

Final Report May 2008

Measuring the Health Benefits and Barriers to the use of Core Paths in East Dunbartonshire

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Executive Summary

Background and objectives

The Land Reform Scotland Act 2003 placed a statutory duty on all local authorities to develop a Core Paths Plan by early 2008 and, during 2007/8, East Dunbartonshire Council (EDC) drafted an Environmental Report and engaged in extensive public consultation to identify 84 Core Path candidates which will form the bedrock of East Dunbartonshire's Core Path Network. During 2007, EDC received funding from Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership to evaluate the impact of Core Path planning on physical activity levels and the current evaluation focused on two distinctive communities – Hillhead in Kirkintilloch and Milngavie.

The study endeavoured to determine the potential impact of Core Path planning on physical activity levels and, where appropriate, identify barriers to path usage. The study specifically aimed to:

- evaluate the impact and contribution of the introduction of Core Path Plans on physical activity levels by gathering data in 2008 which can be compared with data in 2011;
- identify path network usage levels within each target group and community (e.g. walking, cycling and jogging) and purpose (e.g. to access locations, recreation, exercise, dog walking, etc.) to quantify the amount of physical activity taken when using paths;
- examine the extent to which the presence of a path network contributes to active recreation and active travel;
- determine public awareness of the Core Path Plan;
- identify barriers which inhibit path usage among the two target groups;
- identify features which promote and encourage path usage; and
- develop proposals to promote and publicise the path network in the future.

The study's overarching objectives included provision of data that can be used as part of a national evaluation of Core Path planning, collecting demographic data to aid comparable assessments in other Scottish regions, building on good practice by adapting the path evaluation toolkit developed by Paths For All and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to measure benefits of local path networks; and providing information to further the work of East Dunbartonshire's Health Improvement Strategy Group and implementation of the East Dunbartonshire Joint Health Improvement Plan.

Method

The research canvassed the views of 500 respondents (250 each from Hillhead and Milngavie) in a survey conducted between 30th January and 16th March 2008. The research prioritised the views of adults aged 16+ and female respondents comprised 55% of the total. Path users comprised 68% of all survey respondents and 60% of all interviews were conducted off-path to ensure that the views of non-path users were adequately represented in the research. Following preliminary analysis of the research findings, two focus groups (one in each community) were facilitated in early April to enrich the survey findings.

Findings

The key findings are summarised below:

Most frequently used Core Paths

The paths used most frequently by Milngavie residents included the West Highland Way, the Allander Walkway, Mugdock Reservoir and Lennox Park. The paths used most frequently by Hillhead residents included the Forth and Clyde Canal towpath, Luggie Park Link and Luggie Water Link.

Physical activities engaged in on Core Paths

Walking emerged as the most popular Core Path activity (engaged in by 94% of survey respondents), followed by cycling and running/jogging. However, the low representation of running/jogging as a Core Path activity may be explained by the time of year at which the survey was conducted and the difficulties involved in interviewing joggers in mid stride.

Purposes for using Core Paths

Respondents identified shopping as the most popular reason for using Core Paths, followed by getting/staying fit and healthy, enjoying the countryside, walking the dog and visiting people. Overall, Hillhead residents appeared to be more utilitarian in their use of Core Paths than Milngavie residents. For example, two thirds of Hillhead residents used Core Paths for shopping (compared with 42% in Milngavie) while 54% of Milngavie residents used Core Paths to stay fit and healthy (against 28% of Hillhead respondents). Females and older users were more likely to use the paths for shopping than other groups.

Frequency of Core Path usage for health and practical purposes

Overall, respondents used Core Paths for health purposes as much as they did for practical purposes. For example, 44% of all respondents used Core Paths for health purposes on a daily/several times a week basis while 37% of respondents indicated that they used the paths for this purpose on a weekly basis. At the same time, 41% of path users used paths for practical purposes on a daily/several times per week basis while 41% of respondents used paths for practical purposes on a weekly basis. Again, Hillhead residents and older users tended to use paths for practical purposes on a more regular basis than other groups.

Benefits accruing from Core Path usage

Survey respondents cited the mental wellbeing benefits of Core Path usage to a slightly greater extent than the physical or social benefits of path usage. For example, 82% of respondents indicated that the paths helped them to relax, while 81% indicated that path usage helped to reduce stress levels. Overall, 74% of respondents indicated that path usage helped them to feel fit and healthy, while two thirds of respondents agreed that Core Paths helped them to feel part of a wider community. Generally speaking, Milngavie residents demonstrated a greater appreciation of the health and wellbeing benefits of path usage than Hillhead respondents, while older respondents tended to be more appreciative and aware of the benefits of path usage than younger respondents. Focus group participants also place more emphasis on the mental wellbeing benefits of path usage than other benefits.

Propensity to increase Core Path Usage

Forty-nine per cent of survey respondents indicated a desire to increase path usage while 46% responded in the negative. There was no significant variation by location or gender, but 25 to 44 year olds expressed the greatest desire to increase path usage, while respondents aged 65+ expressed the least enthusiasm. The most popular motivations for increasing path usage included getting/staying fit and healthy, followed by enjoying the countryside, shopping, walking the dog and visiting people. Again,

Hillhead residents favoured more pragmatic reasons for increasing path usage (such as shopping) than Milngavie residents.

Barriers inhibiting Core Path usage

Some of the most important barriers to increased Core Path usage (e.g. weather considerations) were beyond the power of EDC and its partners to control, but respondents also identified several considerations within the competence of EDC and its partners. These included unsatisfactory condition of the Core Paths, concerns about personal safety, fear of antisocial behaviour and, to a lesser extent, inadequate lighting, low awareness of the path network and inadequate transport links. In focus groups, Hillhead residents identified unsatisfactory surface conditions of the Core Paths (due to mud and water logging) as the most prominent inhibitor of Core Path usage while Milngavie participants expressed the greatest concern over litter and mess in the vicinity of the paths. Fear of antisocial behaviour was a secondary inhibitor of path usage and its impact was largely restricted to Friday and Saturday evenings.

Features likely to increase Core Path usage

In line with the comments expressed above, both survey respondents and focus group participants identified 'improving the surface of paths' and 'cleaning up the paths' as the most constructive actions which EDC and its partners could take to increase path usage. Significantly, some of the measures recommended by survey respondents failed to find an enthusiastic echo among focus group participants. For example, survey respondents identified provision of additional lighting as a key means of improving Core Path usage but both sets of focus group participants expressed little enthusiasm for this measure.

Future promotion of the Core Path Network

Approximately one in five of survey respondents expressed awareness of the Core Path Network in spring 2008, and research participants were keen to identify means of promoting awareness of the Core Path Network among East Dunbartonshire residents. The most popular means of promoting Core Path awareness included publication of stories, articles and adverts in local newspapers and community newsletters, prominent signage in the main thoroughfares of Milngavie and Kirkintilloch and outside local supermarkets, distribution of posters and leaflets via doctors surgeries, clinics, libraries and museums, and integration of path related activities into local school curricula. The Core Path Network could also be publicised during the Kirkintilloch Canal Festival.

Recommendations

To encourage path usage among East Dunbartonshire residents, EDC and its partners should:

1. Improve the surface condition of Core Paths in key areas identified by research contributors (e.g. sections of the Forth and Clyde Canal towpath and one side of Mugdock Reservoir).
2. Provide additional non flammable litter and dog mess bins in the vicinity of the Core Paths and ensure that they are regularly emptied.
3. Give consideration to the appointment of Path Wardens or Rangers. Contributors identified this as their preferred method of reducing littering and mess, minimising antisocial behaviour and maintaining path surfaces in a good condition. Path Wardens should develop good links with local schools and be contactable via a 'path hotline number'.

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4. Develop a series of recommended Core Path walks, graded according to the physical demand level of each walk and categories of path user for whom the walk would be suitable/unsuitable. These recommended walks should be colour coded to promote easy understanding of the grading system and the information on the walks and the system should be displayed on on-path signage, online and on distributed printed material.
 5. Traffic calming measures should be introduced to the stretch of road which separates Mugdock Moor from Mugdock Country Park.
 6. A dedicated information kiosk should be installed in Milngavie to provide information on the West Highland Way and all other Core Paths throughout East Dunbartonshire.
 7. Safety railing should be provided in the vicinity of the Forth and Clyde Canal towpath to address the safety concerns of Hillhead residents and path users.
 8. The Core Path Network should be actively promoted within East Dunbartonshire schools and path-related activities should be incorporated within local school curricula.

To promote awareness of the Core Path Network, EDC and its partners should:

- place stories, articles, features and advertisements about the Path Network in local newspapers and community newsletters;
- publicly display prominent signage, maps and information about the path network in the centre of Milngavie and in Kirkintilloch High Street and outside local supermarkets;
- distribute posters and leaflets via public venues such as GP surgeries, clinics, libraries and museums;
- integrate path-related activities and learning exercises into local school curricula and provide all children with maps depicting the Core Path Network;
- publicise and promote the Core Path Network during the Kirkintilloch Canal Festival; and
- consider developing a more user friendly and engaging term for Core Paths to encourage local identification with the concept.

Contents

Executive Summary	i
List of figures and tables	2
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background	1
1.3 Objectives	1
2 Method	3
2.1 Overview	3
2.2 Commissioning meetings	3
2.3 Design of research tools	3
2.4 Survey	3
2.5 Focus groups	5
3 Key findings	6
3.1 Survey results	6
3.2 Focus group results	24
4 Conclusions & recommendations	32
4.1 Conclusions	32
4.2 Recommendations	36
Appendices	38

List of figures and tables

Figure 1	Gender profile of respondents	4
Figure 2	Age profile of respondents	4
Figure 3	Employment status of respondents	5
Figure 4	Use of Core Paths in Milngavie	6
Figure 5	Use of Core Paths in Hillhead	7
Figure 6	What physical activity/activities do you usually engage in when using the Core Path(s) you have identified	8
Figure 7	For what purpose(s) do you generally use this Core Path?	8
Figure 8	How frequently do you use this Core Path (or any other Core Paths) for general health/exercise/relaxation purposes?	9
Figure 9	How frequently do you use this Core Path (or any other Core Paths) for practical purposes (e.g. journeying to specific destinations such as work, shops etc.)?	10
Figure 10	Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements	11
Figure 11	Perceptions of safety and anti social behaviour by gender	12
Figure 12	Perceptions of safety and anti social behaviour by age	13
Figure 13	Please tell us more about the specific health benefits you enjoy as a result of using Core Paths	13
Figure 14	If you had the option, would you like to use Core Paths on a more regular basis?	14
Figure 15	If you were able to use Core Paths more frequently, for what purpose(s) would you use them?	14
Figure 16	What prevents you from using/making more use of Core Paths? (responses outwith control of EDC)	15
Figure 17	What prevents you from using/making more use of Core Paths? (responses within control of EDC)	16
Figure 18	What action can EDC and its partners take to increase your use of Core Paths? (by area)	17
Figure 19	What action can EDC and its partners take to increase your use of Core Paths? (by usage)	18
Figure 20	Which face best reflects how you would rate your.....?	19
Figure 21	In a typical week, on how many days do you take at least 30 mins of moderate physical exercise such as brisk walking?	20
Figure 22	How much of that (moderate) exercise is taken on the Core Paths?	21
Figure 23	In a typical week, on how many days do you spend at least 20 continuous minutes doing vigorous exercise	21
Figure 24	How much of that (vigorous) exercise is taken on the Core Paths?	22
Figure 25	Before today, were you aware of East Dunbartonshire's emerging Core Path Network	23
Figure 26	What would be the best means of promoting awareness of Core Paths and the Core Path Network among Hillhead/Milngavie residents? (with 'don't know' answers excluded)	24

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This report presents FMR's analysis of Core Path usage patterns in East Dunbartonshire in spring 2008. It is based on a survey of 500 respondents (250 from Hillhead and 250 from Milngavie) and two focus groups of path users from each community. It analyses current levels of Core Path usage, the physical (and other) benefits accruing from Core Path usage, and barriers to increased usage of Core Paths. It makes recommendations on means of overcoming these barriers and promoting awareness of the Core Path Network in 2008 and beyond.

1.2 Background

All Scots should enjoy good access to their built and natural environment and the Land Reform Scotland Act 2003 plays a key role in guaranteeing such access. As well as establishing statutory rights of access to land and water for outdoor recreation, Section 17 of the Act places a statutory duty on all local authorities to develop a Core Paths Plan by February 2008 to *"provide the basic framework of routes sufficient for the purpose of giving the public reasonable access throughout their area."* Core Paths are differentiated from all other paths by being easily accessible, safe, managed, promoted, maintained in usable condition and well signposted. Core Paths should be capable of accommodating a range of users: functional and recreational; cyclists; horse-riders; canoeists; walkers and people with varying abilities and Core Paths will be formally depicted on Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 Explorer Maps as dashed purple lines. Once fully operational, Scotland's Core Path system will play a key role in delivering a range of public benefits in relation to health and wellbeing, sustainable transport, strengthening communities, promoting economic development and enhancing quality of life by encouraging sedentary people to become more active.

East Dunbartonshire Council (EDC) is on track to meet its obligations under the 2003 legislation. As part of its Strategic Environmental Assessment, it conducted a scoping exercise in 2007 and will deliver a full Environmental Report in January 2008. It has engaged in extensive public consultation and identified 84 Core Path candidates which will form the bedrock of East Dunbartonshire's Core Path Network. It is hoped that East Dunbartonshire's Core Path Network will confer a range of health, wellbeing and quality of life benefits on its citizens and will help to minimise potential conflict between land managers and path users.

EDC recently received funding from Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership to evaluate the impact of Core Path planning on physical activity levels. The current evaluation focused on two distinctive communities – Hillhead in Kirkintilloch (which falls within the bottom 15% of Scottish communities experiencing multiple deprivation) and Milngavie (an area of relative affluence and high life expectancy). The research also targeted women and older people within each community and ensured that the views of path users and non-users were included within the research.

1.3 Objectives

The study's principal objectives were to determine the potential impact of Core Path planning on physical activity levels and, where appropriate, identify barriers to path usage. The study aimed to:

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- evaluate the impact and contribution of the introduction of Core Path Plans on physical activity levels by gathering data in 2008 which can be compared with data 2011;
 - identify path network usage levels within each target group and community (e.g. walking, cycling and jogging) and purpose (e.g. to access locations, recreation, exercise, dog walking, etc.) to quantify the amount of physical activity taken when using paths;
 - examine the extent to which the presence of a path network contributes to active recreation and active travel;
 - determine public awareness of the Core Path Plan;
 - identify barriers which inhibit path usage among the two target groups;
 - identify features which promote and encourage path usage; and
 - develop proposals to promote and publicise the path network in the future.

The study's overarching objectives included:

- providing data that can be used as part of a national evaluation of Core Path planning;
- collecting basic demographic data to aid comparable assessments in other Scottish regions;
- building on good practice by using or adapting the path evaluation toolkit developed by Paths For All and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to measure benefits of local path networks; and
- providing information to further the work of East Dunbartonshire's Health Improvement Strategy Group and implementation of the East Dunbartonshire Joint Health Improvement Plan.

By undertaking this work, FMR's objective was to assist East Dunbartonshire Council in its plan to encourage active path use among its citizens and to ensure that the authority's Core Path System (CPS) is well used.

2 Method

This section summarises the research methods employed throughout the research process.

2.1 Overview

The evaluation involved the following key elements:

- commissioning meeting
- design of research tools;
- survey;
- focus groups; and
- analysis and reporting.

Each of these is discussed in more detail below.

2.2 Commissioning meetings

The project commenced with a preliminary commissioning meeting in December 2007 and a full commissioning meeting in January 2008. At these meetings, it was agreed that the research should consist of a survey of 500 respondents (250 from Milngavie and 250 from the Hillhead area of Kirkintilloch) supplemented by two focus groups (one from each area) to discuss key findings emerging from the survey. EDC is keen to promote health and fitness opportunities among women, so it was decided that female respondents should comprise 50 - 60% of the total, while path users should comprise 50 - 67% of the total. It was agreed that the research should capture the views of adults aged 16 and over and should not capture the views of school students. Quotas were set for age, to give a representative sample of the overall population of the two areas. A revised timetable for conducting the work was also agreed by all parties.

2.3 Design of research tools

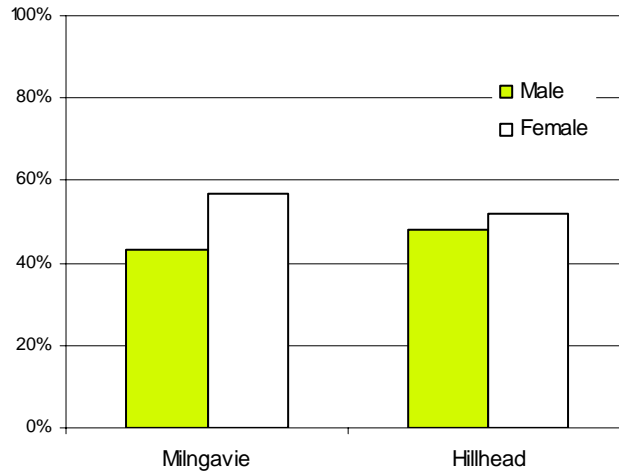
Following the commissioning meeting, a draft questionnaire was created. To enhance the comparability of the research findings, it was agreed that the SNH Paths toolkit should be used as the template for the survey questionnaire but should be modified to reflect the specific concerns and priorities of EDC. In keeping with the project's revised schedule, a draft version of the questionnaire and research methodology was submitted to the project steering group for consideration and, once one or two amendments were inserted, a revised questionnaire was ready for use on 30 January 2008. It was agreed that the questionnaire should be piloted among 20 respondents (10 from each community) to test its flow and duration. The pilot found that the questionnaire flowed in a logical manner and was capable of completion in 10 minutes so it was decided to proceed with the full survey commencing on the weekend of 9th/10th February with a view to completing all the survey fieldwork by Sunday 16th March. The pilot revealed that 80% of all respondents identified themselves as path users so, for the purposes of the full survey and to ensure adequate representation of non-path users, it was agreed that 100 of the 150 off-path interviews would be with non-users.

2.4 Survey

The survey canvassed the views of 502 respondents (251 from each community) and commenced on the weekend of 9th/10th March. In line with the findings from the pilot, it was agreed that, in each community, 40% of interviews should be conducted on

path and 60% off path. To ensure the desired representation of males, females, etc. in the research, quotas were set for the two communities. The figure below shows the gender profile of respondents.

Figure 1 Gender profile of respondents



The following figures show the age and employment status profile of respondents from the two areas.

Figure 2 Age profile of respondents

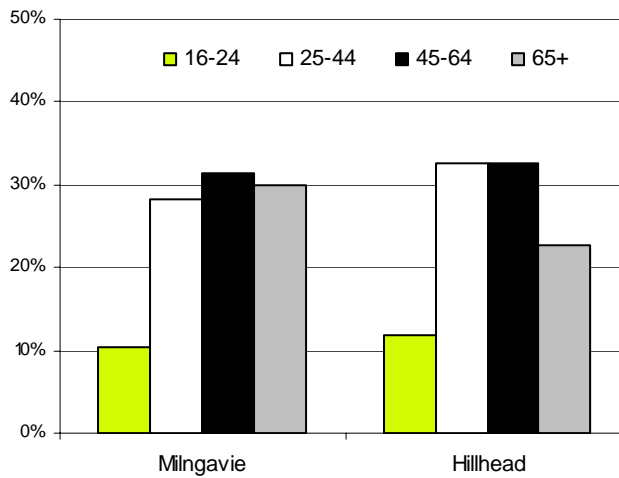
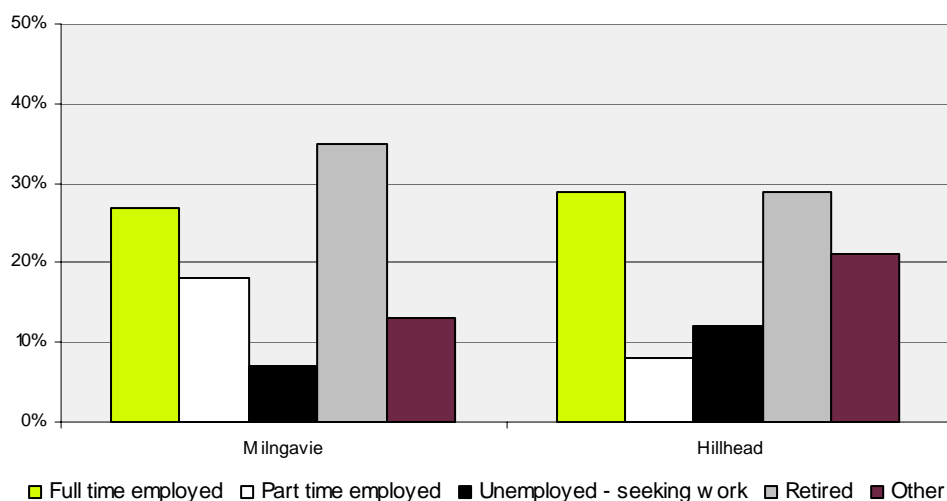


Figure 3 Employment status of respondents



2.5 Focus groups

Two focus groups – one from each community – were facilitated in early April to develop and enrich the survey findings. Topic guides for the focus groups were developed and submitted to the client for comment prior to use in the focus groups.

All focus group participants were path users who expressed an interest in contributing to this stage of the research, and although may not be regarded as 'typical' or 'representative' of East Dunbartonshire residents, it was thought that their informed and concerned views of path usage were most likely to advance the quality of the research to the benefit of the client. Ten participants were recruited for each focus group in the hope that at least 6-8 participants would attend on the day and, in line with a key research objective, females comprised 60% of all focus group recruits. Furthermore, all focus group recruits were individuals who had identified obstacles to path usage which were within the power of EDC and its partners to remedy. The Hillhead focus group was facilitated on 8th April and contained five females and four males. The Milngavie group was facilitated on 10th April and contained four females and four males. Both focus groups ran for approximately eighty minutes. The findings were then written up and compared with the survey findings to produce this final report.

2.6 Data analysis and reporting

The data derived from the face to face survey and focus groups were then analysed. The quantitative data were taken into SPSS for analysis and the focus group findings were subject to qualitative interpretation.

This report brings together the key findings from the project's primary research before reaching conclusions and recommendations.

3 Key findings

This section outlines the key findings to emerge from the survey and focus groups.

3.1 Survey results

Below are the results from the Core Paths survey. The findings are presented in the order in which questions were asked in the survey.

The survey involved a sample of residents, rather than the entire local population. 'Significant' findings, that is where the results from the sample are confidently representative of the broader population (at least +/- 5% @ 95% confidence level), are mentioned in the text that accompanies the figures.

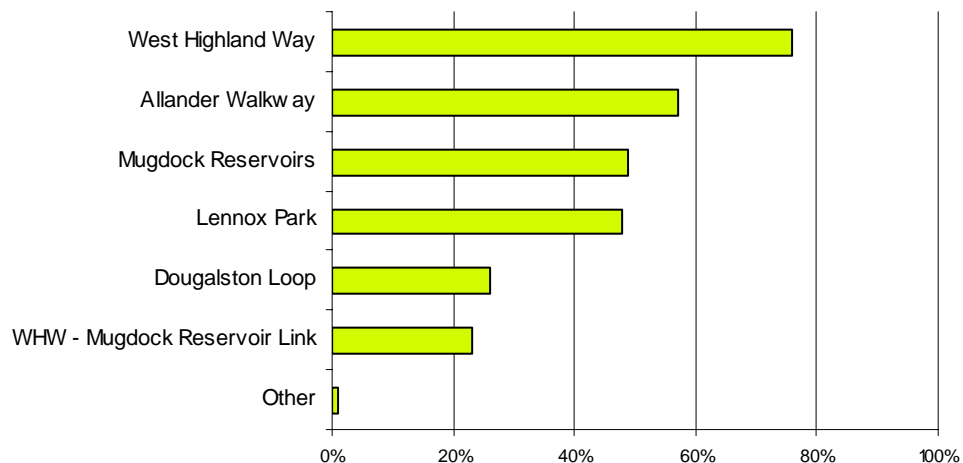
3.1.1 Core Paths most frequently used

The questionnaire included a list of Core Paths in the two areas. People were asked to indicate which, if any, they used.

3.1.1.1 Milngavie

The paths indicated as used most frequently by Milngavie respondents included the West Highland Way (used by 74% of respondents), Allander Walkway (56%), Mugdock Reservoir (49%) and Lennox Park (48%).

Figure 4 Use of Core Paths in Milngavie



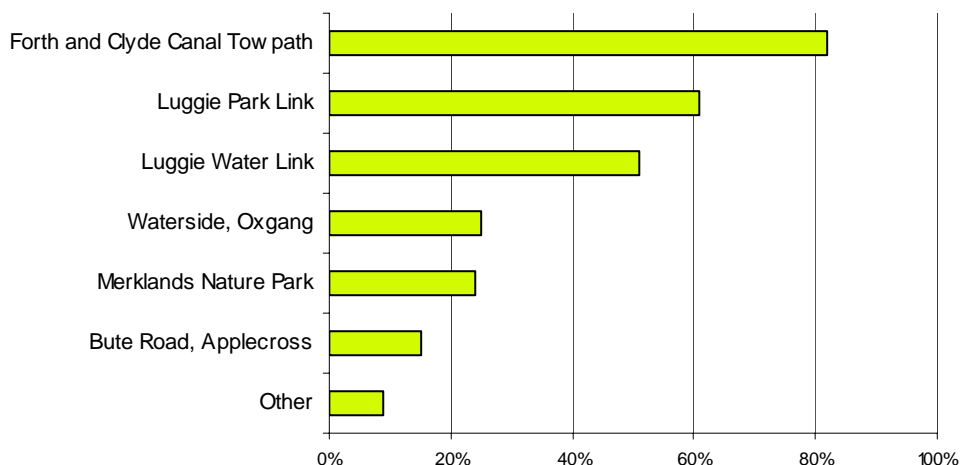
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The figures varied little by gender but there was some variation by age. Respondents aged 16-24 displayed a strong preference for Lennox Park with 75% (9 respondents) of those aged 16 to 24 using this path compared to 42% (19 respondents) of those aged 65 or more. Older residents showed a preference for the West Highland Way with 80% (47 respondents) of 25 to 44 year olds using it compared to only 58% (7 respondents) of those aged 16-24.

3.1.1.2 Hillhead

The most popular Core Paths indicated as being used by Hillhead residents included the Forth and Clyde Canal Towpath (used by 82% of respondents) followed by Luggie Park Link (60%) and Luggie Water Link (51%).

Figure 5 Use of Core Paths in Hillhead



n=170

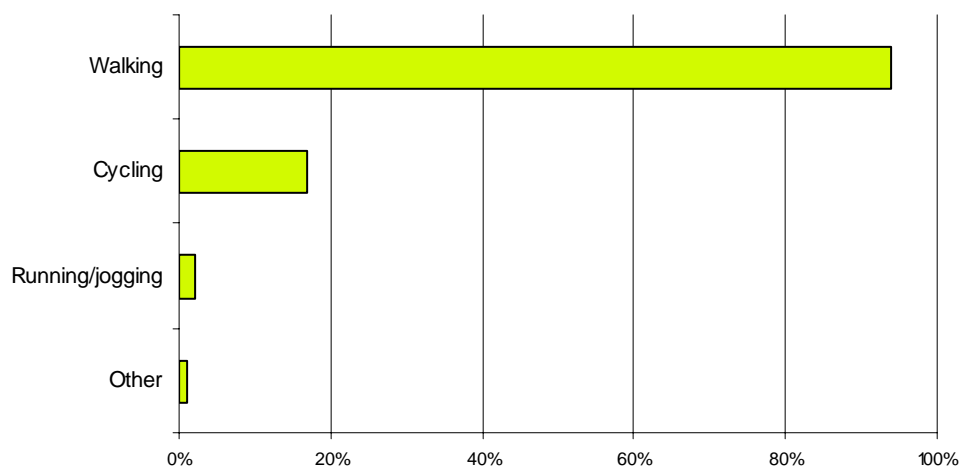
Males were more enthusiastic users of Luggie Park Link and Luggie Water Link (64% and 55% respectively against 36% and 46%) while females were more enthusiastic users of the Waterside Oxcgang path (27% against 22%).

3.1.2 Physical activities engaged in when using Core Paths

Interviewees were asked what physical activities they usually engaged in when using the Core Paths.

Among respondents, walking was the most popular Core path activity (94%, 318 respondents) followed by cycling (17%, 58 respondents) and running/jogging (2%, 6 respondents). However, the lower representation of joggers in the data may be attributed to the time of year when the survey was conducted and the general reluctance or interviewers to stop joggers (or, more likely, joggers to stop for interviewers!) in mid stride for an interview. A physical headcount of joggers using the Core Paths may offer a more accurate picture of the extent to which they are used by joggers/runners. Walking was the most consistently popular activity amongst both genders, all age groups and residents of the two communities.

Figure 6 What physical activity/activities do you usually engage in when using the Core Path(s) you have identified



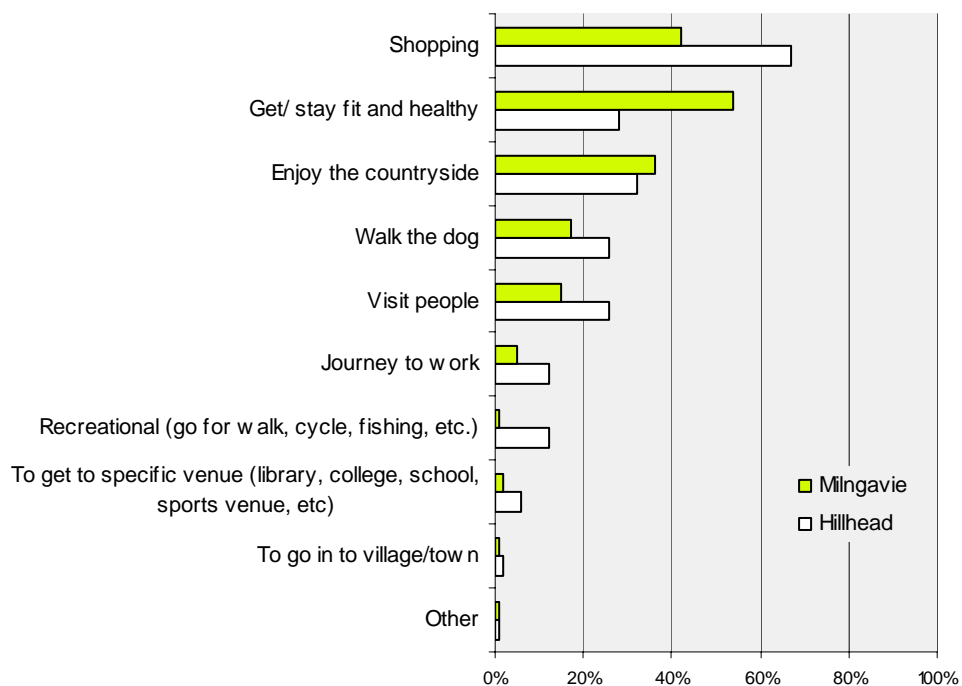
n=339

Cycling was consistently popular among all categories of respondent (between 15% and 21%) apart from the 65 plus age group, of whom 4% (3 respondents) were cyclists.

3.1.3 Purposes for using Core Paths

People were asked for what purposes they generally use the Core Paths they identified. Overall, shopping was identified as the most popular reason for using Core Paths (55%, 185 respondents) followed by getting/staying fit and healthy (41%, 139 respondents), enjoying the countryside (34%, 115 respondents), walking the dog (22%, 74 respondents) and visiting people (21%, 70 respondents).

Figure 7 For what purpose(s) do you generally use this Core Path?



n=339

On the basis of the results presented, Hillhead residents appeared to be more utilitarian and less health/fitness oriented in their use of the Core Paths than Milngavie residents. Only 42% (71 respondents) of Milngavie residents used Core Paths for shopping, compared to 67% (114 respondents) of Hillhead residents. Contrastingly, 54% (92 respondents) of Milngavie residents used Core Paths to stay fit and healthy against only 28% (47 respondents) of Hillhead residents. Hillhead residents were more likely to use Core Paths for walking the dog (26% against 17%), visiting people (26% against 15%), travelling to work (12% compared to 5%) and general recreation (12% compared to 1%) than Milngavie residents.

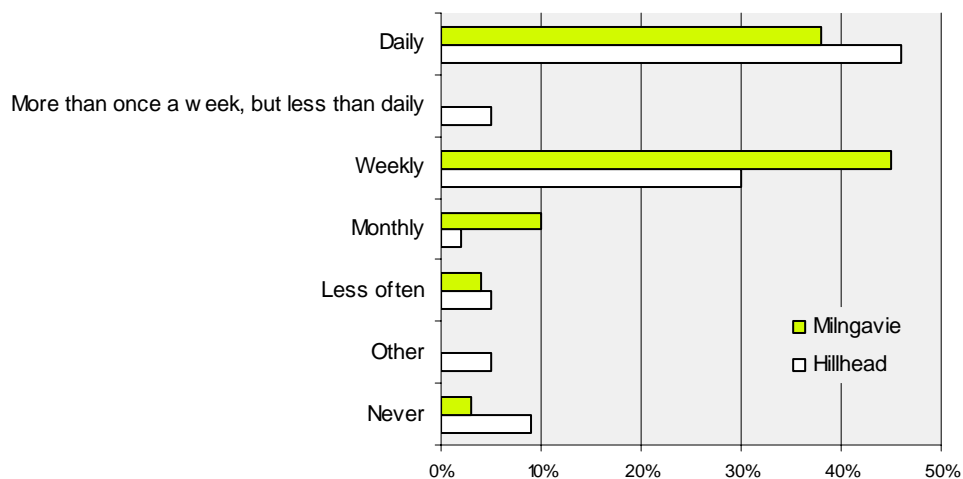
By gender, females (58%, 105 respondents) were much more likely to use Core Paths for shopping than males (51%, 80 respondents) but less likely to use Core Paths to visit people.

Motivation for using Core Paths varied significantly with age. While 63% (46 respondents) of the 65 plus age group used Core Paths for shopping, only 37% (13 respondents) of 16 to 24 year olds used Core Paths for this purpose. The youngest age group in the survey were less likely to use Core Paths to enjoy the countryside and get/stay fit and healthy, but more likely to use Core Paths to visit people and access specific venues.

3.1.4 Frequency of Core Path usage for health/exercise/relaxation purposes

Respondents were asked how frequently they used a Core Path for general health and/or relaxation purposes. In total, 44% (152 respondents) of respondents indicated that they used Core Paths on either a daily basis or multiple occasions per week, while 37% (127 respondents) of all respondents used Core Paths on a weekly basis.

Figure 8 How frequently do you use this Core Path (or any other Core Paths) for general health/exercise/relaxation purposes?



n=339

Within the two communities, Hillhead residents were more likely to use Core Paths on a daily/multiple times per week basis (51%) than Milngavie residents (38%), whereas Milngavie residents were more likely to use Core Paths on a weekly or monthly basis.

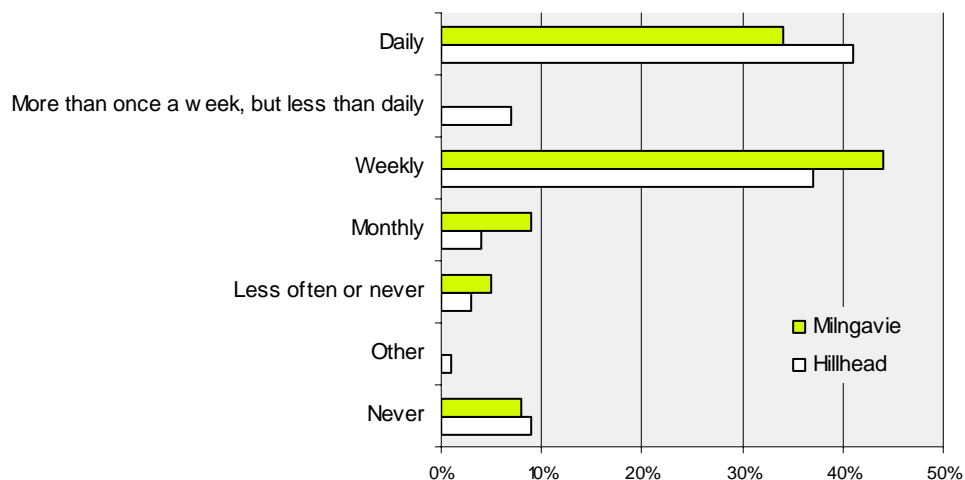
Frequency of use did not change significantly by gender, but did increase with age with 53% (39 respondents) of people aged 65 or more saying they used Core Paths on a daily basis, compared with 34% (12 respondents) of 16-24 year olds.

3.1.5 Frequency of Core Path usage for practical purposes

People were asked how frequently they used a Core Path for practical purposes, for example journeying to specific destinations such as work.

The data suggested that, overall, the use of Paths for practical purposes was the same as the use of Core Paths for health, exercise and relaxation.

Figure 9 How frequently do you use this Core Path (or any other Core Paths) for practical purposes (e.g. journeying to specific destinations such as work, shops etc.)?



n=339

The data suggested Hillhead residents used Core Paths for more practical purposes than Milngavie residents, with 48% (81 respondents) of Hillhead residents using the Core Paths on a daily/several times a week basis for this purpose, compared to 34% (57 respondents) for Milngavie residents.

For practical purposes, use of Core Paths for more practical purposes did not vary significantly by gender but older age groups were more likely to use Core Paths for this purpose on a daily basis than younger age groups.

3.1.6 Perception of benefits accruing from Core Path usage

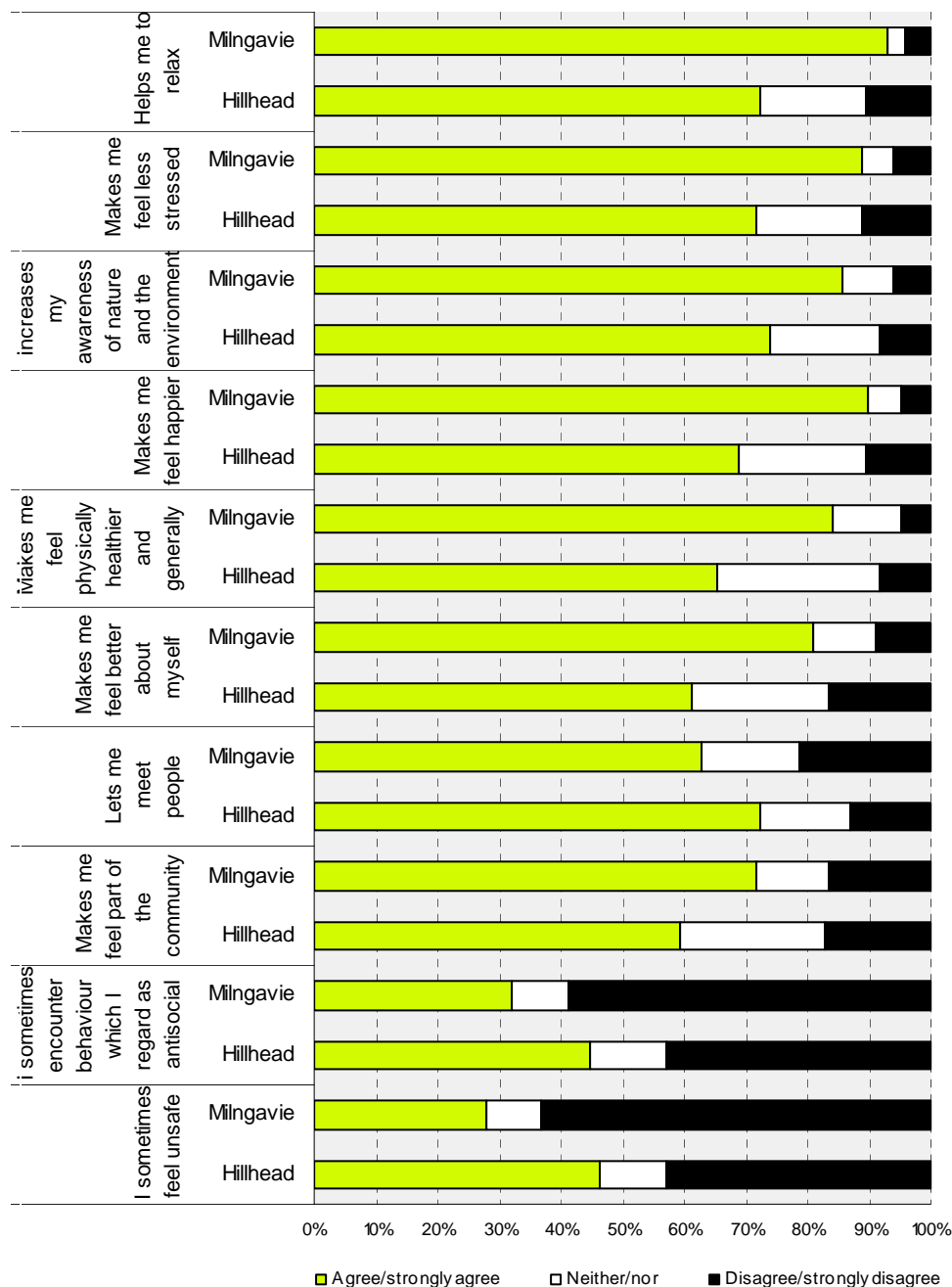
Several statements were read out to respondents during the interview and they were invited to indicate their level of agreement/disagreement with them. Most of the statements were positive (e.g. 'Using the Core Paths Network helps me to relax') but some negative statements (e.g. 'I sometimes feel unsafe') were also included to ensure that respondents were not pushed or prompted towards positive endorsement of Core Paths.

The responses suggested that residents appreciated the range of mental wellbeing, social and health benefits they derived from using Core Paths. For example, 82% (280 respondents) agreed or strong agreed that Core Paths usage helped them to relax, while only 7%, 25 respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this view. Eighty one percent (272 respondents) indicated that Core Path usage reduced stress levels while only 8 % (29% respondents) disagreed.

Similarly, 80% (271 respondents) agreed that Core Path usage increased their awareness of nature and the environment and 74% (253 respondents) believed Core Paths usage made them feel physically healthier and generally helped them to stay fit. Respondents appreciated the social benefits of paths usage but to a lesser extent

than the mental wellbeing or physical health benefits. For example, 67% (229 respondents) indicated that using Core Paths allowed them to meet people and 66% (222 respondents) indicated that Core Paths usage made them feel part of the community.

Figure 10 Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements



n=169 Milngavie, 170 Hillhead

On the whole, Milngavie residents were more appreciative and/or aware of the mental wellbeing and health benefits of Core Paths usage than Hillhead residents. For example, 93% (157 respondents) of Milngavie residents agreed or strongly agreed that Core Paths usage aided relaxation while comparative figure for Hillhead was only 72% (123 respondents). Similarly, 90% (152 respondents) of Milngavie residents felt Core Paths usage made them happier where only 69% (117 respondents) of Hillhead

respondents shared this view, and 84% (142 respondents) of Milngavie residents believed Core Paths usage benefited their health and fitness, compared to only 65% (111 respondents) for Hillhead residents.

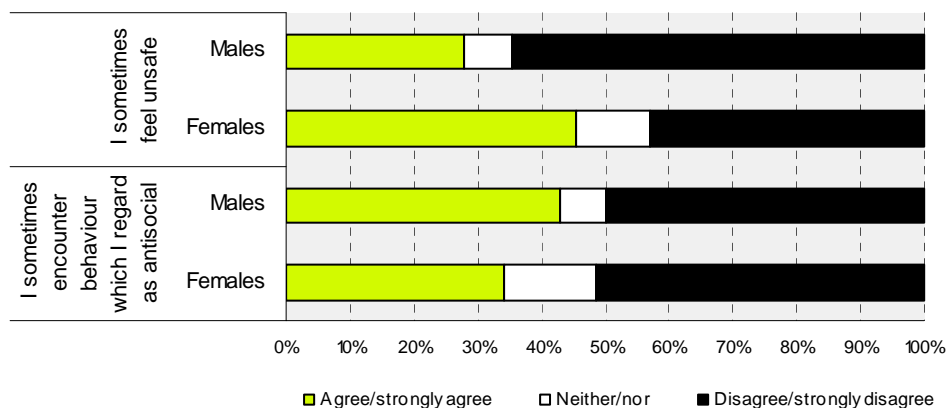
The only area where Hillhead respondents recorded more benefits than Milngavie respondents was with regard to meeting people – 72% (123 respondents) of Hillhead respondents felt that Core Paths usage enabled them to meet people while the comparative figure from Milngavie was 63% (106 respondents).

Males and females appreciated the mental wellbeing, health and social benefits of Core Paths usage in approximately equal measure. However, in terms of age, older residents tended to be much more appreciative and aware of the benefits of Core Paths usage than younger age groups. For example, 79% (58 respondents) of the 65+ age group acknowledged the de-stressing value of Core Paths usage as compared to 60% (21 respondents) of 16 to 24 year olds. Similarly, 74% (54 respondents) of 65+ respondents felt that Core Paths usage made them feel part of the community compared to 46% (16 respondents) of 16-24 year olds, while 75% (55 respondents) appreciated the health benefits of Core Paths usage as compared with 60% (21 respondents) of 16 to 24 year olds.

Respondents were also asked if they encountered antisocial behaviour while using Core Paths or if they felt unsafe while using Core Paths. Thirty seven percent of respondents (116 respondents) indicated they sometimes felt unsafe. In addition, 38% (130 respondents) indicated that they sometimes encountered behaviour that they regarded as antisocial.

Although females indicated feeling less safe than males while using Core Paths, they appeared to encounter less behaviour which they regarded as antisocial.

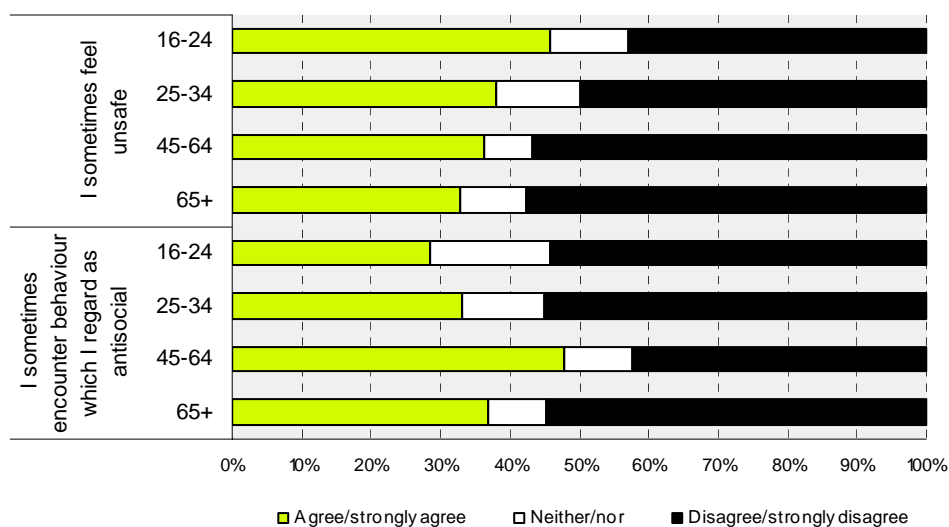
Figure 11 Perceptions of safety and anti social behaviour by gender



n=158 males, 181 females

Young path users felt less safe when using paths than older residents. For example, 45% (16 respondents) of 16 to 24 year olds agreed they felt unsafe when using paths compared to only 33% (24 respondents) of the 65 plus age group. The difference in the figures may be explained by the different times of day at which members of the two groups might use Core Paths. If younger respondents used Core Paths at night or after dark, they may feel less safe than older daytime path users.

Figure 12 Perceptions of safety and anti social behaviour by age



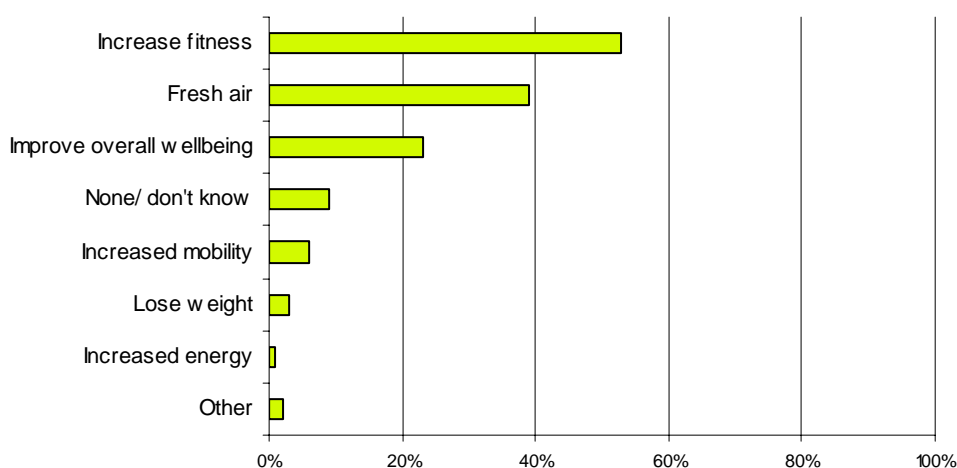
n=35 16-24, 118 25-44, 113 45-64, 73 65+

While feelings of safety varied with age, there appeared no significant variations in the degree to which antisocial behaviour was encountered.

3.1.7 Specific health benefits as a result of CP usage

Respondents were invited (without prompting) to identify the specific health benefits that occurred as a result of Core Paths usage. The most popular responses included increased fitness, which was cited by 53% (135) of respondents, access to fresh air, which was mentioned by 39% (99) of respondents, and improved overall wellbeing which was mentioned by 23% (57) of respondents.

Figure 13 Please tell us more about the specific health benefits you enjoy as a result of using Core Paths



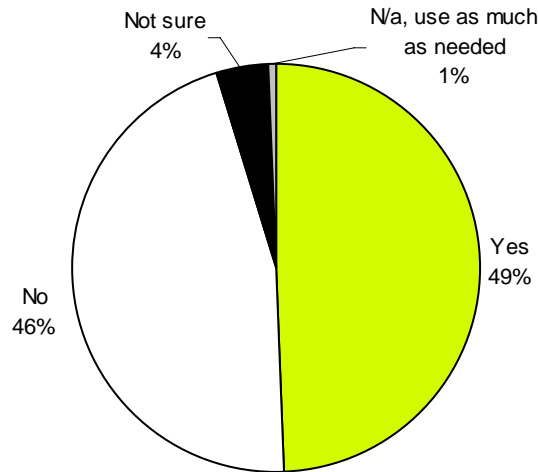
n=253

Hillhead respondents reported increases in fitness (63%, 70 respondents) than Milngavie residents (46%, 65 respondents). Males (58%, 66 respondents) cited increased fitness than females (49%, 69 respondents). Older age groups appeared to have a broader appreciation of health benefits than younger respondents who tended to emphasise increased fitness over everything else, while older respondents also appreciated having access to fresh air.

3.1.8 Willingness to use Core Paths on a more regular basis

Respondents were also asked if, having the option, would they like to make more regular use of Core Paths. Half (168 respondents) of all respondents answered in the affirmative, with no significant variation between Milngavie and Hillhead, or between males and females. With regard to age, 25 to 44 year olds expressed the greatest desire to increase path usage (60%, 71 respondents) while the 65 plus age group expressed least enthusiasm (33%, 24 respondents).

Figure 14 If you had the option, would you like to use Core Paths on a more regular basis?

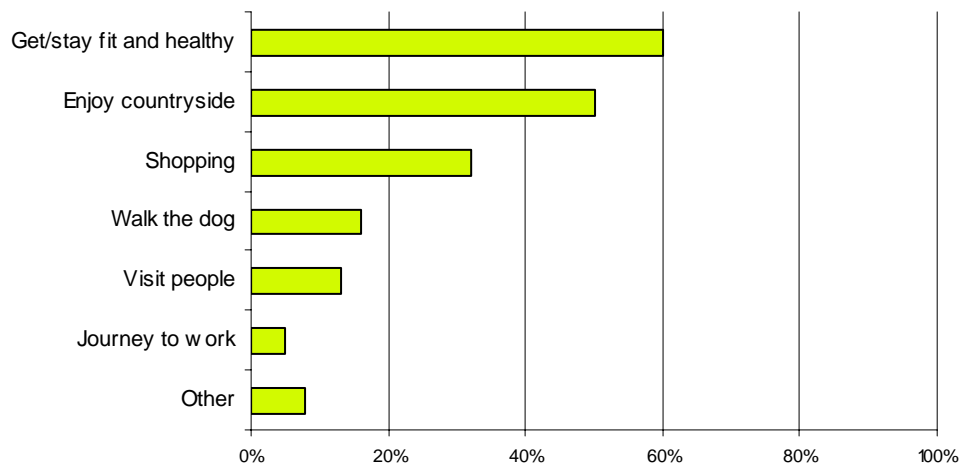


n=339

3.1.9 Motivations for increased Core Path usage

People were asked for what purposes would they use the Core Paths, if they were able to use them more frequently. The most popular reason for increasing Core Path usage was to get/stay fit and healthy (60%, 102 respondents) followed by enjoying the countryside (50%, 85 respondents), shopping (32%, 54 respondents), walking the dog (16%, 27 respondents) and visiting people (13%, 23 respondents).

Figure 15 If you were able to use Core Paths more frequently, for what purpose(s) would you use them?



n=171

As before, Milngavie residents tended to be more health motivated than Hillhead residents in their use of Core Paths, while Hillhead residents tended to be more utilitarian in their path usage. For example, 66% (57 respondents) of Milngavie residents wished to increase path usage to enhance health and fitness (compared to 53%, 45 respondents in Hillhead), while Hillhead residents were more likely to use paths for shopping (39%, 33 respondents) compared to 24% (21 respondents) of those surveyed from Milngavie.

Women (63%, 61 respondents) displayed a greater likelihood of increasing path usage to get fit and stay healthy than males.

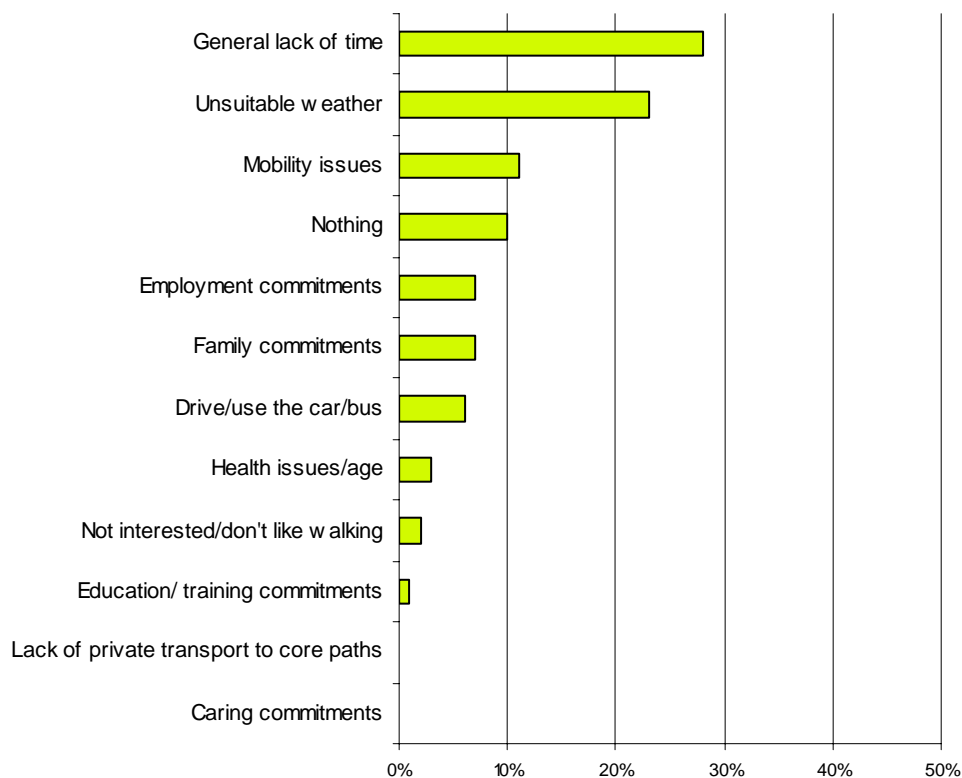
Younger residents displayed less interest in enjoying the countryside than their older peers but were significantly more likely to increase path usage to walk the dog than older residents said they would be.

3.1.10 Obstacles to increased Core Path usage

When asked to identify obstacles to increased Core Paths usage, respondents offered a wide range of barriers. In analysing the data, we have divided the barriers into those which can be controlled by EDC and its partners and those which do not lend themselves to easy remedy by them.

Many of the most frequently cited obstacles must be regarded as beyond easy remedy by EDC and its partners. These included a general lack of time (28%, 139 respondents), unsuitable weather (23%, 117 respondents), mobility issues (11%, 57 respondents, but perhaps partly remediable by EDC and partner actions), employment commitments (7%, 36 respondents) and family commitments (7%, 35 respondents).

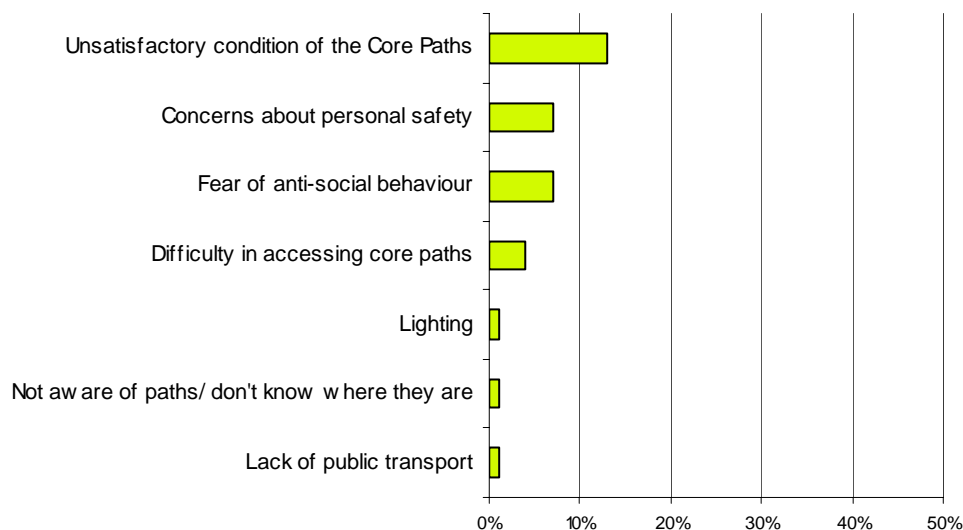
Figure 16 What prevents you from using/making more use of Core Paths? (responses outwith control of EDC)



n=502

With regard to the issues within the competence of EDC and its partners, the most prominent obstacles included unsatisfactory condition of Core Paths (13%, 64 respondents), concerns about personal safety (7%, 35 respondents), fear of antisocial behaviour (7%, 34 respondents), difficulty in accessing Core Paths (4%, 18 respondents) and inadequate lighting, lack of awareness and lack of public transport (each of which cited by five or less people).

Figure 17 What prevents you from using/making more use of Core Paths? (responses within control of EDC)



n=502

Examining the figures by location, Milngavie residents appeared to be more time poor than Hillhead residents: 34% (86 respondents) of Milngavie residents cited general lack of time as a barrier to Core Path usage, compared with 21% (53 respondents) in Hillhead. While employment commitments and family commitments also appeared to be greater obstacles in Milngavie than Hillhead (10%/5% and 11%/3%). Conversely, Hillhead residents had more fear of antisocial behaviour (10%/4%) than Milngavie residents.

Females were also more likely to be deterred by family commitments and concerns about personal safety than males but the fear of antisocial behaviour was similar.

With regard to age, older respondents were more likely to be deterred by mobility issues than younger respondents (28% for the 65 plus group against 0% for 16 to 24 year olds). In contrast, younger age groups were more likely to be deterred by a general lack of time (32% for 16 to 24 year olds) than older age groups (12% for the 65+ group).

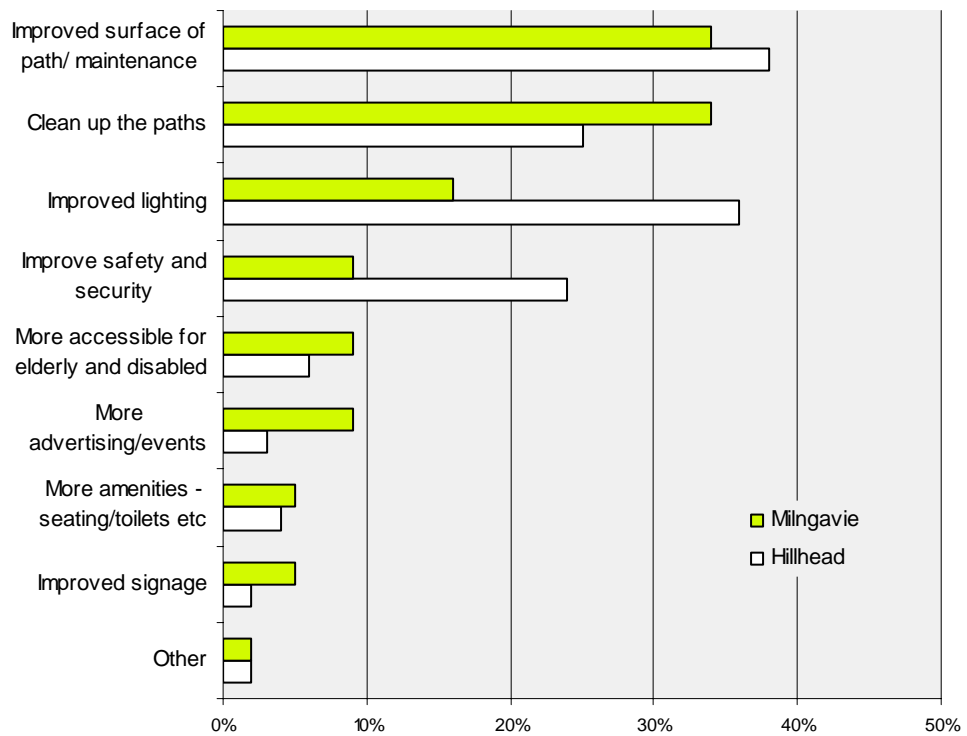
The most prominent reasons cited by non-users for not using Core Paths included mobility issues (23%, 37 respondents), general lack of time (20%, 32 respondents) and a preference for using cars and buses (16%, 26 respondents). The comparative figures for path users under these headings were mobility issues (6%, 20 respondents), general lack of time (32%, 107 respondents) and preference for using cars and buses (1%, 2 respondents). The greatest obstacles to use among path users included a general lack of time (32%, 107 respondents), unsuitable weather (29%, 98 respondents) and unsatisfactory condition of the Core Paths (16%, 55 respondents).

3.1.11 Suggested action to increase Core Paths usage

Respondents were also asked an open question in which they could identify steps EDC and its partners could take to increase Core Path usage. Overall, 43% (218 respondents) were unable to suggest any improvements. Of those who did, the most cited responses included improving the surface of Core Paths and improved path maintenance 36% (104 respondents), cleaner Core Paths 29% (83 respondents), improved lighting 27% (78 respondents), improved safety and security 17% (50 respondents) and increased access for the elderly/disabled 8% (22 respondents).

As the figure below shows, improving lighting and improving safety and security were much more pressing concerns for Hillhead residents than for Milngavie residents.

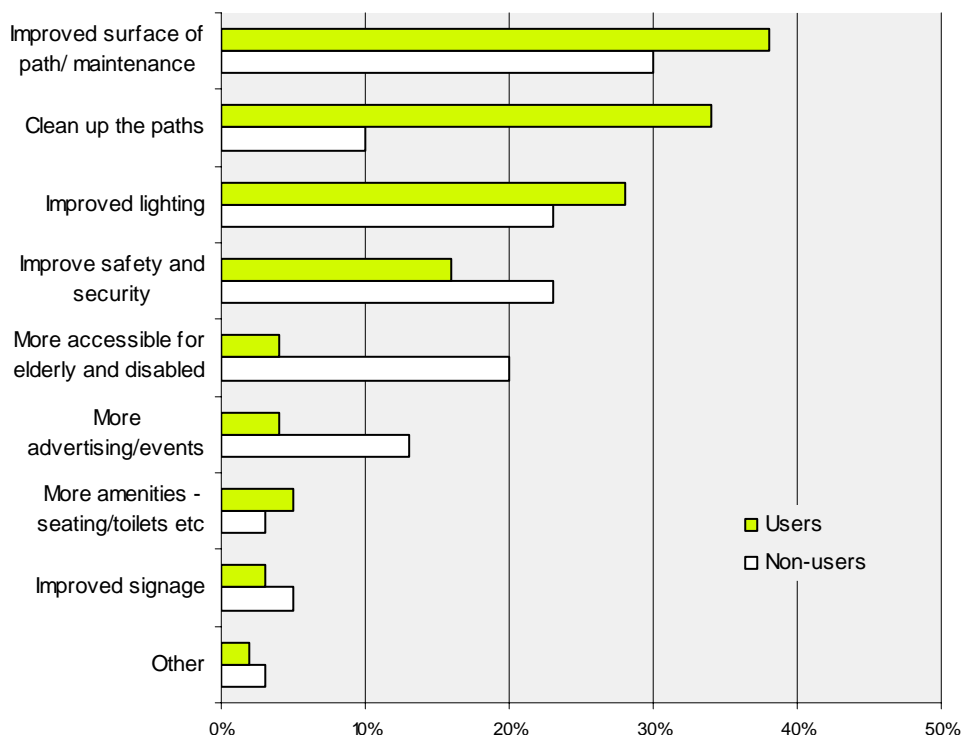
Figure 18 What action can EDC and its partners take to increase your use of Core Paths? (by area)



n=127 Milngavie, 161 Hillhead

There were no major differences in the results by gender, although females appeared to be more concerned by the need to clean up the paths than males. As regards age, the two younger age cohorts identified improved lighting as a stronger concern than the older respondents.

Figure 19 What action can EDC and its partners take to increase your use of Core Paths? (by usage)



n=228 users, 60 non users

Sixty seven percent (227 respondents) of users were able cite actions that could be taken to increase their path usage compare to only 35% (57 respondents) of non users. Of those who were able to suggest actions, path users were more likely to recommend improved surfaces/maintenance of paths, cleaning up the paths, or improved lighting compared to non users (38%/30%, 34%/10% and 28%/23% respectively), whereas non users were more likely to want greater accessibility for the elderly or disabled (20% non users/4% users).

3.1.12 Respondents' perceptions of quality of life, mental and physical wellbeing

To help contextualise respondents' comments, all interviewees were invited to rate their general quality of life, their physical wellbeing and mental/emotional wellbeing on a seven point scale using a pictorial 'smiley faces' scale. The data below show the responses grouped into positive, neutral and negative responses. Comparative data with findings from the East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership Household Survey 2007 and the Greater Glasgow Health & Well-being Study 2005: East Dunbartonshire Report and overall Greater Glasgow Report are included in Appendix 3.

Figure 20 Which face best reflects how you would rate your.....?



n=502

Overall, responses were positive. Within the data, some interesting tendencies emerged. Core Path users awarded themselves higher ratings in all three categories than non path users. On the whole, Milngavie residents appeared to be significantly more positive about their quality of life, physical and mental wellbeing than Hillhead residents. There were no significant variances by gender and levels of negative perception around all three criteria increased progressively with age.

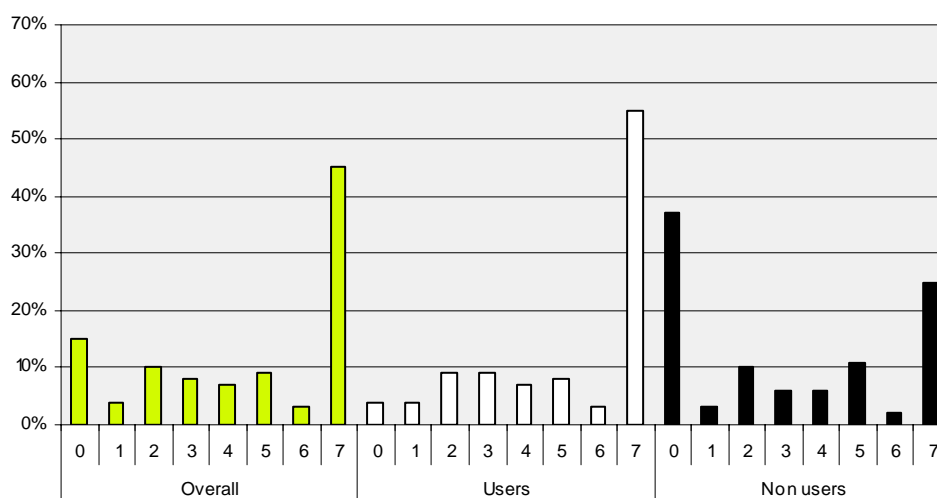
3.1.13 Respondents' levels of moderate exercise

Interviewees were invited to identify the number of occasions per week in which they engaged in 30 minutes of moderate exercise and the proportion of such exercise taken on Core Paths. Moderate exercise was explained as all physical activity that people did, including sport and leisure, their job, housework, DIY and gardening.

The evidence indicated that 45% (228 respondents) of all respondents engaged in such exercise on a daily basis i.e. 7 times per week, and only 15% (74 respondents) of respondents indicated complete abstention from moderate exercise at this level.

Core Path users were significantly more likely to engage in such exercise on a daily basis than non users.

Figure 21 In a typical week, on how many days do you take at least 30 mins of moderate physical exercise such as brisk walking?



n=502 overall, 339 users, 163 non users

Milngavie residents were more likely to engage in moderate exercise than Hillhead residents, and males were slightly more likely to engage in daily moderate exercise than females. The three older age cohorts were more likely to engage in daily exercise than 16 to 24 year olds, although 26% (34 respondents) of the 65 plus age group conceded that they abstained from daily moderate exercise at this level, possibly for mobility reasons.

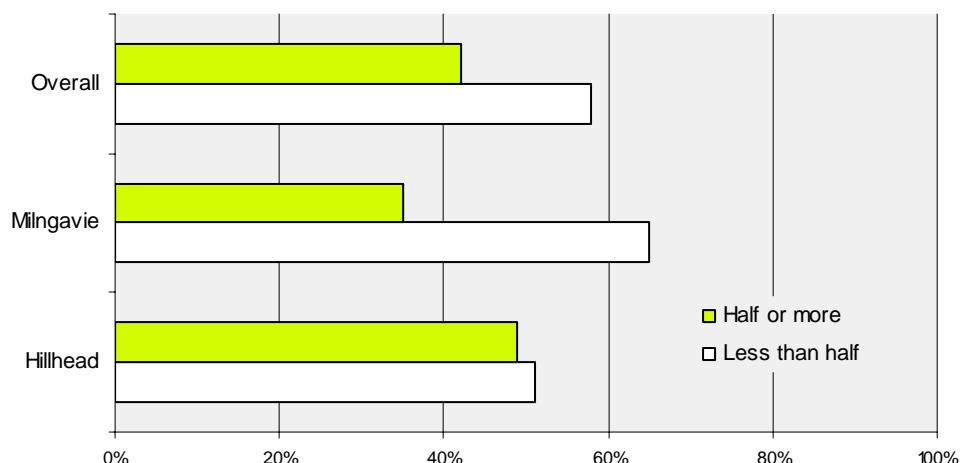
Comparative data with findings from the East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership Household Survey 2007 and the Greater Glasgow Health & Well-being Study 2005: East Dunbartonshire Report and overall Greater Glasgow Report are included in Appendix 3.

3.1.14 Proportion of moderate exercise occurring on Core Paths

Respondents were also asked to quantify the proportion of their moderate physical exercise taken on Core Paths.

Overall, 42% (178 respondents) of respondents indicated that more than half of their exercise occurred on Core Paths. Within these data, 54% (178 respondents) of Core Path users said more than half of their exercise took place on Core Paths. Hillhead residents were more likely to exercise on Core Paths than Milngavie residents, while males were more likely to exercise on Core Paths than females. Older age groups were more likely to exercise on Core Paths than younger age groups. For example, only 36% (18 respondents) of 16 to 24 year olds took more than half of their exercise on Core Paths, while the comparative figure for the 65 plus age group was 44% (43 respondents).

Figure 22 How much of that (moderate) exercise is taken on the Core Paths?



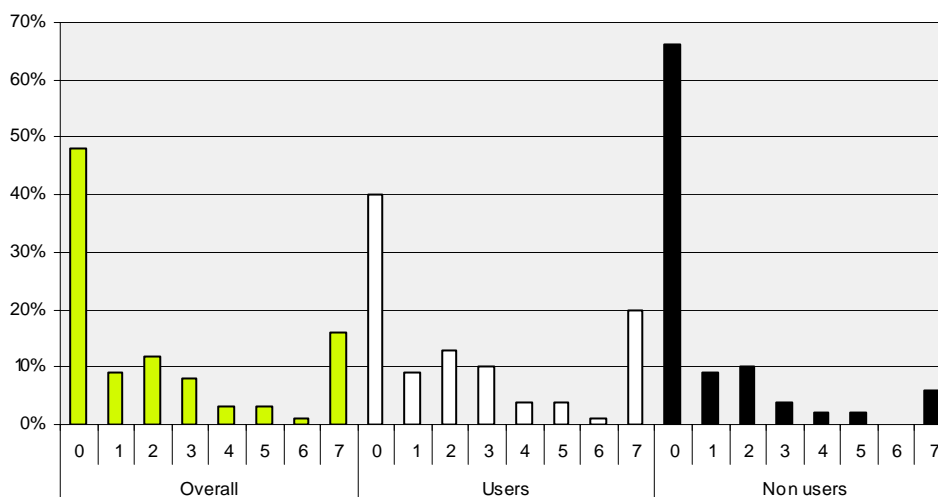
n=428 overall, 225 Milngavie, 203 Hillhead

3.1.15 Respondent level of vigorous exercise

Respondents were also invited to identify the number of occasions per week in which they engaged in 20 minutes of vigorous exercise (defined as enough to make you sweaty and out of breath), and the amount of such exercise occurring on Core Paths.

Significantly, 48% (241 respondents) of all respondents indicated complete abstention from exercise at this level and only 16% (78 respondents) indicated that they engaged in such exercise on a daily basis.

Figure 23 In a typical week, on how many days do you spend at least 20 continuous minutes doing vigorous exercise



n=502 overall, 339 users, 163 non users

Core Path users were significantly more likely to engage in vigorous exercise than non Core Path users. Twenty percent (68 respondents) of Core Path users said they took at least 20 continuous minutes of vigorous exercise on seven days in a week, compared to 6% (10 respondents) for non Core Path users and 66% (107 respondents) of non Core Path users said on no days a week did they exercise at this level, compared to 40% (134 respondents) of Core Path users.

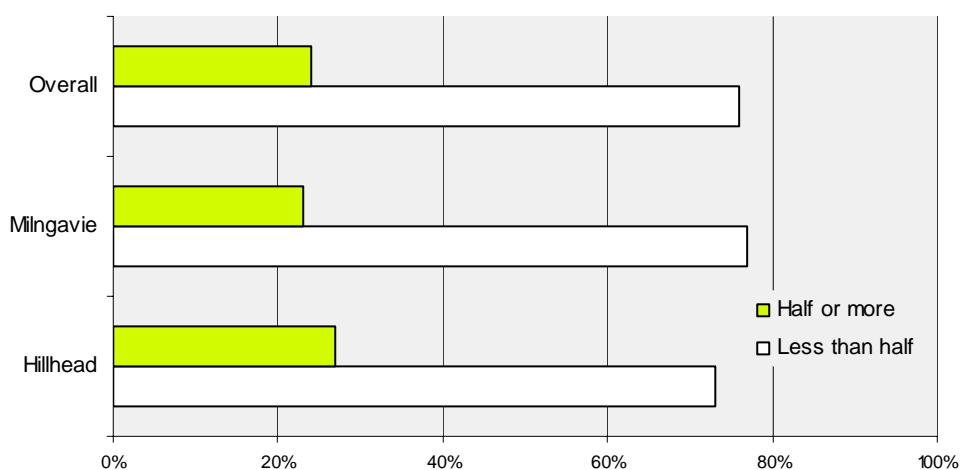
As previous data have implied, Milngavie residents appeared to be more health and fitness conscious than Hillhead residents. Males appeared to be more active in vigorous exercise than females. Seventy per cent (93 respondents) of all respondents aged 65+ completely abstained from vigorous physical exercise as against 32% (18 respondents) of 16 to 24 year olds, although 14% (18 respondents) of the 65+ group engaged in vigorous exercise on a daily basis while only 7% (4 respondents) of 16 to 24 year olds did likewise.

Comparative data with findings from the East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership Household Survey 2007 and the Greater Glasgow Health & Well-being Study 2005: East Dunbartonshire Report and overall Greater Glasgow Report are included in Appendix 3.

3.1.16 Proportion of vigorous exercise occurring on Core Paths

With regard to the amount of vigorous exercise occurring on Core Paths, 24% (63 respondents) of respondents said they took more than half on Core Paths.

Figure 24 How much of that (vigorous) exercise is taken on the Core Paths?



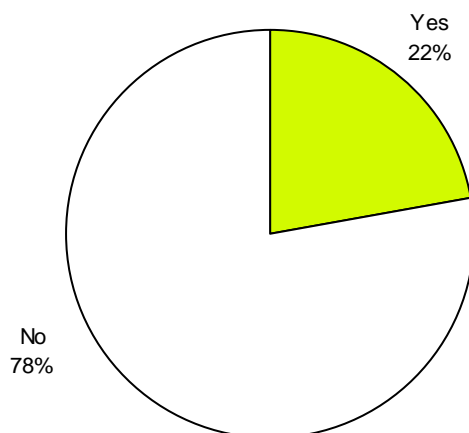
n=261 overall, 153 Milngavie, 108 Hillhead

No significant variations were noticeable by location, although males were more likely to take their vigorous exercise on Core Paths than females. Similarly, the youngest age cohort was much less likely to take its vigorous exercise on Core Paths than older age groups.

3.1.17 Awareness of East Dunbartonshire's emerging Core Paths Network

The survey asked respondents to indicate the level of awareness of East Dunbartonshire's emerging Core Paths network. The results suggested almost four fifths of respondents (391 respondents) were unaware of the emerging Core Paths network.

Figure 25 Before today, were you aware of East Dunbartonshire's emerging Core Path Network



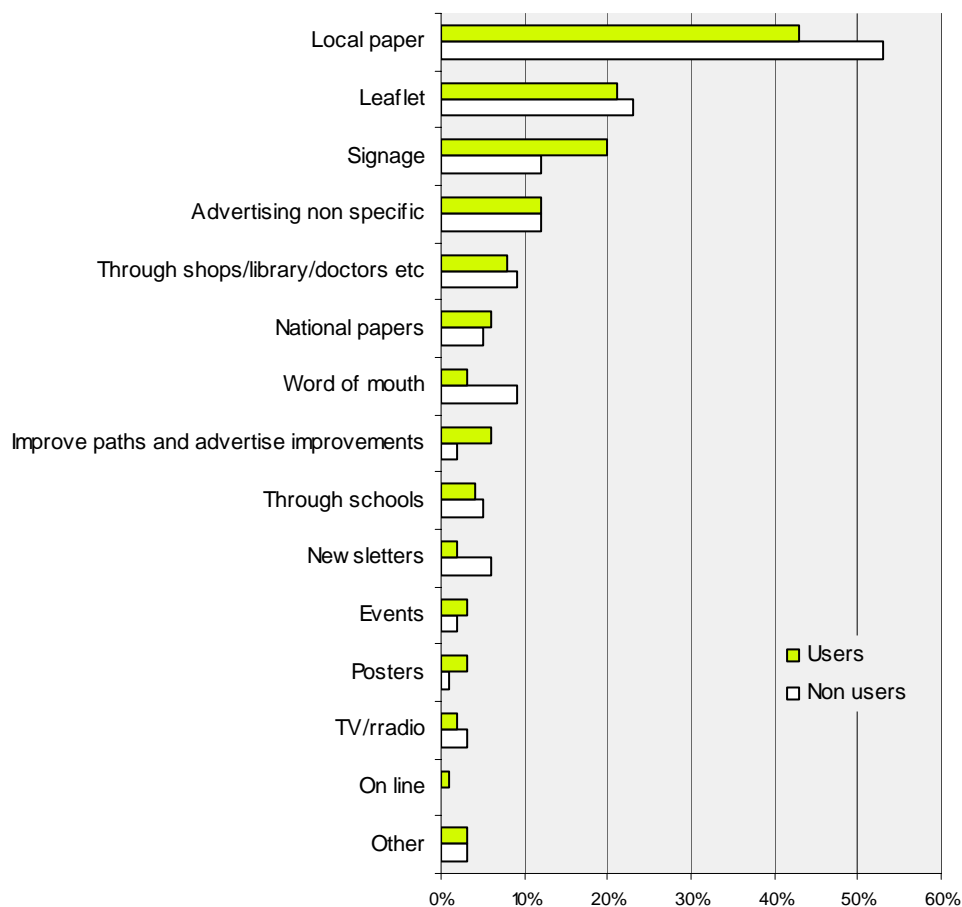
n=502

There was no major variation by gender or location but Core Paths users were twice as likely to be aware of the emerging Core Paths (26%, 89 respondents) network than non-users (13%, 22 respondents). Similarly, older respondents seemed to be more aware of the Core Paths Network than younger respondents.

3.1.18 Optimal means of promoting Core Paths awareness

Respondents were invited to identify effective means of promoting Core Paths and the Core Path Network. Twenty three percent of respondents (115 respondents) were unable to think of any means of promoting awareness. Of those who were able to make suggestions, the four most popular identified by respondents included promotion in the local paper 46% (180 respondents), leaflets 22% (85 respondents), improved signage 18% (70 respondents) and non specific forms of advertising 12% (46 respondents).

Figure 26 What would be the best means of promoting awareness of Core Paths and the Core Path Network among Hillhead/Milngavie residents? (with 'don't know' answers excluded)



n=390

Non Core Path users were more likely to be unable to suggest any ways of promoting awareness (37%, 61 respondents) compared to users (19% 66 respondents). Of those who were able make suggestions, non Core Path users seemed to favour local newspapers (53%, 61 responses), leaflets (23%, 27 responses). In general, older residents expressed greater enthusiasm for the local paper as a media of communication than younger residents, but expressed lower enthusiasm for leaflets and signage. By location, the Milngavie respondents (53%, 105 respondents) expressed a greater preference for local newspapers as a medium of communication than Hillhead residents (39%, 75 respondents) while Hillhead residents (26%, 50 respondents) were more enthusiastic about leaflets than Milngavie residents (18%, 35 respondents).

3.2 Focus group results

This section offers qualitative analysis of the findings of the two focus groups facilitated for this research during early April 2008. Participants were recruited from the survey respondents who expressed an interest in contributing to this stage of the research. In line with a key research objective, females comprised 60% of all focus group recruits and participants tended to be individuals who had identified obstacles to path usage which were within the power of EDC and its partners to remedy. The findings are presented in the order in which issues were explored in the topic guide (see Appendix), with general group comment first followed by comment from specific groups and/or specific subsets within the two groups (where appropriate).

3.2.1 General Core Path usage

Participants used Core Paths for a wide range of activities but, as with the survey results, walking was the most popular Core Path activity with only two participants identifying themselves as joggers and only two identifying themselves as frequent cyclists. However, some participants indicated that they would use Core Paths for cycling more frequently if the condition of the paths was improved (e.g. more even and less waterlogged in places). The vast majority of participants used Core Paths for a moderate exercise only (for example, walking the dog, walking with children and other family members, solitary walking).

3.2.2 Health and wellbeing benefits derived from Core Path usage

When asked to identify health and wellbeing benefits derived from path usage, participants tended to the mental wellbeing and de-stressing benefits of path usage over any physical benefits they derived. Some sample comments included:

“Walking on Core Paths lifts my mood and I always get a feel good factor after exercising. It gets me out the house too.”

“You always feel good after using the Core Paths, it’s great just to watch the world go by and they’re a good antidote to the busy lives that people lead.”

Participants were also keen to stress the physical benefits. Participants noted that Core Path usage helped them to lose weight and/or maintain a steady weight and one drew attention to the cardiovascular benefits of walking on Core Paths. Participants also felt that Core Paths offered particularly good exercise opportunities for retired people and parents with young children, principally mothers.

3.2.3 Other benefits derived from path usage

Many participants felt that paths performed a valuable role in promoting social interaction and providing opportunities to meet people. As one contributor said:

“Core Paths are a good way of meeting other people and socialising, especially if you’re out walking the dog or with a kid.”

In keeping with the survey findings, Hillhead residents tended to adopt a practical and utilitarian approach to path usage. Several Hillhead residents noted that the paths offered quick and direct access to shops and enabled them to save money on bus fares but no Milngavie residents drew attention to this issue.

One Milngavie participant also noted that the Core Paths allowed him to walk home after visiting the pub without needing to use his car.

3.2.4 Frequency and time of day when Core Paths used

All participants were invited to identify the frequency of their Core Path usage and times of day at which they used Core Paths but no trends or overriding patterns emerged according to gender or location. Participants used Core Paths with a frequency that varied from one day per week to daily usage with no pattern of usage being dominant. Similarly, participants used paths at different times of the day, the only slightly discernible trend being that females, particularly parents, were slightly more likely to use paths during the day, particularly for shopping.

Other than that, the only trend that emerged was that participants tended to increase their path usage during the summer months and reduce it during winter.

3.2.5 Factors inhibiting Core Path usage

Participants were invited to identify factors which inhibited frequent path usage and, to enhance the utility of the research, were encouraged to focus on factors which were remediable by action by EDC and its partners. The two groups frequently identified similar concerns but placed differing emphasis on these concerns.

Hillhead residents identified four factors which discouraged path usage, of which the most prominent was the unsatisfactory condition of Core Paths in some areas. Several participants noted that paths, particularly close to the canal, were often muddy, water logged or bumpy and that this discouraged enjoyable walking and/or frequent cycling activity. Participants attributed the unsatisfactory condition of the paths to inadequate drainage and noted that, while the secondary paths leading to the Core Paths were often in good condition (due to less frequent usage), key sections of the Core Paths themselves were often in bad repair due to poor drainage combined with frequent usage.

While Hillhead residents identified the unsatisfactory condition of Core Paths as the most prominent inhibitor, litter and mess on paths was identified as another prominent discouraging factor. The most frequently cited examples of mess included dog dirt and broken glass or bottles, although one participant also reported seeing used condoms and syringes in the vicinity of the Core Paths.

A third factor which discouraged more frequent use of Core paths was the fear of antisocial behaviour and feeling unsafe when using Core paths. Participants tied these anxieties very closely to antisocial behaviour by groups of young people, often fuelled by drink and noted that this concern was only prominent after dark on Friday and Saturday evenings. Although none of the participants had actually experienced physical assault or harm on the Core Paths, there was a general anxiety about youth antisocial behaviour and several participants referred to incidents which had occurred to other people, although it is uncertain if this referred to actual incidents or fears exacerbated by media reports. Participants indicated that youths used an old railway tunnel as a gathering place and these youths were blamed for destroying several amenities in the vicinity of the paths (e.g. benches, bins, trees, lights, fences).

A final inhibitor identified by Hillhead respondents was a lack of safety railings and fencing in the vicinity of the canal paths or, in places where railings had been provided, gaps in railings due to vandalism or poor maintenance. The lack of fencing or gaps in the fencing was identified as a particular danger to unsupervised children playing in the vicinity of the Core Paths. Another contributor noted:

“You often use the railings as a guide when you’re walking home at night, and if there’s a section missing, this increases your likelihood of falling in.”

Some of the inhibitors identified by Hillhead residents were also identified by Milngavie residents, although these were listed in a different order.

While Hillhead participants identified littering and mess as their second most prominent inhibitor, Milngavie residents unambiguously identified litter and mess as their number one obstacle to more frequent path usage. The forms of mess most frequently cited included general littering, dog dirt, broken glass and bottles, plastic bags snagged on bushes and trees, and supermarket trolleys submerged in water. Dog mess was identified as a particular concern for parents who wished to use Core Paths in the company of young children. As one participant noted:

“That’s three times this week I’ve had to hose down my pram wheels after being on the paths due to dog dirt.”

Other than litter and mess (which all participants expressed concern over), participants identified a number of secondary concerns which discouraged path usage. While youth antisocial behaviour was identified as a major concern for Hillhead residents, it was a less prominent concern among Milngavie residents with only one contributor (an older female) drawing attention to it. As another contributor noted:

“Antisocial behaviour is only a problem in the urban areas on a Friday and Saturday night. It’s never a problem out in the countryside – the neds never travel that far.”

While Hillhead residents expressed major concern over the unsatisfactory condition of Core Paths, this was a much less prominent concern for Milngavie residents, although in places where the paths were especially bumpy, contributors noted that this made the paths unsuitable for use by pram and wheelchair users.

Several participants identified a number of concerns with Core Paths in the vicinity of Mugdock reservoir. Several participants drew attention to the fences which had been placed around the reservoir, noting that they spoiled the look and feel of the countryside and discourage people from taking pictures. Two participants also felt that the saplings surrounding the car park in the vicinity of the reservoir provided unhelpful cover for vandals and criminals wishing to attack cars. Some participants also felt unsafe in crossing the stretch of road linking the moor with the paths around the reservoir due to the high speed of motorists in this area.

Having discussed some general aspects of path usage, participants then considered specific means of improving the paths and promoting path usage.

3.2.6 Improvements to publicly displayed signage, maps, directions

Improvements to signage was a more prominent issue for Milngavie residents than for Hillhead residents. Hillhead participants indicated that the majority of people using paths in the Hillhead area were local people who were familiar with the area and that additional or improved signage would prove superfluous. However, several participants were extremely knowledgeable and proud of their area’s local history and did feel that additional information on Hillhead and Kirkintilloch history should be displayed in the vicinity of Core Paths (e.g. Kirkintilloch was Europe’s first inland port and also contains an area where road, rail, Canal and river transport intersect). Other than this, improving signage and directions was not considered a major issue by Hillhead residents.

Perhaps because Core Paths in the Milngavie area are more widely used by visitors, improved signage was more of a priority issue for Milngavie residents who made several suggestions in this regard. For example, Milngavie participants felt that signs at the start and end of all paths should be colour coded to indicate the physical demands of the walk and groups for whom the walk would be suitable. They also felt that this colour coding should be consistent throughout all East Dunbartonshire paths. As one contributor noted, *“you need to know at the outset if the path is going to be suitable for you.”* Participants also felt that signs should contain information on toilet facilities and should be regularly checked to ensure that they were pointing in the correct direction.

3.2.7 Keeping Core Paths clean and attractive

Both groups felt that the best means of keeping Core Paths clean and in a usable state involved the appointment of additional community/litter/canal wardens or rangers. As one participant noted, *“Kirkie is meant to be the canal capital of Scotland so it needs dedicated wardens if the area is going to be kept clean and attractive.”* Milngavie participants noted that their area already possessed one dedicated litter warden but felt that this individual needed additional support and assistance in order

to discharge their duties. Participants hoped that additional wardens would not only undertake the task of removing litter and mess but that their presence would also discourage littering in the first place.

Several additional measures also received the support of both groups. For example, both sets of participants noted that EDC had provided a large number of plastic litter and dog mess bins but that these bins were frequently set alight by antisocial individuals. All bins provided in the vicinity of Core Paths should therefore be made of a non flammable and indestructible material. Moreover, such bins should be frequently and regularly emptied to ensure that path users could use them in the intended manner.

Both groups also favoured the introduction of vigorous fines (possibly 'on the spot' fines) for litterers and individuals who failed to remove dog mess but were aware of the difficulties involved in the imposing and collecting such fines, particularly if they were administered in an on-the-spot basis. Some Milngavie participants felt that the parents of children and young people who drop litter should be fined in order to make parental responsibility clear.

Some contributors also noted that 'prevention is better than cure' and advocated the introduction of anti-litter campaigns in both local papers and local schools. They hoped that anti-litter campaigns in schools would also encourage children and young people to grow into responsible adults. One participant also noted that the litter problem was, to a great extent, the result of the retail and packaging sector's reliance on non biodegradable packaging and that littering would only cease to be a major problem once the packaging industry moved to biodegradable packaging.

Members of the Milngavie group felt that EDC and its partners should support and enable local volunteers to sporadically remove litter from Core Paths as a civic duty. They also felt that children and young people should be involved in voluntary cleaning activities so that they became aware of the consequences of littering. Milngavie participants also felt that a litter hotline service should be created (along the lines of RALF) to enable path users to report litter and mess issues to litter wardens in a prompt and timely manner, and that such calls should receive a prompt response so that citizens developed faith in the hotline service.

3.2.8 Lighting

Participants in both groups did not view provision of additional lighting as a major means of encouraging Core Path usage. Milngavie participants did not want lampposts to be erected in countryside areas and felt that urban path areas were already sufficiently well lit. Ironically, they noted that groups of youths often congregated in the vicinity of illuminated areas, so provision of additional lighting would only exacerbate some of their concerns. Similarly, Hillhead participants also expressed minimal support for provision of additional lighting to promote path usage.

3.2.9 Improved upkeep and maintenance of Core Paths

The muddy and water logged condition of paths was identified as a major deterrent to Core Path usage among Hillhead residents who particularly requested installation of improve drainage to path areas, particularly in frequently used sections of path. Some resurfacing of paths in key high use areas was also requested.

On the whole, improved path maintenance was less of an issue for Milngavie residents, except in the vicinity of Mugdock reservoir (one side only) where Core Paths were described as "*exceptionally muddy*". Participants attributed this to inadequate drainage and the fact that fallen leaves were not promptly removed from path areas. Participants also felt that fine stone gravel should be applied to path surfaces in some areas and again called for creation of a hotline to report upkeep and maintenance issues.

3.2.10 Enhancing the general safety of Core Paths

In addition to improving drainage and removing mess, Hillhead participants favoured improvements to the railing and fencing along the paths, particularly in path areas in the vicinity of the canal. Milngavie residents made no specific suggestions to improve the overall safety of Core Paths but felt that the provision of path or community wardens would help to ensure that paths were maintained in a safe and usable condition.

3.2.11 Discouraging antisocial behaviour

Hillhead and Milngavie participants suggested several means of discouraging antisocial behaviour in path areas and often agreed on strategy and tactics.

Both groups felt that the introduction of Path or Community Wardens would help to discourage and minimise antisocial behaviour in the vicinity of paths. However, both groups stressed that any such wardens should be local to the area they cover and should be able to develop a relationship with the young people with whom they come into contact. Participants of both groups felt that wardens should be introduced to children and young people via schools to ensure that mutually respectful relationships developed on both sides. Furthermore, wardens needed to maintain a high profile on path areas (possibly on bikes) to ensure that antisocial behaviour was discouraged.

Members of both groups also requested a higher profile police presence in path areas and a faster police response to reports of antisocial behaviour. Members of both groups criticised the fact that the Police who serviced their communities were based in Maryhill and often arrived late to incidents which they had reported.

All nine members of the Hillhead group supported the introduction of CCTV cameras in path areas to discourage antisocial behaviour, but Milngavie residents expressed no support for this measure. Milngavie participants noted that youth antisocial behaviour was often fuelled by underage drinking and that problems of antisocial behaviour could only be minimised by interrupting the supply of alcohol to young people under the age of 18. Group members supported vigorous action being taken against retailers who sold alcohol to minors and to parents who provided alcohol to their children – one 17 year old member of the Milngavie group noted that many teenagers enjoyed illegal access to alcohol via their parents. Eliminating underage drinking would, in the opinion of this group, not only reduce antisocial behaviour but would also lead to less litter, broken glass and bottles being strewn on Core Paths.

3.2.12 Improved public transport access to Core Paths

Neither group identified improved provision of public transport as a major means of promoting path usage. Hillhead participants described themselves as 'local people' and felt that public transport links to Core Paths were already satisfactory.

Similarly, members of the Milngavie group did not view provision of improved public transport as a priority issue except in one area where they noted that parents with children in prams often experienced great difficulty in accessing Mugdock Country Park and felt that improved public transport was needed for them.

3.2.13 Improving general access to Core Paths

Milngavie participants noted that motorists often drive at excessive speeds on the stretch of road which separates Mugdock Moor from Mugdock Country Park and that improved crossing facilities were required for pedestrians. Hillhead participants identified a general need to improve access to Core Paths for individuals with mobility issues but did not identify any particular areas where such action should be taken.

However, at the same time they also noted that secondary or access paths were often in better condition than the Core Paths themselves due to lower frequency of usage.

3.2.14 Additional action

Milngavie participants felt that Milngavie, because of the prominence of the West Highland Way, merited the creation of a staffed tourist information kiosk and that such a kiosk could be staffed by older, retired volunteers as a civic duty. The current situation whereby a local ironmonger's shop distributes tourist information as a sideline was considered unacceptable. One participant felt that the tourist information office should have been integrated into the Costa Coffee premises near the start of the West Highland Way when it was built.

Milngavie participants also felt that path-related activities and exercises should be integrated into local school curricula and that all schoolchildren should receive a map of the Core Path Network once it becomes operational.

Hillhead participants felt that a kiosk should be created in the vicinity of the Canal to provide snacks and drinks to families and sell fishing kit to fishermen/women. Some group members also felt it would be appropriate to create designated areas for fishermen/women in the vicinity of the canal.

Some participants also recommended provision of picnic tables in the vicinity of the paths in Luggie Park to encourage greater use of both the park and Core Paths. As one contributor noted:

"Lots of Luggie Park is just an empty wasteland without any features, and if there were picnic tables and that it would encourage more people to use the park."

3.2.15 Promoting awareness of the Core Path Network

Participants suggested a range of imaginative ways of promoting the Core Path Network and these are summarised below in no particular order. The Core Path Network should be promoted by:

- stories, articles, features and advertisements in local newspapers and community newsletters;
- prominent signage, maps and information located in the centre of Milngavie village and Kirkintilloch High Street. Similar signage should also be located outside of major local supermarkets;
- posters and leaflets distributed in public venues such as GP surgeries, clinics, libraries and museums. Members of local youth groups (e.g. cubs, brownies, scouts, etc.) could be enlisted to deliver these leaflets;
- path-related activities and learning exercises which are integrated into local school curricula; and
- increased profile and exposure via the Kirkintilloch Canal Festival.

Finally, one member of the Milngavie group questioned the very use of the term 'Core Path', describing it as, *"uninformative, unimaginative and unappealing. It makes the idea of going out for a walk on a Path sound like a grim Stalinist duty rather than an enjoyable pleasure."*

In contrast, this participant recommended developing a more engaging and user friendly term for Core Paths, *"preferably something with a local flavour so that local people will engage with the concept."*

3.2.16 Contribution of Core Path Network to East Dunbartonshire's quality of life

Members of both groups felt that the creation and widespread usage of the Core Path Network would enhance the quality of life in East Dunbartonshire and articulated their views in the following ways:

"Using Core Paths will encourage people to talk to each other more and make new friends, help to improve the community spirit."

"It'll give people something to be proud of and promote a better sense of community."

"It will encourage people to have more respect for their own area and appreciate their local environment."

"If you feel fit, you've got an obvious feel-good factor so the paths will help create a healthier community, both physically and mentally."

"The paths will give people more of a chance to observe and appreciate nature and wildlife."

4 Conclusions & recommendations

This section draws some conclusions from the evidence presented above and offers some general recommendations concerning current and future Core Path usage and promotion of the Core Path Network.

4.1 Conclusions

The study's principal objectives were to determine the potential impact of Core Path planning on physical activity levels and, where appropriate, identify barriers to path usage. This section summarises conclusions in line with the stated objectives of the project, leading with quantitative survey data and, where relevant, amplified by findings from the two focus groups comprised of enthusiastic and committed path users.

4.1.1 Most frequently used Core Paths

The paths used most frequently by Milngavie residents included the West Highland Way (74% of respondents), Allander Walkway (56%), Mugdock Reservoir (49%) and Lennox Park (48%). There was little variation by gender but younger respondents were more likely to use Lennox Park older respondents, while older respondents displayed a strong preference for the West Highland Way.

The most frequently used paths by Hillhead residents included the Forth and Clyde Canal Towpath (82% of respondents) followed by Luggie Park Link (60%) and Luggie Water Link (51%). The Forth and Clyde Canal Towpath was popular with all age groups, while men were more enthusiastic users of the Luggie Park and Water Links and women displayed a greater preference for the Waterside Oxbang path.

4.1.2 Physical activities engaged in on Core Paths

Walking was the most popular Core Path activity among survey respondents (94%), followed by cycling (17%) and running/jogging (2%). Walking was the most consistently popular activity among all groups, although the low representation of running/jogging as a path activity may have been influenced by the time of year when the survey was conducted (early spring) and the difficulties involved in interviewing joggers in mid stride. Focus group findings generally reinforced these results, with the vast majority of participants describing themselves as walkers who, on the whole, used the paths primarily for moderate exercise.

4.1.3 Purposes for using Core Paths

Overall, survey respondents identified shopping as the most popular reason for using Core Paths (55% of respondents), followed by getting/staying fit and healthy (41%), enjoying the countryside (34%), walking the dog (22%) and visiting people (21%).

Hillhead residents appeared to be more utilitarian and less health/fitness oriented in their use of paths than Milngavie residents. Sixty seven per cent of Hillhead residents used paths for shopping (against 42% in Milngavie) whereas 54% of Milngavie residents used the paths to stay fit and healthy, against only 28% of Hillhead respondents. Females were more likely to use the paths for shopping than males, and older people were more likely to use the paths for shopping than younger users.

4.1.4 Frequency of Core Path usage for health and practical purposes

Forty four per cent of all respondents indicated that they used the paths for health/exercise/relaxation purposes on a daily or several times per week basis while 37% of all respondents indicated that they used the paths for this purpose on a weekly basis. Hillhead residents were more likely to use the paths on a daily/several times per week basis than Milngavie residents (presumably for practical and utilitarian purposes) and older people were much more likely to use the paths on a daily basis than younger respondents.

Overall, the data suggest that respondents used Core Paths for practical purposes to the same extent that they used them for health/exercise/relaxation purposes. Forty one per cent of respondents indicated that they used Core Paths for practical purposes on a daily/several times per week basis while 41% indicated that they use them for these purposes on a weekly basis. Again, Hillhead respondents were more likely to use the paths for practical purposes than Milngavie respondents, and older people were more likely to use the paths for practical purposes on a daily basis than younger age groups

4.1.5 Benefits accruing from Core Path usage

Survey respondents demonstrated a strong awareness of the mental wellbeing benefits likely to accrue from Core Path usage. For example, 82% of respondents agreed using the paths helped them to relax, while 81% of all respondents agreed that using the paths helped to reduce stress levels.

Survey respondents also appreciated the social and physical wellbeing benefits they derived from path usage, although to a slightly lesser extent than the mental wellbeing benefits they gained. For example, 74% of respondents agreed that path usage made them feel physically healthier and help them to stay fit, while approximately two thirds of all respondents agreed that Core Paths enabled them to meet people and feel part of a wider community. In general, Milngavie respondents appear to demonstrate a greater appreciation of the health and wellbeing benefits of path usage than Hillhead residents. For example, 93% of Milngavie residents indicated that path usage aided relaxation (compare to 72% in Hillhead), while 90% of Milngavie residents agreed that path usage enhanced their happiness, while only 69% of Hillhead respondents shared this view. This may reflect the more practical/utilitarian approach applied by Hillhead residents to path usage and the generally lower ratings they awarded themselves with regard to physical and mental wellbeing and general quality of life. Only with regard to using Core Paths to meet people did Hillhead respondents award themselves higher scores than Milngavie residents (72% against 63%).

Males and females appreciated the mental wellbeing, health and social benefits of path usage in approximately equal measure but, in terms of age, older respondents tended to be more appreciative and aware of the benefits of Core Path usage than younger respondents. For example, 79% of the 65+ age group acknowledged the stressing value of Core Paths compared to 60% of 16-24 year olds.

When invited to identify principal benefits accruing from Core path usage, Milngavie and Hillhead respondents were equally keen to place a strong emphasis on the mental wellbeing benefits of path usage over all other benefits. Focus group participants were keen to emphasise the de-stressing value and feel-good factor associated with path usage over the physical health and social benefits of path usage.

4.1.6 Propensity to increase Core Path usage

When asked if they would like to increase their path usage, 49% of respondents answered in the affirmative and 46% in the negative. There was no significant variation by location or gender but, with regard to age, 25 to 44 year olds expressed

the greatest desire to increase path usage (60% of respondents) while the 65+ age group expressed the least enthusiasm (33%).

When invited to identify their motivations for increasing path usage, the most popular reason was to get/stay fit and healthy (60% of respondents), followed by enjoying the countryside (50%), shopping (32%), walking the dog (16%) and visiting people (13%). As before, Hillhead residents tended to favour more pragmatic motivations (such as shopping) for increasing their path usage than Milngavie residents, while females displayed a greater desire to increase path usage to get fit and stay healthy than males.

4.1.7 Barriers inhibiting Core Path usage

When invited to identify barriers inhibiting increased Core Path usage, respondents identified a range of factors, some of which being within the power of EDC and its partners to improve and several being outwith the competence of EDC and its partners. Many of the most frequently cited obstacles to increased path usage were beyond the easy remedy by EDC and its partners. These included a general lack of time (28% of respondents), unsuitable weather (23%), mobility issues (11%), employment commitments (7%) and family commitments (7%).

The most frequently cited issues which were within the power of EDC and its partners to remedy included unsatisfactory condition of the Core Paths (13% of respondents), concerns about personal safety (7%), fear of antisocial behaviour (7%) and, to a much lesser extent, inadequate lighting, low awareness of the Path Network and inadequate public transport links.

Focus group participants were also invited to identify obstacles to increased path usage and their responses amplify and add further insight into the survey results. For Hillhead residents, the greatest inhibitor to increased path usage was undoubtedly the unsatisfactory condition of the Core Paths (i.e. muddy and waterlogged in places) closely followed by excessive littering and mess (including dog dirt) in the vicinity of the paths. Milngavie focus group participants were much less concerned with the unsatisfactory surface conditions of the paths (except in the vicinity of Mugdock Reservoir) but were very strongly deterred by littering and mess in the vicinity of the paths. If 'unsatisfactory condition of Core Paths' is stretched to include both poor surface conditions and excessive littering, it can be seen that this concern represents the greatest deterrent to increased Core Path usage and offers a clear signal for action. Fear of antisocial behaviour was identified as a secondary inhibitor of path usage, primarily because it only assumed major significance on Friday and Saturday evenings after dark. Most of the other inhibitors identified by survey respondents (e.g. lighting, lack of public transport etc.) were not identified as major concerns by focus group participants.

4.1.8 Features likely to increase Core Path usage

When invited to identify measures likely to increase path usage, answers provided by survey respondents closely reflected the factors and considerations which discouraged path usage.

For example, when asked to identify inhibitors to more frequent path usage, survey respondents and focus group participants both drew attention to the unsatisfactory condition of Core Paths (in places) and excessive littering and mess in the vicinity of the Paths. When invited to identify actions which EDC and its partners could take to increase path usage, respondents overwhelmingly cited 'improving the surface of paths' and 'cleaning up the paths' as their two most popular suggestions and these emphases found an echo in the comments of focus group participants. Members of both groups felt that removing litter and mess was likely to increase Core Path usage and cited several means by which this goal could be achieved. These included the appointment of additional litter/path wardens and rangers and the provision of

regularly emptied non-flammable litter and dog mess bins in the vicinity of the paths. Both groups also felt that the introduction of a vigorous fining system might help to reduce littering and mess, and members of the Milngavie group also favoured creation of a litter hotline which they could call to report litter and mess issues promptly.

Hillhead participants also felt that improving the surface of paths' in a number of key areas (particularly in the vicinity of the Canal) was likely to increase their usage of Core Paths, while this was less of a concern for Milngavie residents (except in the vicinity of Mugdock Reservoir).

Interestingly, some of the measures recommended by survey respondents found little echo among focus group participants. For example, improved lighting was identified as an action which EDC and its partners could take to increase path usage by survey respondents but this measure found little support among focus group participants.

'Improving safety and security in the vicinity of the paths' emerged as a major concern for Hillhead survey respondents and was also identified as a major issue by Hillhead focus group participants. Measures they suggested to improve safety and security included provision of additional community or path wardens, speedier police responses to reports of antisocial behaviour, introduction of CCTV cameras in the vicinity of the paths and improvements to railings and fences in the vicinity of the canal towpath.

4.1.9 Future promotion of the Core Path Network

As noted earlier, awareness of the Core Path Network among survey respondents in spring 2008 was fairly low, with only approximately 1 in 5 respondents expressing awareness of the proposed Core Path Network. The East Dunbartonshire Core Path Network will be formally launched during 2008 and survey respondents and focus group participants were invited to identify effective means of promoting awareness of the Core Path Network.

The measures which drew the greatest support from survey respondents included advertising and publicity in the local press, distribution of leaflets, improved signage, unspecified forms of general advertising and leaflets/posters displayed in shops, libraries, doctors' surgeries, etc.

On the whole, comments made by focus group participants echoed the views expressed by survey respondents with a strong emphasis being placed on advertisements and features in the local press and community newsletters and posters and leaflets made available via public venues such as doctors' surgeries, clinics, libraries and museums.

Focus group participants offered valuable insight into the use of improved signage as a means of promoting awareness of the Core Path Network. Both groups felt that signage and maps describing the Core Path Network should be prominently displayed in the centre/main shopping street of both communities and outside widely used supermarkets. With reference to on-path signage, Milngavie respondents expressed strong support for this measure, mainly because the West Highland Way attracts many non local visitors to the area. Milngavie participants felt that signage at the beginning and end of paths should also provide colour coded information describing the severity of the path and groups for whom the path would be suitable/unsuitable. As most of the walkers on Hillhead Core Paths were described as 'local people', Hillhead focus group participants expressed less support for signage but did feel that further information should be made available on the area's proud industrial and commercial past.

A member of the Milngavie focus group also felt that the term 'Core Path' was unlikely to promote public identification with the Core Path Network and suggested developing a more engaging and user friendly brand for the concept.

4.2 Recommendations

Several positive and highly encouraging features emerged from analysis of Core Path usage in 2008. Path users strongly appreciated a range of benefits accruing from Core Path usage and approximately half of all survey respondents wished to increase their Core Path usage. The following recommendations are made with a view to increasing path usage among East Dunbartonshire residents and to promote awareness of the Core Path Network during 2008 and beyond.

4.2.1 Encouraging path usage

Survey respondents and focus group participants identified unsatisfactory condition of Core Paths as a major deterrent to Core Path usage, and EDC and its partners should take steps necessary to ensure that Core Paths are maintained in a usable state throughout the path network.

Littering and mess in the vicinity of Core Paths emerged as major inhibitors to usage among existing and potential users. EDC and its partners should provide additional non flammable litter and dog mess bins in the vicinity of Core Paths and ensure that they are regularly emptied.

Both sets of focus group participants felt that the appointment of Path Wardens or Rangers would deter littering and mess and minimise concerns over antisocial behaviour. Wardens could also undertake to remove litter and mess from path areas and identify sections of path requiring urgent maintenance. Creation of a 'Path hotline' would also enable path users to advise wardens of sections of path requiring maintenance or de-littering. Path wardens should also develop positive and constructive relations with local young people, possibly through increased contact via schools.

Walking emerged as the most popular Core path activity and EDC and its partners should develop a range of 'recommended walks' which should be publicised to potential users via distributed pamphlets and on-path signage. These recommended walks should be graded according to the physical demands of each walk and any groups of users for whom the walk would be suitable/unsuitable. Use of a colour coded system may facilitate easy understanding of the walk grading system. Information on these recommended walks should be prominently displayed at key access points on the Core Paths, and signage in Hillhead area should draw attention to the area's distinguished industrial and commercial past.

Traffic calming measures or improved pedestrian crossing access should be introduced in the stretch of road separating Mugdock Moor from Mugdock Country Park.

A dedicated information kiosk should be installed in Milngavie to promote both usage of the West Highland Way and all other Core Paths in the East Dunbartonshire area.

Hillhead residents expressed concern over the condition and provision of safety railings in the vicinity of the Forth and Clyde Canal towpath, and EDC and its partners should take steps to remedy these concerns.

Creation of the Core Path Network should be actively promoted within East Dunbartonshire's schools and path-related activities should be incorporated within school curricula to promote awareness of the Core Path Network and identification with its purposes.

4.2.2 Promoting awareness of the Core Path Network

The following measures should be introduced to promote awareness of the Core Path Network:

- stories, articles, features and advertisements should be placed in local newspapers and community newsletters;
- prominent signage, maps and information should be located in the centre of Milngavie and in Kirkintilloch High Street. Similar signage should also be located outside of major local supermarkets;
- posters and leaflets should be distributed via public venues such as GP surgeries, clinics, libraries and museums;
- path-related activities and learning exercises which are integrated into local school curricula and all children should receive maps depicting the Core Path Network; and
- the Core Path Network should be publicised and promoted during the Kirkintilloch Canal Festival.

EDC and its partners should also consider developing a more user-friendly and engaging term for Core Paths to encourage local identification with the concept.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Survey questionnaire
Appendix 2	Focus group topic guide
Appendix 3	Comparative health data

Appendix 1 – Survey questionnaire

Contract No: 2852
Contract Name: EDC Core Paths Health Impact Assessment
Final questionnaire

Introduction

READ OUT

"Good morning/afternoon/evening, my name is _____ from FMR Research. I am undertaking a survey on behalf of East Dunbartonshire Council and partners on Core Path usage in Hillhead and Milngavie. The survey will provide information which will be used to improve East Dunbartonshire's Core Path Network, and all answers will be treated in strict confidence. The interview will take between 5-10 minutes.

Screening Question Do you live in Hillhead/Milngavie?

Yes	1	Continue
No	2	thank and close

Interview location

Milngavie Town Centre		1
Milngavie Core Path	Allander Walkway	2
	Lennox Park	3
	Start of West Highland Way	4
	Mugdock Reservoir	5

Hillhead (respondent's home)		6
Hillhead Core Path	Forth and Clyde Canal Towpath	7
	Luggie Park/Water Link	8
	Merklands Nature Park	9

INTERVIEWER: BRIEFLY EXPLAIN THE CORE PATH CONCEPT, SHOW MAPS ETC AND PROCEED WITH QUESTIONNAIRE.

1. What is your postcode?

2a. Do you use any of the Core Paths which we have described to you?

Yes	1	GO TO Q2B
No	2	GO TO Q10

2b. If yes, which ones? INTERVIEWER, USE MAPS TO IDENTIFY PATH NAMES

Milngavie		Hillhead	
Allander Walkway	1	Forth and Clyde Canal Towpath	1
Lennox Park	2	Luggie Park Link	2
West Highland Way	3	Luggie Water Link	3
Dougalston Loop	4	Merklands Nature Park	4
Mugdock Reservoirs	5	Bute Road, Applecross	5
WHW – Mugdock Reservoir Link	6	Waterside, Oxgang	6
Other, please specify below	7	Other, please specify below	7

3. **What physical activity/activities do you usually engage in when using the Core Path(s) you have identified?**

Cycling	1
Walking	2
Other (please specify)	3

4. **For what purpose(s) do you generally use this Core Path? TICK ALL THAT APPLY
SHOWCARD A**

Shopping	1
Journey to work	2
Visit people	3
Get/stay fit and healthy	4
Enjoy countryside	5
Walk the dog	6
Other (please say what)	7

5. **How frequently do you use this Core Path (or any other Core Paths) for general health/exercise/relaxation purposes?
SHOWCARD B**

Daily	1
Weekly	2
Monthly	3
Less often	4
Never	5
Other (please say what)	6

6. **How frequently do you use this Core Path (or any other Core Paths) for practical purposes (e.g. journeying to specific destinations such as work, shops etc.)?
SHOWCARD B**

Daily	1
Weekly	2
Monthly	3
Less often or never	4
Never	5
Other (please say what)	6

- 7a. Thinking about your overall experience of using Core Paths and the benefits you enjoy as a result, please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements **SHOWCARD C**

USING THE PATH NETWORKS	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Helps me to relax	1	2	3	4	5
Makes me feel happier	1	2	3	4	5
Makes me feel less stressed	1	2	3	4	5
Lets me meet people	1	2	3	4	5
I sometimes feel unsafe	1	2	3	4	5
Makes me feel part of the community	1	2	3	4	5
Makes me feel better about myself	1	2	3	4	5
I sometimes encounter behaviour which I regard as anti-social	1	2	3	4	5
Increases my awareness of nature and the environment	1	2	3	4	5
Makes me feel physically healthier and generally helps me to stay fit	1	2	3	4 Ask 7b	5 Ask 7b

- 7b. If you agree that Core Path usage is generally beneficial to your health and fitness levels (i.e. answered 4 or 5 to last option above), please tell us more about the specific health benefits you enjoy as a result of using Core Paths

INTERVIEWER PROBE FOR PARTICULAR HEALTH/FITNESS BENEFITS

8. If you had the option, would you like to use Core Paths on a more regular basis?

Yes	1	GO TO Q9
No	2	GO TO Q10
Not sure	3	GO TO Q10

9. If you were able to use Core Paths more frequently, for what purpose(s) would you use them? **SHOWCARD A**

Shopping	1
Journey to work	2
Visit people	3
Get/stay fit and healthy	4
Enjoy countryside	5
Walk the dog	6
Other (please say what)	7

ASK ALL

10. What prevents you from using/making more use of Core Paths? UNPROMPTED, INTERVIEWER TO CODE RESPONSE

General lack of time	1
Unsuitable weather	2
Family commitments	3
Employment commitments	4
Education/ training commitments	5
Caring commitments	6
Mobility issues	7
Difficulty in accessing Core Paths	8
Lack of private transport to Core Paths	9
Lack of public transport to Core Paths	10
Concerns about personal safety	11
Fear of anti-social behaviour	12
Unsatisfactory condition of the Core Paths	13
Other (please say what)	14

11. What action can EDC and its partners take to increase your use of Core Paths?

12. Looking at the faces on the card (SMILEY FACE SHOWCARD D)

a) Which face best reflects how you would rate your overall quality of life?

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b) Which face best reflects how you would rate your general physical well being?

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

c) Which face best reflects how you would rate your general mental or emotional well being?

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

INTERVIEWER READ OUT: In the two questions that follow, please include all physical activity that you do, including sport & leisure, your job, housework, DIY and gardening etc.

13a. In a typical week, on how many days do you take at least 30 minutes of moderate physical exercise such as brisk walking? It doesn't have to be 30 minutes all at once.

_____ days each week

13b. How much of that exercise is taken on the Core Paths?

None	1
Less than half	2
More than half	3
All of it	4

14a. In a typical week, on how many days do you spend at least 20 continuous minutes doing vigorous exercise (enough to make you sweaty and out of breath)?

_____ days each week

14b. How much of that exercise is taken on the Core Paths?

None	1
Less than half	2
More than half	3
All of it	4

15. Before today, were you aware of East Dunbartonshire's emerging Core Path Network?

Yes	1
No	2

16. In your opinion, what would be the best means of promoting awareness of Core Paths and the Core Path Network among Hillhead/Milngavie residents?

17. Are there any other comments you'd like to make about East Dunbartonshire's Core Path Network or any initiatives underway to encourage greater use of paths for walking, cycling and other activities?

ABOUT YOU

18. Respondent gender

Male	1
Female	2

19. Into which of these age bands do you fall? SHOWCARD E

16-19	1
20-24	2
25-34	3
35-44	4
45-54	5
55-64	6
65+	7

20. What is your working status? SHOWCARD F

Full time employed	1
Part time employed	2
Unemployed – seeking work	3
Retired	4
Other (e.g. student, not seeking work, looking after home/family, etc)	5

21. In April 2008, we will be organising a focus group of Hillhead/Milngavie residents to discuss some of the results emerging from this survey. Would you be interested in participating in this focus group?

Yes	1	RESPONDENT TO SIGN BELOW
No	2	

		Signature
A	I would like to take part in focus groups and understand that my contact details will NOT be passed to East Dunbartonshire Council.	

22. East Dunbartonshire Council may also like to send out information or conduct further consultation on Core Paths. Would you be interested in this?

Yes	1	RESPONDENT TO SIGN BELOW
No	2	

		Signature
B	I would like further information or to take part in future research and am also happy for my contact details to be passed to East Dunbartonshire Council for other future involvement (I understand that only my name, address and telephone number will be passed to East Dunbartonshire Council and not my individual comments in the survey!)	

INTERVIEWER, MAKE SURE YOU COLLECT FULL RESPONDENT DETAILS IF RESPONDENT HAS SIGNED ABOVE.

**INTERVIEWER:
COLLECT RESPONDENT DETAILS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH AND/OR
BACKCHECKING PURPOSES.**

**EXPLAIN THAT THERE IS A ONE IN TEN CHANCE THAT A SUPERVISOR MAY PHONE
TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE INTERVIEW.**

Respondent Name	
Address	
POST CODE	
Telephone Number	
email address	

CLOSE INTERVIEW BY READING OUT STATEMENT:

"Thank you very much for your help. Can I assure you once again that the information you have given will be treated as absolutely confidential and will only be used for the purposes of an assessment of Core Path usage in Hillhead and Milngavie "

INTERVIEWER DECLARATION:

I declare that this interview was carried out according to instructions, within the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct, and that the respondent was not previously known to me.

Interviewer Name	
Signature	
Date	
Back-checked by	
Date	

Appendix 2 – Focus Group Topic Guide

2852: EDC Core Paths

TOPIC GUIDE FOR PATH USERS FOCUS GROUPS

Introduction and outline of research

Health impacts and benefits

1. Please tell us about your general usage of Core Paths and reasons for using Core Paths, differentiating between use for health and fitness purposes, general relaxation and utilitarian/practical purposes.
2. If you use Core Paths for health and fitness reasons, please tell us about the activities you engage in when using Core Paths, differentiating between various types and levels of exercise/physical activity.
3. Please describe the principal health and wellbeing benefits you derive from using Core Paths.
4. Please tell us about any other benefits you derive from using Core Paths.
5. Please tell us how frequently you use Core Paths and what time(s) of day you generally make use of Core Paths.
6. Please tell us about the factors which influence your use of Core Paths, distinguishing between positive factors which promote and encourage Core Path usage and negative factors which discourage Core Path usage (n.b not all factors will be within the control of EDC and its partners).

Promoting Core Path usage

Survey respondents identified several measures and steps which EDC and its partners could take to promote Core Path usage among East Dunbartonshire residents. We are particularly keen to hear your detailed thoughts and comments on these suggestions and any specific actions which EDC and its partners could take to implement these recommendations.

7. Improved provision of signage and publicly displayed maps, directions etc.
8. Keeping Core Paths clean and attractive (including removal of dog mess).
9. Additional lighting around Core Path areas.
10. Improved upkeep and maintenance of Core Paths.
11. Enhancing the general safety of Core Paths.
12. Discouraging anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of Core Paths.
13. Improved public transport access to Core Paths.
14. Improved general access to Core Paths.
15. Are there any further actions which EDC and its partners could take to promote Core Path usage among residents of East Dunbartonshire?
16. What measures should EDC and its partners take to promote awareness of the Core Path Network among East Dunbartonshire residents?

17. In your opinion, what contributions can the Core Path Network and increased Core Path usage make to improving the quality of life for East Dunbartonshire residents and their communities?
18. Are there any other comments you'd like to make regarding Core Paths or the development of East Dunbartonshire's Core Path Network?

Thanks and close

Appendix 3 – Comparative Health Data

COMPARATIVE HEALTH DATA

Sources:

- East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership Household Survey 2007
- Greater Glasgow Health & Well-being Study 2005: East Dunbartonshire Report and
- Greater Glasgow Health & Well-being Study 2005: Greater Glasgow Report

Overall quality of life

Percentage giving a positive rating (i.e. 1 – 3 on smiley faces scale 1 - 7)

Hillhead

Source		Value
2008 Core paths interviews		80%
2007 ED CPP survey		80%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing Study 2005 (total Glasgow sample)	Overall	83%
	Depcat 6/7	78%
	15% SIMD	77%

Milngavie

Source		Value
2008 Core paths interviews		91%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing	2005 ED boost	89%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing Study 2005 (total Glasgow sample)	Overall	83%
	Depcat 1/2	90%
	Other datazones (outside 15% SIMD)	87%

Physical Wellbeing

Percentage giving a positive rating (i.e. 1 – 3 on smiley faces scale 1 - 7)

Hillhead

Source		Value
2008 Core paths interviews		74%
2007 ED CPP survey		75%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing Study 2005 (total Glasgow sample)	Overall	80%
	Depcat 6/7	76%
	15% SIMD	75%

Milngavie

Source		Value
2008 Core paths interviews		91%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing	2005 ED boost	87%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing Study 2005 (total Glasgow sample)	Overall	80%
	Depcat 1/2	88%
	Other datazones (outside 15% SIMD)	83%

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

Percentage giving a positive rating (i.e. 1 – 3 on smiley faces scale 1 - 7)

Hillhead

Source		Value
2008 Core paths interviews		86%
2007 ED CPP survey		78%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing Study 2005 (total Glasgow sample)	Overall	84%
	Deprcat 6/7	79%
	15% SIMD	77%

Milngavie

Source		Value
2008 Core paths interviews		95%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing	2005 ED boost	89%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing Study 2005 (total Glasgow sample)	Overall	84%
	Deprcat 1/2	90%
	Other datazones (outside 15% SIMD)	88%

Exercise

Percentage taking 30 mins or more moderate exercise on 5 or more days/week

Hillhead

Source		Value
2008 Core paths interviews		56%
2007 ED CPP survey		56%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing Study 2005 (total Glasgow sample)	Overall	50%
	Deprcat 6/7	55%
	15% SIMD	55%

Milngavie

Source		Value
2008 Core paths interviews		57%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing	2005 ED boost	44%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing Study 2005 (total Glasgow sample)	Overall	50%
	Deprcat 1/2	44%
	Other datazones (outside 15% SIMD)	48%

Exercise

Percentage taking 20 mins or more vigorous exercise on 3 or more days/week

Hillhead

Source		Value
2008 Core paths interviews		27%
2007 CPP survey		21%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing Study 2005 (total Glasgow sample)	Overall	28%
	Deprcat 6/7	28%
	15% SIMD	29%

Milngavie

Source		Value
2008 Core paths interviews		35%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing	2005 ED boost	20%
NHS GG Health & Wellbeing Study 2005 (total Glasgow sample)	Overall	28%
	Depcat 1/2	27%
	Other datazones (outside 15% SIMD)	28%