

Stoddart, Fiona and Wilson, Edward R. (2015) A working paper of the first analysis of data from the Lake District Osprey Project visitor survey, 2012. (Unpublished)

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**A Working Paper of the first analysis of data from the Lake District  
Osprey Project visitor survey, 2012.**

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January 2015

Unpublished research.

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## **Acknowledgements**

We wish to express our thanks to the staff and volunteers working with the Lake District Osprey Project for their support with this research.

We also wish to thank the University of Cumbria for their support of this research through the provision of Research and Scholarship Development funding.

## Summary

This document is in draft form and contains the first analysis of data collected through a questionnaire survey conducted with visitors to the Lake District Osprey Project at the Dodd Wood and Whinlatter Forest sites in the summer of 2012.

Findings from the first analysis of the data support the view that the Lake District Osprey Project is successful at attracting a range of different types of visitor from a range of destinations.

This initial analysis of the data also suggests that the Lake District Osprey Project hooks visitors into a number of additional experiences at the two sites where the research took place. These additional experiences include:

- Other wildlife sightings/encounters
- Educational opportunities
- Family activities
- Exercise and relaxation

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## Number of Respondents

The table below indicates the number of visitor questionnaires completed at both Dodd Wood and Whinlatter Forest within two time periods.

Woodland Visited	01 May to 06 July	07 July to 31 August	Total
Dodd Wood	63	64	127
Whinlatter Forest	60	39	99
Both	4	1	5
Total	122	109	231

Note: 06 July 2013 was the last day of school term, start of the summer holidays.

Dodd Wood has a lower and an upper viewing platform which is a 15 minute walk from the lower site. Of the 127 surveys completed 94% of respondents went to the lower viewing site, while only 52% went to the upper viewing site.

The following number of visitors to Dodd Wood who walk to the lower and upper viewing sites:

	Number visiting site		Percent visiting site	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Lower Viewing Site	124	8	94	6
Upper Viewing Site	67	63	52	48

## Gender and Special Needs

The gender ratio of the respondents was as follows:

### Gender of Respondents

Woodland Visited	Male	Female	Total
Dodd Wood	62	65	127
Whinlatter Forest	36	63	99
Both	2	3	5
Total	100	131	231

### Special Needs responses:

	Number			Percent		
	Dodd	Whinlatter	Total	Dodd	Whinlatter	Total
Respondent						
Yes	9	10	19	6.9	10.1	8.3
No	122	89	211	93.1	89.9	91.7
Total	131	99	230	100	100	100
Group member						
Yes	3	17	20	2.4	17.9	9.2
No	120	78	198	97.6	82.1	90.8
Total	123	95	218	100	100	100

#### Notes:

- 1 At Dodd, one respondent did not provide data
2. Several respondents did not wish to report information on members of their group



Incidence of reported disabilities/special needs within group (respondent and/or member of respondent's group):

	Number			Percent		
	Dodd	Whinlatter	Total	Dodd	Whinlatter	Total
Sight	2	2	4	1.5	2.0	1.7
Hearing	3	7	10	2.3	7.1	4.3
Mobility	5	21	26	3.8	20.2	10.8
Other	3	2	5	2.3	3.0	2.6
Total	13	32	45			

Notes:

1. Some respondents reported more than one disability/special need for themselves or members of their group.
2. Incidence reported in this table is based on overall reporting (respondent and members of their groups). For example, overall 10.8 percent of respondents reported one or more member of their group had a functional disability with mobility.
3. The "other" category included dyslexia, Downs, dietary and 2 unspecified conditions

## The Type of Visitor

More of the respondents identified themselves as 'leisure visitors', placing themselves in the following categories:

### Question - What term best describes you?

	Number of Visitors			Percent of Visitors		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
Local to area	18	26	44	14	25	19
Leisure visitor	112	77	189	85	74	80
On business in area	1	0	1	<1	0	<1
Educational	1	1	2	<1	<1	<1

Interestingly a higher proportion of respondents who were local to the area went to Whinlatter than to Dodd.

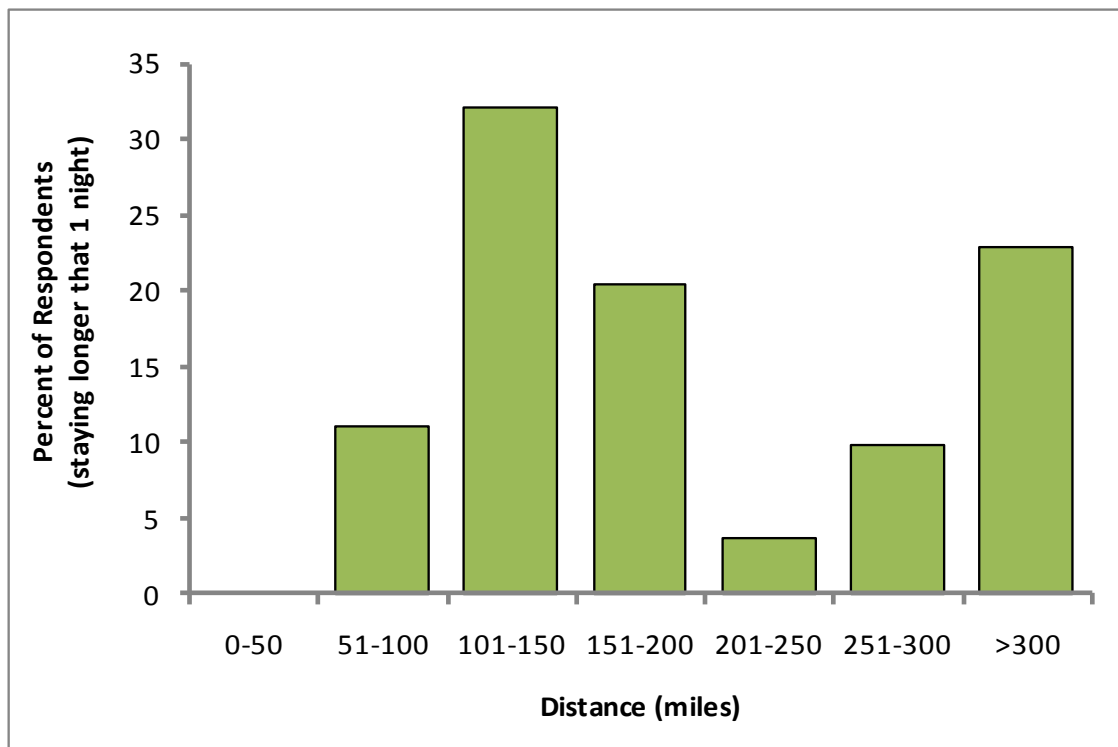
The highest number of respondents identified their visit to the Osprey project as part of a longer visit to the area.

**Distance Travelled to get to viewing sites:**

Visitor Type	1	2	3	4	5	
	Local (<3h)	Local (>3h)	One night stay	Longer stay	Overseas	Mean
No	47	6	8	163	7	
%	20.3	2.6	3.5	70.6	3.0	
Mean distance (miles)	29.4	125.2	215.0	194.6	-	158.8
Mean travel time (mins)	42.9	135.4	210.5	200.3	-	165.9

Notes:

1. Distance and travel times are based on one-way trips
2. Total number of respondents was 231
3. Distance and travel time data is based on UK visitors only
4. Countries represented include: Ireland, Isle of Man, Germany, India, Australia, Netherlands (2)
5. Distances and travel times were derived from postcode information provided by respondents. Data was based on most direct driving times and routes using Google Maps.



The previous figure shows the distance travelled from home for visitors staying longer than one night in the Lake District, who visited either Dodd Wood or Whinlatter Visitor Centre to view ospreys. Total number of respondents staying >1 night in Lake District was 163 (70.6% of respondents)

**Question - Which of the following best describes your trip today?**

	Number of Visitors			Percent of Visitors		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
Day trip (<3h from home)	21	26	47	16	25	20
Day trip (>3h from home)	5	1	6	4	1	3
Visit with overnight stay	7	1	8	5	1	3
Part of longer visit to area	99	76	175*	75	73	74

Note: \* 5 visitors attended both sites

At both Dodd Wood and Whinlatter more respondents identified their visit to the Osprey project as part of a longer visit to the area.

## Family relationships

Most of the respondents who visited both Dodd Wood and Whinlatter were either in retired couple or family groups. 78% of respondents at Dodd Wood were with their partner or with family. Very few people came to either site on their own (6% at Dodd Wood and 5% at Whinlatter). The most common group size was the respondent plus one other, either partner or friend or family. (58% at Dodd Wood, 55% At Whinlatter).

The responses indicated that there was a greater amount of intergenerational activity at Whinlatter compared to Dodd Wood. As shown in the next table 80% of respondents at Dodd Wood were in a child/parent grouping, whilst at Whinlatter a greater number of Children and Grandparent groups, and also child, parent and grandparent groups were revealed in the data, as shown below.

### Family Relationships:

Relationships	Number			Percent of visitors at site		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
Children/parents	33	13	46	80	42	64
Children/grandparents	1	3	4	2	10	6
Children/parents/grandparents	7	8	15	17	26	21
others	0	7	7		23	10
Total number of groups	41	31	72	100	100	100

## Age range of visitors

More Whinlatter respondents were in the over 60 category (62.9%) while at Dodd Wood the highest number fell into the 46-60 age category (40.2%).

### Age range for Respondents:

Age Range (years)	Number			Percent of visitors at site		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
18-24	4	2	6	3.0	2.1	2.6
25-45	38	19	57	28.8	19.6	24.9
46-60	53	15	68	40.2	15.5	29.7
>60	37	61	98	28.0	62.9	42.8
Total	132	97	229	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note – 5 respondents at Dodd also went to Whinlatter first. 2 respondents at Whinlatter chose not to disclose their age range.

## Interest in bird watching

24.2% of respondents from Whinlatter identified themselves as serious bird enthusiasts.

The data below shows responses when asked which of the following terms would you be most comfortable with as a description for yourself?

Descriptor	Number			Percent of visitors at site		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
Serious bird enthusiast	21	24	45	15.9	24.2	19.5
Generally interested in birds and wildlife	111	75	186	84.1	75.8	80.5
Total	132	99	231	100.0	100.0	100.0

Around one third of respondents at each site identified being a member of the RSPB.

### Question - Are you a member of the RSPB?

Membership Status	Number			Percent of visitors at site		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
Member of RSPB	44	34	78	33.3	34.3	33.8
Not Member of RSPB	88	65	153	66.7	65.7	66.2
Total	132	99	231	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: includes those from Ireland who are members of "Irish Bird Society".

## The Visitor Experience

The majority of respondents identified their main reason for visiting both Dodd Wood and Whinlatter was for Osprey Viewing (Dodd Wood 77.3%, Whinlatter 63.6%) At Whinlatter ‘watching other wildlife’ 8.1% and ‘relaxing outdoors’ (10.1%) were identified by some respondents as the main reason for their visit.

### Question - What was the main reason for your outing today?

Main Purpose for Visit	Number			Percent of visitors at site		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
Osprey viewing	102	63	165	77.3	63.6	71.4
Walking	21	10	31	15.9	10.1	13.4
Cycling	0	6	6	0	6.1	2.6
Watch other wildlife	2	2	4	1.5	2.0	1.7
Relaxing outdoors	3	8	11	2.3	8.1	4.8
Other	4	10	14	3.0	10.1	6.1
Total	132	99	231	100.0	100.0	100.0

‘walking’ and ‘relaxing outdoors’ were identified as other reasons (not the main reason) for visiting sites. At Whinlatter the other reasons also included visits to the café and shopping.



**Question - Were there other reasons for your visit here today?**

Main Purpose for Visit	Number			Percent of visitors at site		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
Osprey viewing	17	19	36	9.8	14.0	11.6
Walking	42	26	68	24.1	19.1	21.9
Cycling	2	1	3	1.1	0.7	1.0
Watch other wildlife	22	13	35	12.6	9.6	11.3
Relaxing outdoors	37	23	60	21.3	16.9	19.4
No other reason	30	17	47	17.2	12.5	15.2
Other	24	37	61	13.8	27.2	19.7
Total	174	136	310	100.0	100.0	100.0

Nearly three quarters of the respondents at Whinlatter were return visitors compared to Dodd Wood where just over a third of respondents were return visitors.

**Question - Have you been to this osprey site before?**

Previous visit to site	Number			Percent of visitors at site		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
Yes	47	74	121	35.6	74.7	52.4
No	85	25	110	64.4	25.3	47.6
Total	132	99	231	100.0	100.0	100.0

Of the respondents who had been to the sites previously, 91.7% of the total number had visited in previous years.

**Question – if you have visited this site before, have you visited in previous osprey years?**

Previous visit to site	Number			Percent of visitors at site		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
Yes	40	71	111	85.1	95.9	91.7
No	7	3	10	14.9	4.1	8.3
Total	47	74	121	100.0	100.0	100.0

Interestingly 47% of respondents who had been to Whinlatter before had visited the site for 10-12 years (34 respondents in total).

**Question -Can you say approximately how many years you have visited?**

Number of seasons visited (years)	Number			Percent of visitors at site		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
1-3 y	18	19	37	41	26	32
4-6 y	10	18	28	23	25	24
7-9 y	5	2	7	11	3	6
10-12 y	11	34	45	25	47	38
Total	44	73	117	100	100	100

28.9% of respondents visiting Dodd Wood initially found out about the site from the signs on the road, whilst at Whinlatter the largest number of respondents identified finding out about the site from 'Media – TV, Radio, Magazine' (27.6%). At both sites the recommendation of friend/families was the second most important way in which respondents found out about each site.

**Question-. How did you initially find out about this site?**

	Number			Percent		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
Friends	23	21	44	19.0	21.4	20.1
RSPB/Wildlife Organisation	12	6	18	9.9	6.1	8.2
Media – TV, Radio, Magazines	14	27	41	11.6	27.6	18.7
Signs on Road	35	12	47	28.9	12.2	21.5
Tourist Information	20	14	34	16.5	14.3	15.5
Internet	7	1	8	5.8	1.0	3.7
Other	10	17	27	8.3	17.3	12.3
Totals	121	98	219	100	100	100

At Dodd Wood the respondent perception of their frequency of visit was that 82.8% of respondents identified visiting the site once per season. Interestingly at Whinlatter, one person said that they visited the site most days. Significantly more respondents identified visiting Whinlatter (41.2%) 2 – 3 times per season compared to Dodd Wood (13.8%).

**Question-. How often do you visit this osprey viewing facility (in this season)?**

	% respondents at each site		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	total
1 = most days	0	2.4	1.0
2 = 1-3 times per week	0.9	3.5	2.0
3 = 1-3 times per month	2.6	11.8	6.5
4 = 2=3 times per season	13.8	41.2	25.4
5 = 1 per season	82.8	41.2	65.2
Median Score	5 (once per season)	4 (2-3 times per season)	5 (once per season)

Nearly 45% of respondents at both Dodd Wood and Whinlatter stated that their visit was spontaneous. A small number of people (5.3% Dodd Wood and 1% at Whinlatter) identified having planned their visit for several years.

**Question - How long have you been planning to come here?**

	% respondents at each site		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	total
1 = spontaneous	44.7	44.8	44.5
2 = just recently	27.3	32.3	29.5
3 = within past few months	18.2	10.4	15.0
4 = within past year	4.5	11.5	7.5
5 = several years	5.3	1.0	3.5
Median Score	2 (just recently)	2 (just recently)	2 (just recently)

Less respondents (21.2%) identified watching the Osprey nestcam over the internet than those who did not (78.8 %). The average time span respondents identified that they had been watching the Osprey nestcam was 3.3years.

**Question - Have you been watching the nestcam over the internet?**

	% respondents		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	total
Yes	16.7	27.3	21.2
No	83.3	72.7	78.8

## Wildlife and Environment

Question - Have you seen any live osprey today?

Osprey viewed on day of visit	Number			Percent		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
Yes	112	2	114	84.8	2.0*	49.4
No	20	97	117	15.2	98.0	50.6
Total	132	99	231	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note – 5 people who visited Dodd and saw an Osprey also visited Whinlatter to view the osprey display. \*this figure does not count those who also went to Dodd.

Question - Did you see any red squirrels during your visit?

Red squirrels viewed on day of visit	Number			Percent		
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Total
Yes	24	7	114	18.2	7.1	49.4
No	108	92	117	81.8	92.9	50.6
Total	132	99	231	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Question –asked the different species seen and identified by visitors at the different sites - more details in appendices**

species group	Dodd		Whinlatter	
	Number	Counts	Number	Counts
birds	34	183	34	88
insects	6	7	0	0
mammals	4	15	3	8
reptiles	1	2	0	0
plants	0	0	3	3



## Visitor Perceptions of the Lake District Osprey Project volunteers

95.4% of respondents stated they had interacted with Volunteer Rangers at Dodd Wood, whilst 80.8% of respondents at Whinlatter said they had interacted with Volunteer Rangers. The data from this research offers a very positive picture of visitor perceptions of the Lake District Osprey project volunteers.

Respondents were asked to give a score out of 5 for their contact with volunteers whilst visiting the Osprey project. 5 out of 5 was the maximum score that could be attributed. As indicated in the table below the score out of 5 was very high at both Dodd Wood and also at Whinlatter.

Score for:	Median Score		Mean Score ( $\pm$ St. Dev.)	
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest
Volunteers	5	5	4.9 $\pm$ 0.3	4.7 $\pm$ 0.7

Note: Scale is 1-5, with 5 being best.

These scores indicated that the respondents had very positive perceptions of their contact with the Osprey project volunteers. Positive perceptions were also evident when respondents were asked the reason for the score that they had given for their contact with volunteers. Words that were frequently used by respondents to describe the volunteers at both the Dodd Wood and Whinlatter sites were

‘Friendly’, ‘helpful’, ‘knowledgeable’, ‘enthusiastic’, ‘interesting’, ‘approachable’, ‘informative’.

The information provided to visitors by the volunteers was seen as beneficial and adding to the visitor experience at both sites.

The quotes below are good examples of the visitor perceptions of the volunteers.

‘Pleasant, really important, they are here. Would not have found birds without them. Their explanation is key.’ (Dodd Wood Respondent)

‘Terrific, absolutely necessary’, ‘Don’t get this anywhere else.’ (Whinlatter Respondent).

These are just an example of some of the comments made by respondents. The data from this research clearly indicates successful communication between Lake District Osprey Project Volunteers and the visitors surveyed in this research.

## Perceptions of the information display panels

72.7% of participants viewed panels at Whinlatter. 93.9% of participants viewed panels at Dodd Wood.

Whilst the perceptions of the information display panels were high they did not score quite as highly as perceptions of the volunteers.

Score for:	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest
Information panels	4	5	4.3 ± 0.7	4.6 ± 0.7

Note: Scale is 1-5, with 5 being best.

When making suggestions for changes to the Lake District Osprey Project a couple of respondents at Dodd Wood said that they thought the signs should be repaired. These responses may have impacted on the score given for the information panels at Dodd Wood.

## **Suggested changes to the Lake District Osprey project**

Respondents were asked if they thought there were any changes that could be made to the project. The following issues were themes that have been identified across the responses given.

### **Parking:**

Cheaper parking and the availability of parking were the most frequently identified changes that the respondents thought would improve both the Dodd Wood and the Whinlatter experience. Some respondents thought that public transport to Whinlatter could be improved.

### **Access:**

At both sites, improvement in the access for disabled people was mentioned by a number of respondents. At Dodd Wood, respondents identified that more information at the carpark about the distance and the steepness of the trail, and also about the disability provision would be beneficial to those with limited mobility. At Whinlatter comments were made about the need to improve the disability access for children to the play area, and also for adults to the main centre building.

### **Improved Technology:**

A few respondents at Dodd Wood thought the nest site was too far away and at both sites respondents thought that an increase in the number of cameras on the nest would improve the experience, with the chance to zoom in and get closer images of the birds. Visitors to Whinlatter suggested a camera focused on the Red Squirrels would be a good addition to the experience.

### **Refreshments:**

Whilst the café at Whinlatter generally received positive comments, a few respondents thought that there should be refreshments available at the top of the Dodd Wood trail.

## The Overall Visitor Experience

As indicated in the table below the scores respondents gave for the overall visitor experience were high.

Score for:	Median Score		Mean Score ( $\pm$ St. Dev.)	
	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest	Dodd Wood	Whinlatter Forest
Overall experience	5	5	4.8 $\pm$ 0.5	4.7 $\pm$ 0.7

Note: Scale is 1-5, with 5 being best.

In the main the comments made by respondents about the overall experience of visiting the Lake District Osprey Project were favorable. At Dodd Wood respondents described their visit in the following ways:

‘Brilliant for ospreys’

‘Interesting, stunning,  
awesome’

‘Fantastic part of the country to visit any time of year with the bonus of seeing osprey’

‘Enjoyable atmosphere, landscape, knowledgeable people.’

‘Beautiful, saw wonderful birds, crossed some things off bucket list, been planning to come for two years.’

At Whinlatter respondents made the following comments about the overall experience:

‘Pleasant, informative, wunderbar. Excellent to encourage people to know about conservation and the environment.’

‘Brilliant – lucky to have this. A great help for the young to prompt interest in birds.’

‘Lovely in the forest, good fresh air, good toilets, clean, hot water.’

‘Good tea shop, good walking centre, added bonus is the Osprey.’

‘Coming here for years. Something for everyone, even if you are not interested in the Osprey there is a lot going on.’