply when interpreting the survey findings.

Between March 2010 and February 2011 a total of 46,099 interviews were completed, key details were collected for 47,825 visits and more details were collected on 17,389 selected visits.

The table below illustrates the **design effect** associated with each of these samples. This is an indication of how much larger the sample variance is with the complex survey design used in MENE than it would be if the survey was based on the same sample size but selected randomly (i.e. a Simple Random Sample).

The table also includes the **design factor** which is an inflation factor for the standard errors obtained using a complex survey design. The overall design factor at the all respondent level of 1.29 indicates that standard errors for the 12 months' data are 1.29 times as large as they would have been had the design been a Simple Random Sample.

The design factor is used to obtain the **effective sample size** which gives, for a complex survey design, an estimate of the sample size that would have been required to obtain the same level of precision in a Simple Random Sample. The estimated effective sample size for respondent based results after twelve months of interviewing is 27,586 - around 60 per cent of the actual achieved sample.

**Table A** Sample design effect and design factor

	Total sample	Design effect	Design factor	Effective sample
Respondent based results	46,099 respondents	1.67	1.29	27,586 respondents
All visit based results	47,825 visits	1.67	1.29	28,740 visits
Selected visit based results	17,389 visits	2.26	1.50	7,730 visits

These design factors may be used to obtain an indication of the levels of accuracy of results obtained from MENE.

For example with a Simple Random Sample, a result of 50 per cent with the total respondent sample of 47,825 would have a margin of error of +/-0.44 percentage points at the 95 per cent levels of confidence. Multiplying this value by 1.29 provides us with the margin of error when taking account of the MENE sample design i.e. +/-0.57 percentage points.

Following this approach the following margins of error may be estimated for certain key results from the first year of data collection:

- 39.4 per cent of the population had visited the natural environment in the last seven days. This result ranges from 38.8 per cent to 40.0 per cent;
- 53.4 per cent of the population stated that they normally visited the natural environment for leisure at least once a week. This result ranges from 52.2 per cent to 54.6 per cent;
- 52.5 per cent of visits were taken to the countryside. This result ranges from 51.9 per cent for 53.1 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level;
- 10.4 per cent of visits were to the coast. This result ranges from 10.1 per cent to 10.8 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level; and

- 37.0 per cent of visits were to green spaces such as parks within town and city locations. This result ranges from 36.4 per cent to 37.8 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level.

The following provides an indication of the general levels of accuracy of MENE results when applying the design factors described above.

### **Respondent based results**

- Where the sample size is in excess of 40,000 respondents, the data will generally be accurate to around +/-0.6 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level.
- When the sample size is around 10,000 respondents, the data will generally be accurate to around +/-1.3 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level.
- Where the sample size is around 5,000 respondents, the data will generally be accurate to around +/-1.8 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level.
- Where the sample size is around 1,000 respondents, the data will generally be accurate to around +/-4 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level.

### **All visit based results**

- When the sample size is around 50,000 visits, the data will generally be accurate to around +/-0.6% at the 95% confidence level.
- When the sample size is around 20,000 visits, the data will generally be accurate to around +/-0.9% at the 95% confidence level.
- When the sample size is around 10,000 visits, the data will generally be accurate to around +/-1.3% at the 95% confidence level.
- Where the sample size is around 5,000 visits, the data will generally be accurate to around +/-1.8% at the 95% confidence level.

### **Selected visit based results**

- When the sample size is around 20,000 visits, the data will generally be accurate to around +/-1 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level.
- When the sample size is around 10,000 visits, the data will generally be accurate to around +/-1.47 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level.
- Where the sample size is around 5,000 visits, the data will generally be accurate to around +/-2.1 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level.
- Where the sample size is around 1,000 visits, the data will generally be accurate to around +/-4.6 per cent at the 95 per cent confidence level.

### **Estimates of total visits**

One of the outputs of MENE is a series of estimates of the total number of visits taken by adults in England between March 2010 and February 2011. Estimates of visits have been produced for all visits and for visits taken to particular types of place.

The table below illustrates the upper and lower confidence limits associated with these estimates. These estimates take account of two sources of variation: the uncertainty associated with respondent based results and the sample variation in terms of the number of visits respondents report to have taken in the 7 days prior to interview.

**Table B** Total number of visits taken by adults

	12 month visit estimate '000s visits	Lower confidence limit '000s visits	Upper confidence limit '000s visits
<b>All visits</b>	<b>2,493,837</b>	<b>2,431,187</b>	<b>2,556,448</b>
<b>By specific place visited</b>			
A playing field or other recreation area	190,962	173,106	208,818
Allotment or Community Garden	15,637	11,507	19,767
Another open space in a town or city	188,684	171,178	206,190
Another open space in the countryside	307,211	281,996	332,426
Beach	159,083	143,993	174,173
Children's Playground	75,804	65,791	85,818
Country Park	176,258	161,847	190,669
Farmland	232,977	209,686	256,267
Mountain, hill or moorland	63,938	54,689	73,188
Park in town or city	557,838	532,798	582,883
Path, cycleway or bridleways	359,534	330,312	388,755
River, lake or canal	231,907	210,907	252,908
Village	157,450	139,966	174,934
Woodland or forest	325,554	300,792	350,316
<b>By general place visited</b>			
Town or city	923,060	887,798	958,322
Seaside resort or town	172,573	156,109	189,037
Seaside coastline	88,267	78,391	98,142
Countryside	1,309,938	1,257,351	1,362,525

### Estimates of expenditure during visits

MENE also collects data on the amounts spent during visits to the natural environment. This data is then applied to estimates of the total volume of visits taken to obtain an estimate of the total amount spent on all visits taken over a 12 month period. The table below illustrates the confidence limits associated with these estimates.

**Table C** Expenditure during visits

	12 month visit estimate	Lower confidence limit	Upper confidence limit
<b>Average spend per visit (excluding visits with no spend)</b>	£29.69	£24.74	£34.81
<b>Average spend per visit (including visits with no spend)</b>	£6.90	£5.75	£8.09
<b>Estimated total spend all visits over 12 month period</b>	£17.2 billion	£14.3 billion	£20.2 billion

A Technical Report is available from the Natural England website providing full details of the survey accuracy.

# Appendix 3 Definitions of socio-economic groups

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## **A UK: 3% of the population**

These are professional people, very senior managers in business or commerce, or are top-level civil servants.

Retired people, previously grade A, and their widows/ widowers.

## **B UK: 18% of the population**

Middle management executives in large organisations, with appropriate qualifications.

Principal officers in local government and civil service.

Top managers or owners of small business concerns, educational and service establishments.

Retired people, previously grade B, and their widows/ widowers.

## **C1 UK: 27% of the population**

Junior management, owners of small establishments, and all others in non-manual positions.

Jobs in this group have very varied responsibilities and educational requirements.

Retired people, previously grade C1 and their widows/ widowers.

## **C2 UK: 24% of the population**

All skilled manual workers, and those manual workers with responsibility for other people.

Retired people previously grade C2, with a pension from their job.

Widows/widowers, if receiving pensions from their late spouse's job.

## **D UK: 16% of the population**

All semi skilled and unskilled manual workers, and apprentices and trainees to skilled workers.

Retired people, previously grade D, with a pension from their job.

Widows/widowers, if receiving pensions from their late spouse's job.

## **E UK: 12% of the population**

All those entirely dependent on the state long term, through sickness, unemployment, old age or other reasons.

Those unemployed for a period exceeding 6 months (otherwise classified on previous occupation).

Casual workers and those without a regular income.

Only households without a chief wage earner are coded in this group.