



Review of National Trails and Routes

National Consultation 27 Jan 2009

Evidence summary and recommendations

Definition

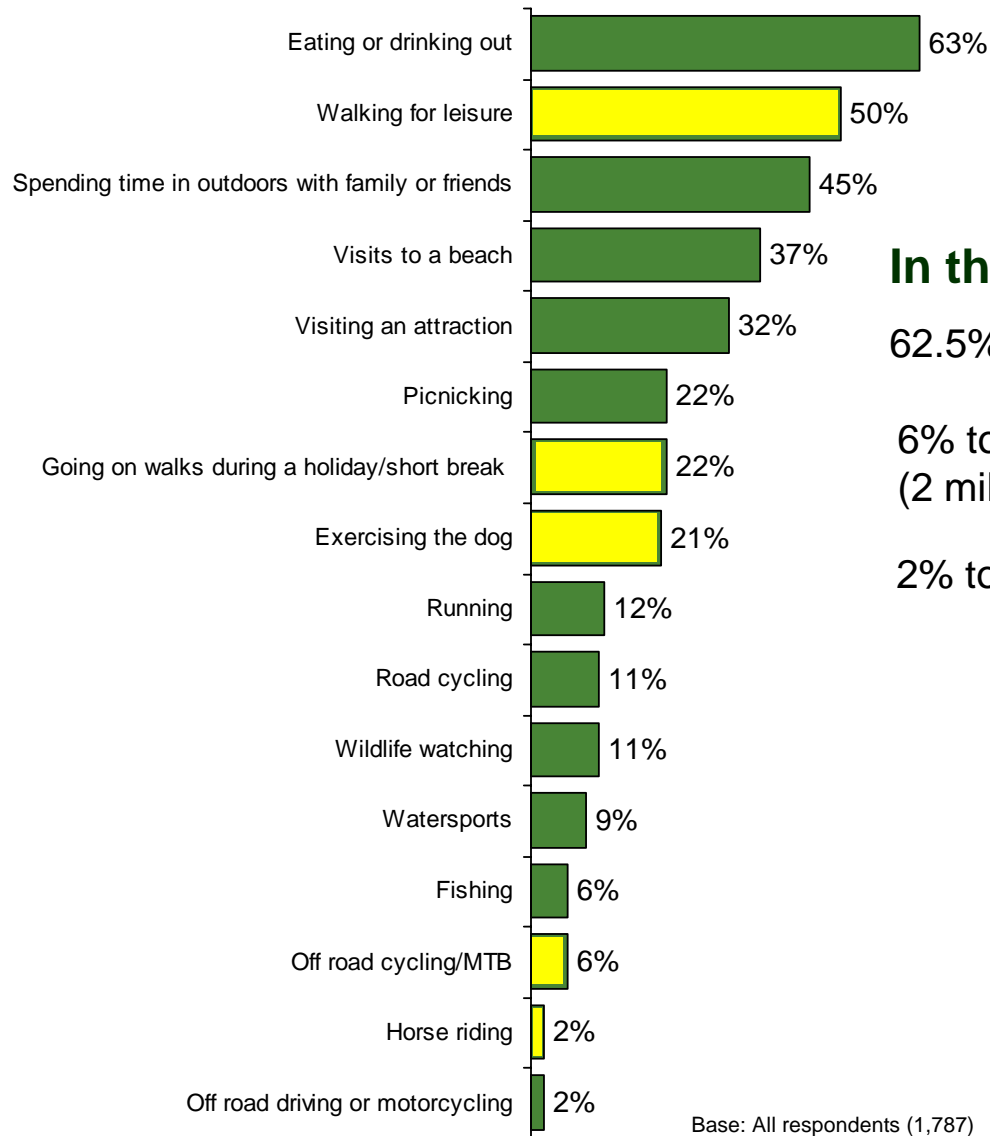
Mainly traffic-free routes for walking, cycling or horse riding that :

- have a name
- can be enjoyed over a series of days as well as for short trips
- are promoted as an attraction to visitors as well as local people
- are managed and promoted as part of the local, regional or national picture for recreation

Review aims

- Who uses trails and routes and what experiences do they seek
- How to increase and diversify use
- Differences between National Trails and other routes
- Smarter ways of managing and funding National Trails

Leisure participation: adults



In the 12 months prior to the survey:

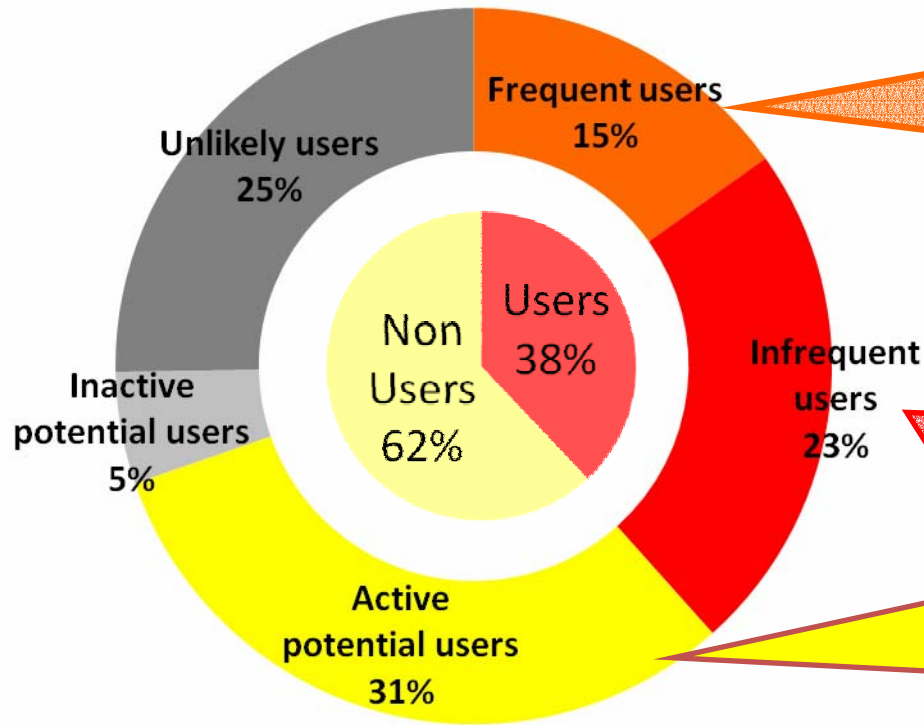
62.5% took part in leisure walking (26 million).

6% took part in off-road mountain biking or cycling (2 million)

2% took part in horse riding (1 million)

Base: All respondents (1,787)

The Opportunity

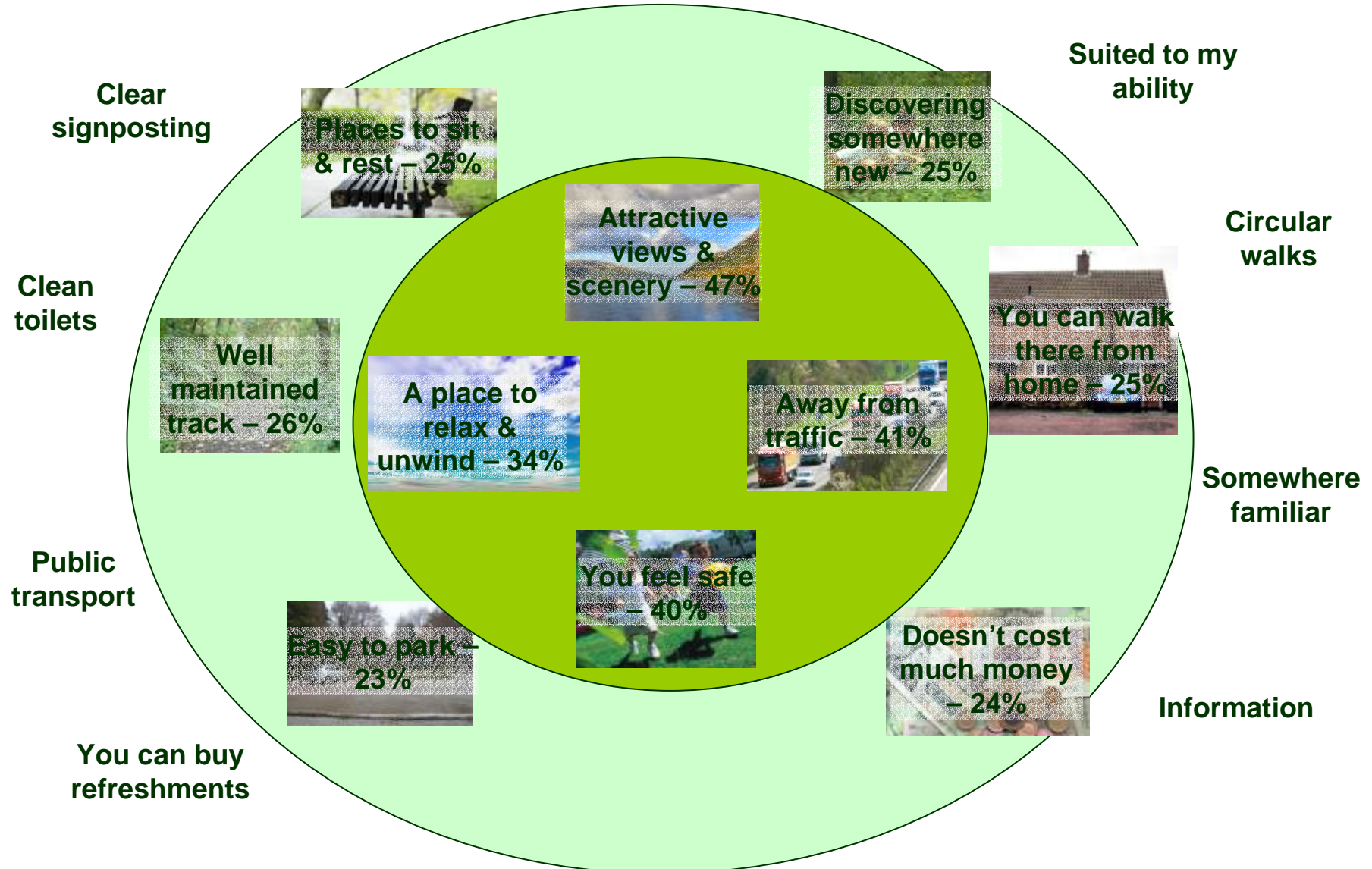


6 million (15%) people could be encouraged to take a trail break or enjoy more routes while on holiday

9 million (23%) people could be encouraged to walk, cycle and ride more often locally and while on holiday



15 million (36%) people could be encouraged to be more active to improve their health as part of their every day lives

Choosing a place to walk – important factors

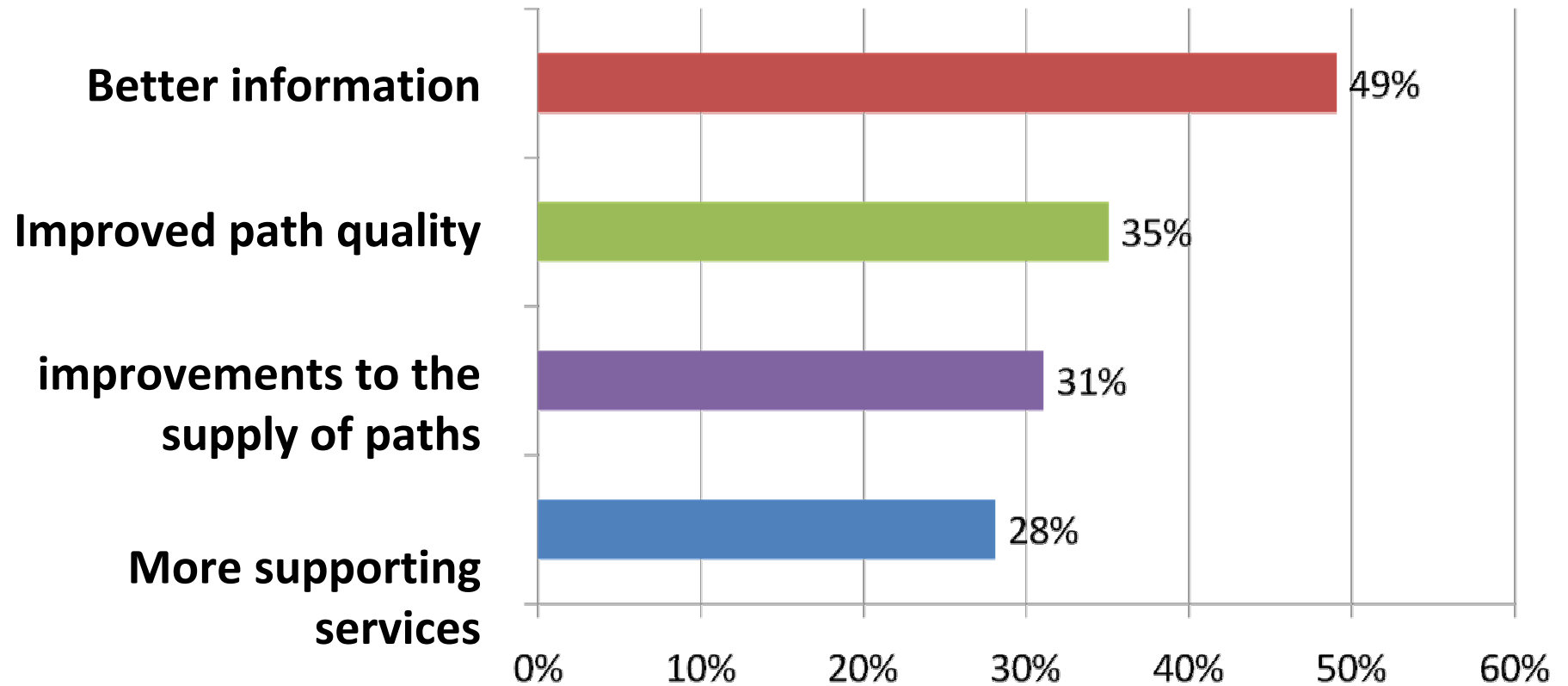


Increasing use

What would make people more likely to use routes in future??

	<u>Users</u>	<u>Non-users</u>
 <p>Increasing local use</p>	<p>Something - 65%</p> <p>Improve path conditions More parking on paths More printed information More circular routes Better signposting</p>	<p>Something - 42%</p> <p>More printed information Better signposting Good places to eat & drink Better choice of routes in local area</p>
 <p>Increasing use outside of local area</p>	<p>Something - 51%</p> <p>More routes connecting interesting places More printed and on-line information about routes and accommodation</p>	<p>Something - 31%</p> <p>More routes connecting interesting places More printed and on-line information about routes and accommodation</p>

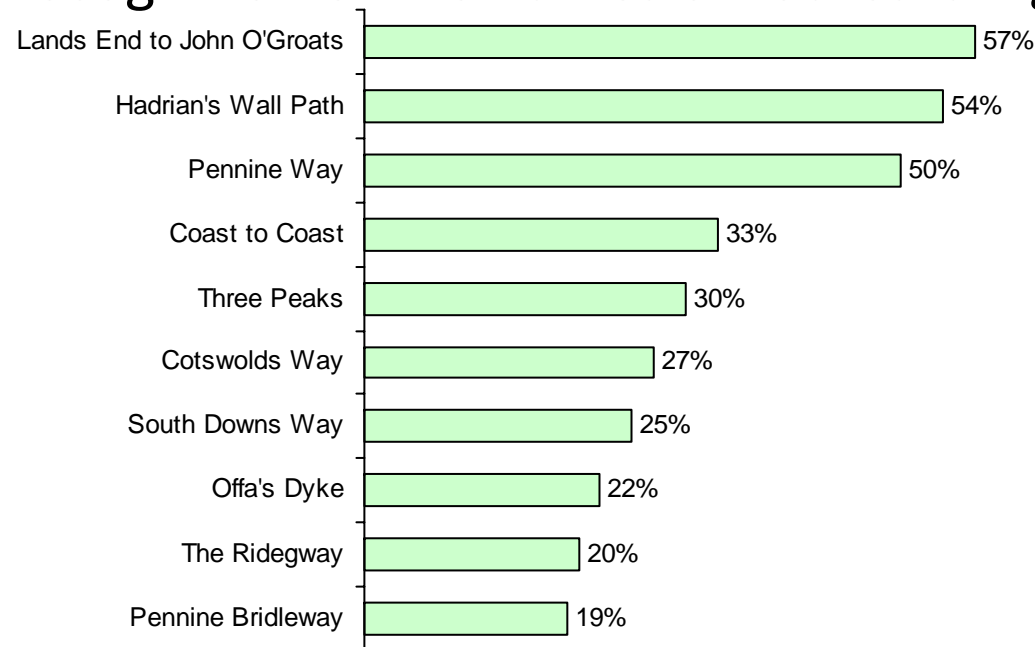
People's needs to use trails and routes more



Awareness of Trails and Routes

- **61%** of adult population are aware that Strategic Recreation Routes exist in England (25 million).
- **52%** expect there to be one or more route in their local area.
- **26%** can provide the name of one or more route. Highest recall of local routes.
- Prompted recognition of the names of routes is higher:

The 'Top 10'



The difference between National Trails and other routes

An average of **20p** is spent on National Trails per user

Only **1%** of authorities can relate costs to user numbers

Measure	National Trails	Strategic recreational routes
Quality of environment	★★★	★★
Quality of experience	★★	★
Quality of route	★★	★
Effectiveness of management	★★	★
Value for money	★★	★
Iconic status	★★★★	★
Prevalence to recommend	★★★	★★

55% of the land corridor around National Trails is managed within agri-environment schemes, national coverage is **44%**.

All evidence

77% of NTs work with volunteers to help manage the trail, compared to **13%** of SRRs

Summary of findings

- 1. There are 15 million potential users of trails and routes who are mainly not aware of them.** They come from all ages, income levels and cultural backgrounds.
- 2. Providing high quality information about trails and routes would increase awareness and routes.**
- 3. Two thirds of highway authorities believe there are enough or too many trails and routes in England.**
- 4. One third of highway authorities think there are too few.** In rural areas concern is for more cycling and horse riding. In urban areas (71% are urban) the concern is routes closer to where people live.
- 5. There are no recognised standards for routes apart from the National Trails Quality Standard.** These are too expensive to apply widely elsewhere.

Summary of findings

6. **Very few routes other than National Trails support services such as baggage handling and accommodation booking.**
7. **National Trails stand out from other routes in every way, especially in quality of environment, experience and iconic status**
8. **There is little strategic direction in the future management and promotion of National Trails.**
9. **There is potential to improve both the environment, and links to settlements and places of interest, within trail corridors.**
10. **Natural England's grant system causes inefficiencies due to its short term nature.**

Recommendations: public facing

1. **The best trails and routes in England.** Develop an accreditation system to identify the best routes in the country.
2. **Visitor information.** Create and promote a new dynamic website to enable users and potential users to learn about, enjoy and appreciate all routes in England.

Recommendations: management effectiveness

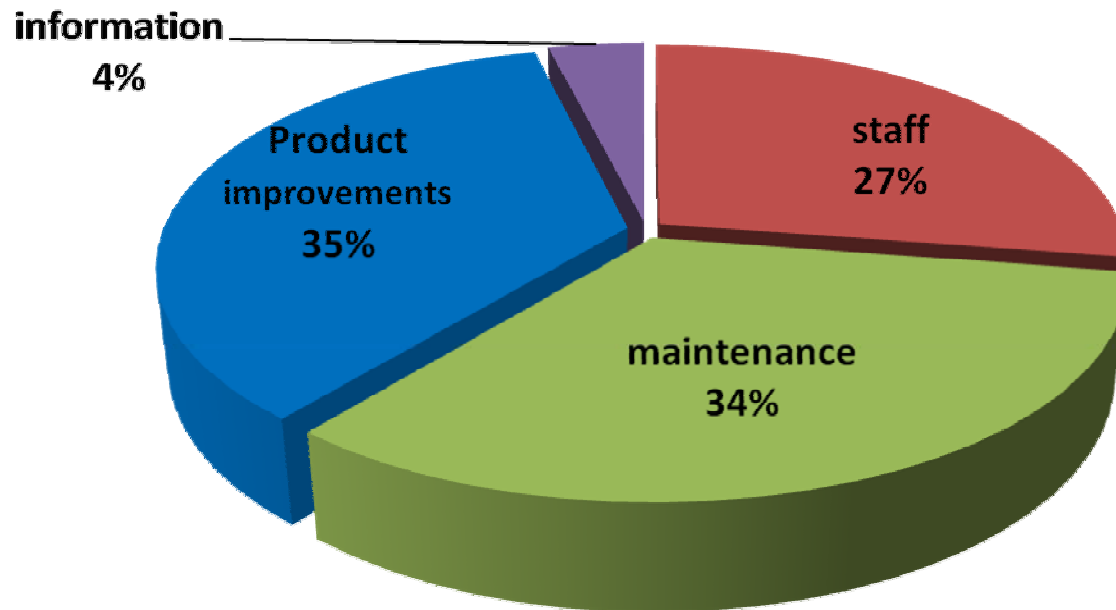
- 3. Management Information.** Establish a national methodology for collecting and sharing evidence on levels of use, satisfaction, costs and economic impact.
- 4. Natural England grants.** Modernise NE's grant system, prioritise the current NT quality standards & link grants more closely to results.
- 5. Volunteering.** Recruit and support more volunteers to assist with the management and promotion of trails and routes.
- 6. Trail & Route staff.** Improve the 'team working' of people managing National Trails.
- 7. A new management model.** Encourage more progression in Trail management.

Proposed new management model

Construction	Early years	Maturity	Adding Value
There is a plan and resources to construct a trail	Trail is open, signed and promoted	Trail is consistently maintained to a high standard	Trail & corridor improves, other routes are promoted
Priorities			More Strategic Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating the product • delivery partnerships • management agreements • practical action • launch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completing some sections • marketing • maintenance and monitoring systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintenance systems in place • most improvements completed • information delivery in place • audits and monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • links to urban centres via public transport and connections with attractions/other routes • promotion alongside other routes • better use of HLS • enhanced volunteer networks • visitor services • innovative projects

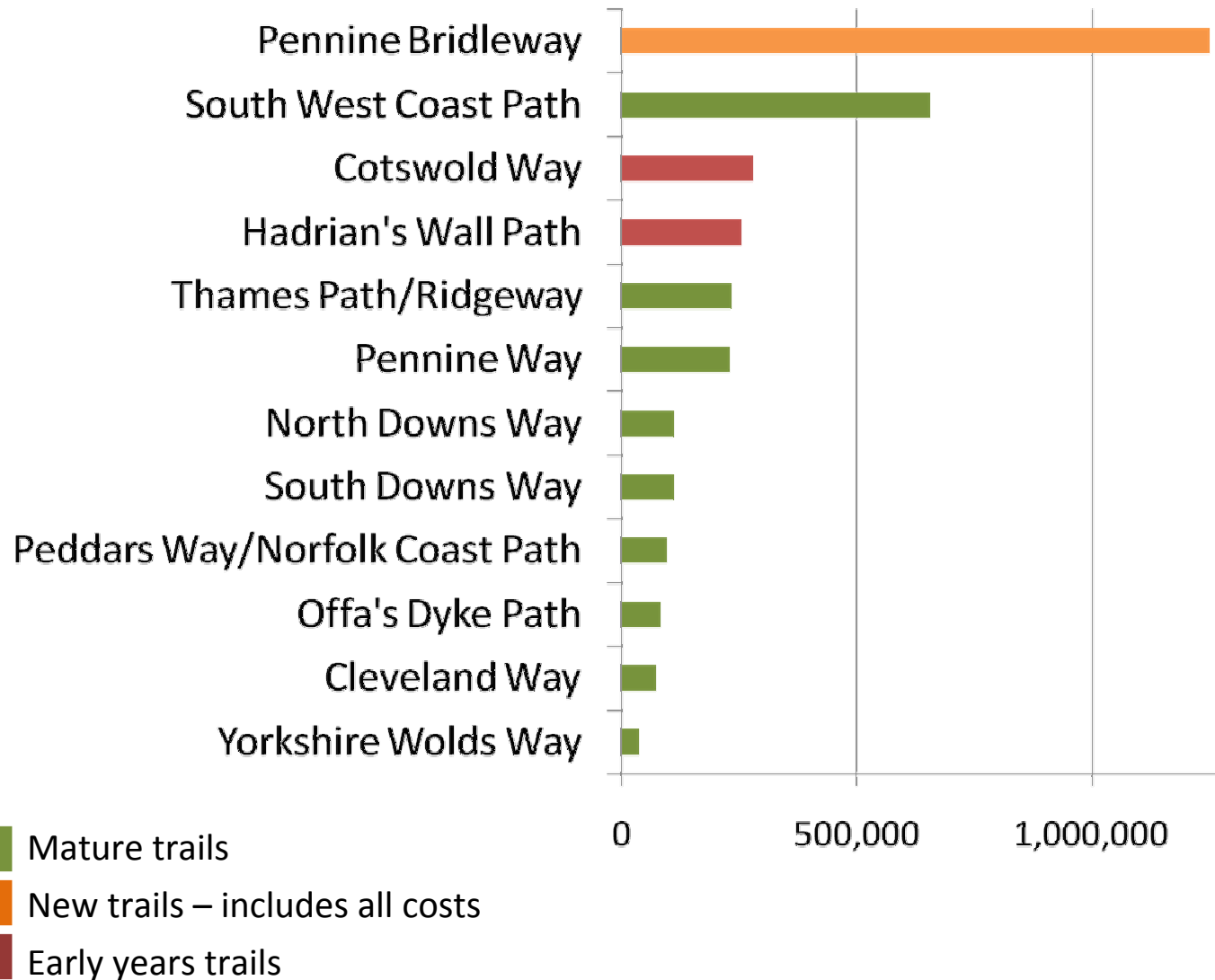
Natural England's current commitment

£2.3m per year on 13 National Trails + £1.2m on Pennine Bridleway
£0 per year on 564 recreational routes

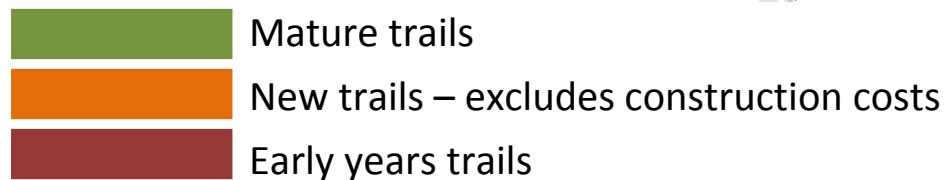
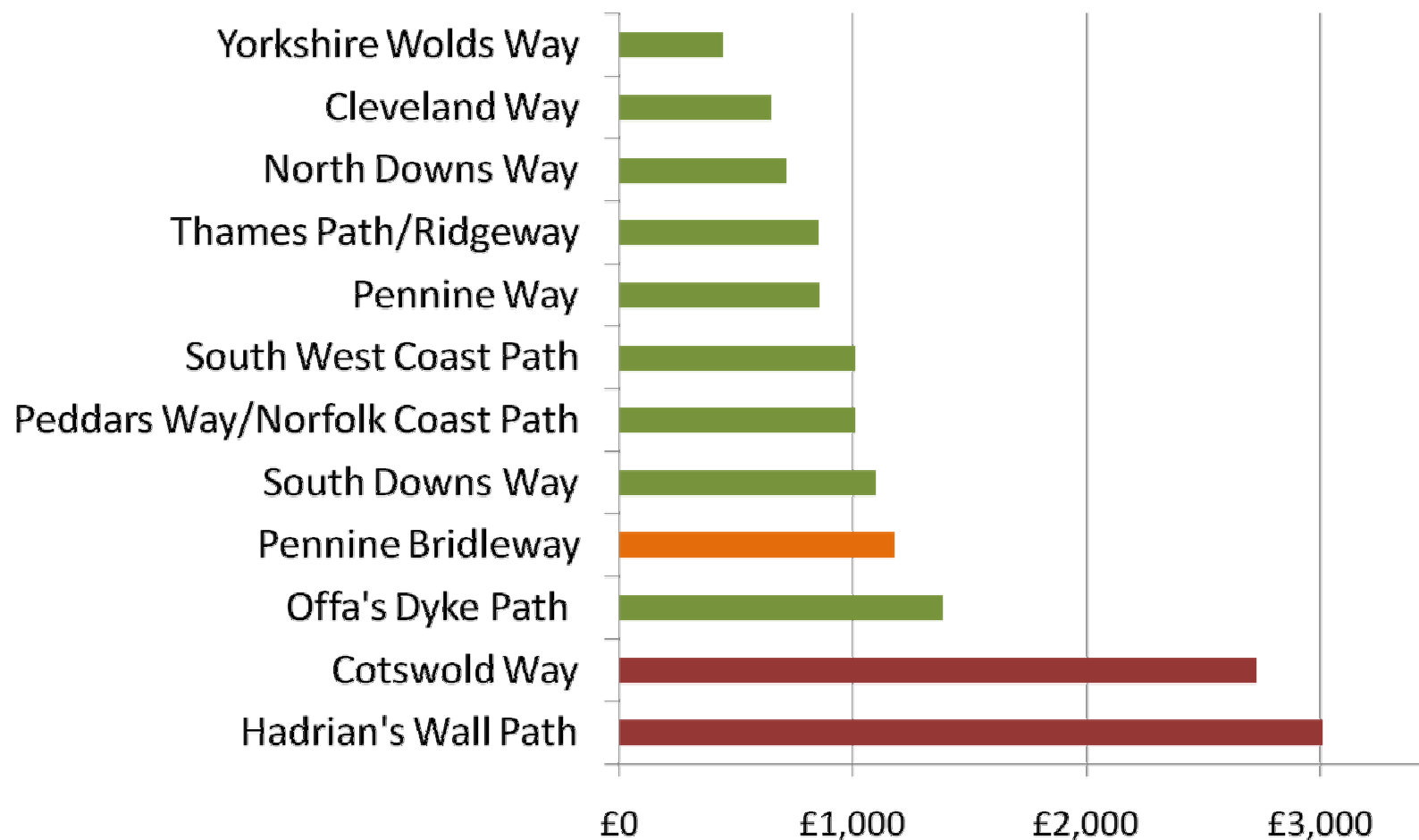


“National Trails are better known and understood than National Nature Reserves. The public do not generally understand who pays for National Trails - many believe all are owned by the National Trust.”

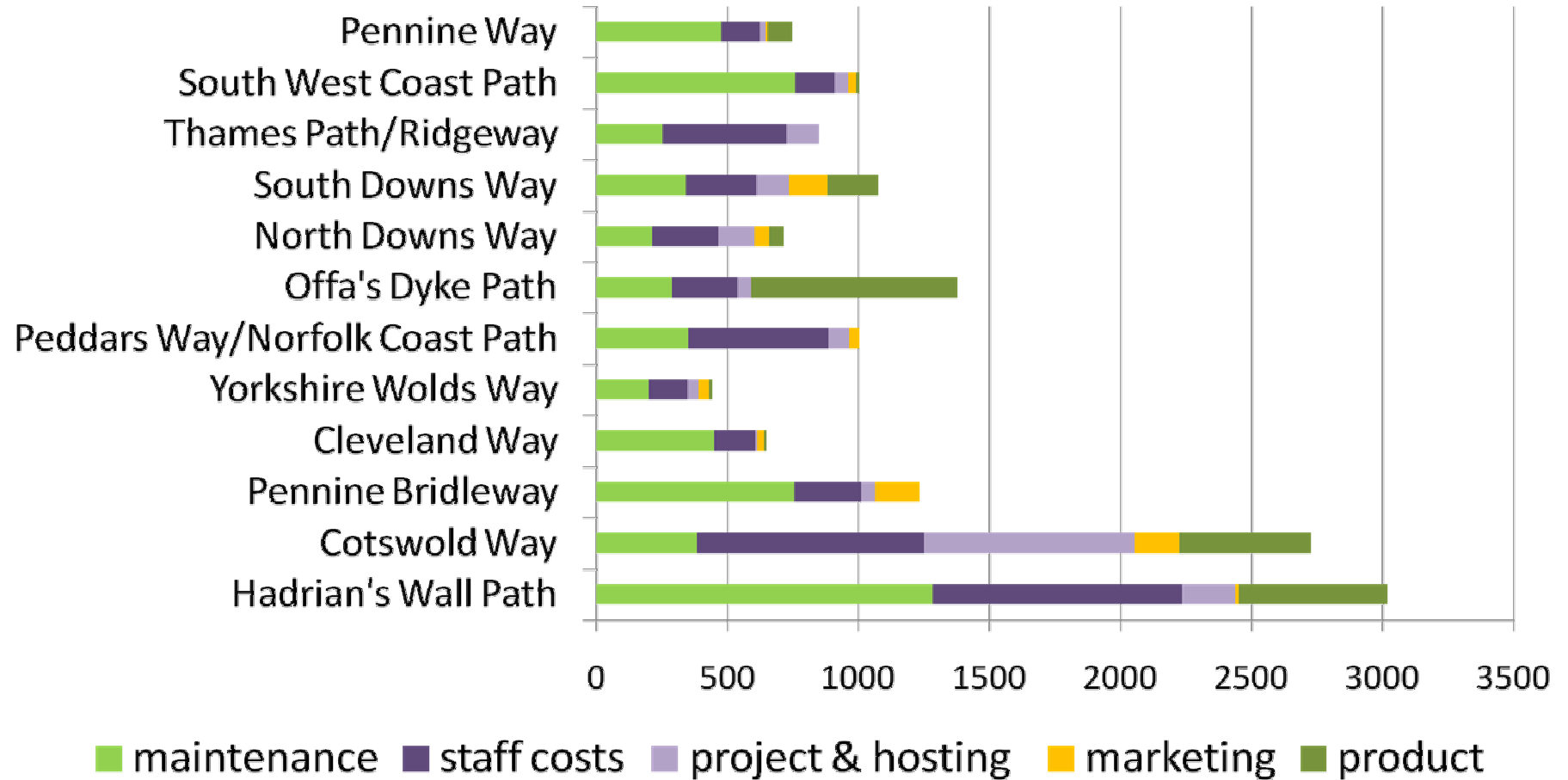
Natural England contribution by trail 08/09



Overall costs per mile



Trail costs per mile



Discussion time

- 3 groups
- 60 minutes
- Raporter svp

The Spanish Inquisition

- Are national trails an outdated concept?
- What justifies national trails getting more funding per mile than other rights of way?
- If we faced a 50% cut in national funding what or where would be the top priority?

Questions

public facing recommendations

- 1. Selecting the Best Trails and routes**
 - a. would it be useful to highway authorities ?
 - b. would it be useful to the public ?
 - c. How do you think we should identify the best routes ?
 - d. How could the public be involved ?
 - e. Is Natural England the right body to lead on this ?

- 2. A single source Visitor Information**
 - a. Would it be useful to highway authorities?
 - b. Would it be useful to the public?
 - c. How will it complement what you already do ?

Questions

management recommendations

- 3. Better management information:**
 - a. Would a toolkit of monitoring methodologies be useful ?
 - b. What would be most useful to you ?
 - c. Would access to national data be useful ?

- 4. Improving the grants system**
 - a. What changes would help you ?
 - b. What difference would they make ?

- 5. Increasing volunteering**
 - a. What are the barriers ?
 - b. What action is needed ?

Questions

management recommendations

6 Staff working on Trails and Routes

- a. How can we share and develop expertise better?

7. The New Management Model for National Trails

- a. Do you agree that Trails have different management needs at different stages of their life ?
- b. How can NT staff on mature trails widen their roles to look at corridor and marketing improvements ?
- c. How can you help to attract external funding from health, education, agriculture, the lottery, RDAs, tourism businesses?
- d. How do we get better value for all of our spend on National Trails?