

Appendix 1

Consultation on the introduction of Car Parking Charges at Lydiard and Coate Water Country Parks

Summary of key findings

Lydiard - 976 responses

1. A quarter of respondents visit Lydiard more than once a week, a quarter visit weekly, and a similar proportion once or twice a month.
2. The busiest times for visitors are weekend mornings and weekend afternoons. During the week, weekday mornings and afternoons are similarly busy. One in five visitors have no regular pattern of visiting.
3. Three quarters of visits last between one and three hours; only a few are shorter, or longer, than this. Those who visit on foot are more likely to stay for a shorter time, but even so most stay for between one and three hours. Those who visit most often are also more likely to stay for a shorter time, whilst those who only visit occasionally tend to stay for longer; but in all cases, the majority of people stay for between one and three hours.
4. More than four out of every five visitors to Lydiard arrive by car. Two thirds of the remainder come on foot, but few travel by bike or by bus.
5. Asked about the principle of introducing parking charges, 9% think this is a good idea, and a further 41% accept the need for it, even though they wish it wasn't necessary. On the other hand, 47% of those taking part in the survey oppose charges in principle, and half of those who object do so strongly.
6. If car parking charges were to be trialled at Lydiard, the preference is for a fixed amount for up to two hours, with more for a longer visit. Around half of those surveyed support this, whilst a third would prefer a fixed amount with no time limit. Only one in five want an hourly charge.
7. As to season tickets for parking, the preference is for a season ticket that covers both Lydiard and Coate, which appeals to half of all those who express an opinion. A third would like a season ticket system for Lydiard only, while one in four is willing to extend this privilege to people living outside the Borough.
8. The strong preference is for a per visit charge of less than £2; virtually nobody would be prepared to pay more than £3 for a visit, regardless of duration. For an annual season ticket, there is a strong preference for a charge of up to £50 a year, with virtually nobody interested in a charge exceeding £100.
9. Comments on parking focus strongly on the need to keep any charges low and affordable; several people make (varied) suggestions as to what a fair level of charge might be. There is also a strong view that the Council could, and should, work harder

to raise revenue from other areas of Lydiard, such as the cafe, or from events, and thus avoid the need to charge for parking.

10. A number of people, especially from among those participating in Parkrun, indicate that charges will affect their visiting.
11. There is also a significant concern that parking charges will result in on-street parking nearby, causing difficulties for residents in the vicinity. People also argue that, if charges are to be levied at Lydiard, the car park surface should be improved first.

Coate Water Country Park - 603 responses

12. Over two fifths of respondents to the consultation visit Coate at least once a week, and many visit more often than that. A quarter visit once or twice a month, and a quarter less often than that.
13. Respondents are most likely to visit weekend mornings and weekend afternoons. During the week, weekday mornings and afternoons are similarly busy. One in four visitors have no regular pattern of visiting.
14. Visits tend to last between one and three hours; few stay longer than this. Visitors on foot are more likely to pay a shorter visit to Coate, but even so most stay between one and three hours. Frequency of visiting has no impact on the length of stay, except that those who visit every day are more likely to spend a shorter time in the park.
15. More than four out of every five respondents arrive by car. Two thirds of the remainder come on foot, but few travel by bike or by bus.
16. Asked about the principle of introducing parking charges at Coate, 6% think this is a good idea, and a further 36% accept the need for it, even though they wish it wasn't necessary. On the other hand, over half of those taking part in the survey oppose charges in principle, and a third oppose the principle strongly
17. If car parking charges were to be trialled at Coate, the preference among those expressing an opinion is for a fixed amount for up to two hours, with more for a longer visit. Around two in five of those surveyed support this, whilst a third would prefer a fixed amount with no time limit. Only one in five want an hourly charge.
18. As to season tickets for parking, the preference is for a season ticket that covers both Lydiard and Coate, which appeals to nearly half of those expressing an opinion. A quarter would like a season ticket system for Coate only, while just one in eight is willing to extend this privilege to people living outside the Borough.
19. The strong preference is for a per visit charge of less than £1; virtually nobody would be prepared to pay more than £1.50 for a visit, regardless of duration. For an annual season ticket, there is a strong preference for a charge of up to £50 a year, although there appear to be a small minority who would be willing to pay over this.

20. Comments on parking suggest that the Council needs to consider alternative ways of raising revenue, such as an improved catering facility or more chargeable events at Coate. A major concern is the impact of charges on neighbouring streets, and several people point out that charges were trialled at Coate in the past and were abandoned, partly because of the effect on neighbours. There is also a feeling that the car park surface needs to be improved before charging is imposed.

1.0 Introduction and methodology

In February 2016 the Council began the process to seek a sustainable operating model for the future of Lydiard House and Park, within the council's ownership.

A consultation with users to understand any specific concerns, or how they might be affected by future changes was opened on the 22nd in February 2016, closing on 29th April 2016. The results of this consultation are being analysed to understand any specific concerns around how users could be affected by future changes and will inform Cabinet Members as part of their decision-making to seek a sustainable future for Lydiard House and Park.

Car Parking at Lydiard Park and Coate Water Country Park

The consultation also sought to seek the views of users, local residents and stakeholders on the introduction of car parking charges at Lydiard Park and also Coate Water Country Park which once implemented would raise at least £400,000 across all facilities in a full year.

Views from residents and users on different levels of charging were sought and this report provides an analysis of responses to these questions.

Promotion and Distribution

Separate consultations for Lydiard Park and Coate Water Country Park were advertised through the Council website as an online link, and also by the provision of paper self-completion questionnaires at both country parks and in local libraries. The consultations were also promoted at local events across the Borough, during February and March 2016.

Response

A total of 976 valid responses for Lydiard and 603 valid responses for Coate have been included in this analysis.

An accurate response rate is difficult to define because we cannot know how many people had the opportunity to respond but decided not to do so, however the respondent profile confirms that most respondents are visitors of either Lydiard or Coate Water Country Parks.

Not everyone answered every question, so the total number of responses for each question is shown as part of the data analysis. Guarantees of anonymity have been given to respondents, and care has been taken not to use any information provided in such a way as to allow a respondent to be identified from the data they supply. This includes the suppression of results where they are below 0.5%; these results are instead indicated with an asterisk (*).

Lydiard House and Park

2.0 Respondent Profile

2.1 Nature of interest in the consultation

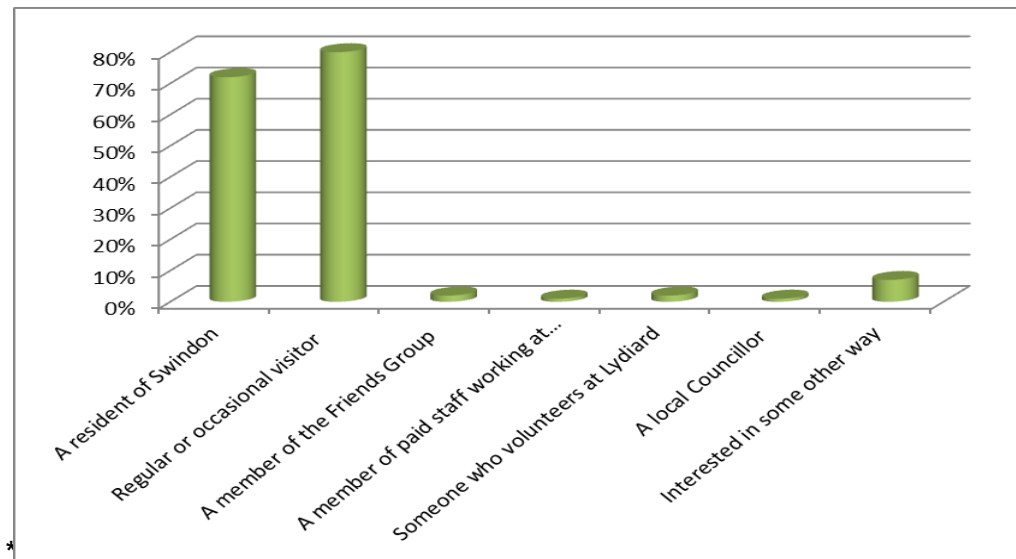
Respondents were invited to indicate the nature of their interest in the consultation, and respond as follows:

Table 1: Nature of interest in Lydiard consultation

Interest	Proportion of respondents
A resident of Swindon	72%
Someone who visits Lydiard, either regularly or occasionally	80%
A member of the Friends Group	2%
A member of paid staff working at Lydiard	1%
Someone who volunteers at Lydiard	2%
A local Councillor	1%
Interested in some other way	7%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>970</i>

+ Multiple answers were invited for this question so percentages will not sum to 100%

Chart 1: Nature of interest in Lydiard consultation

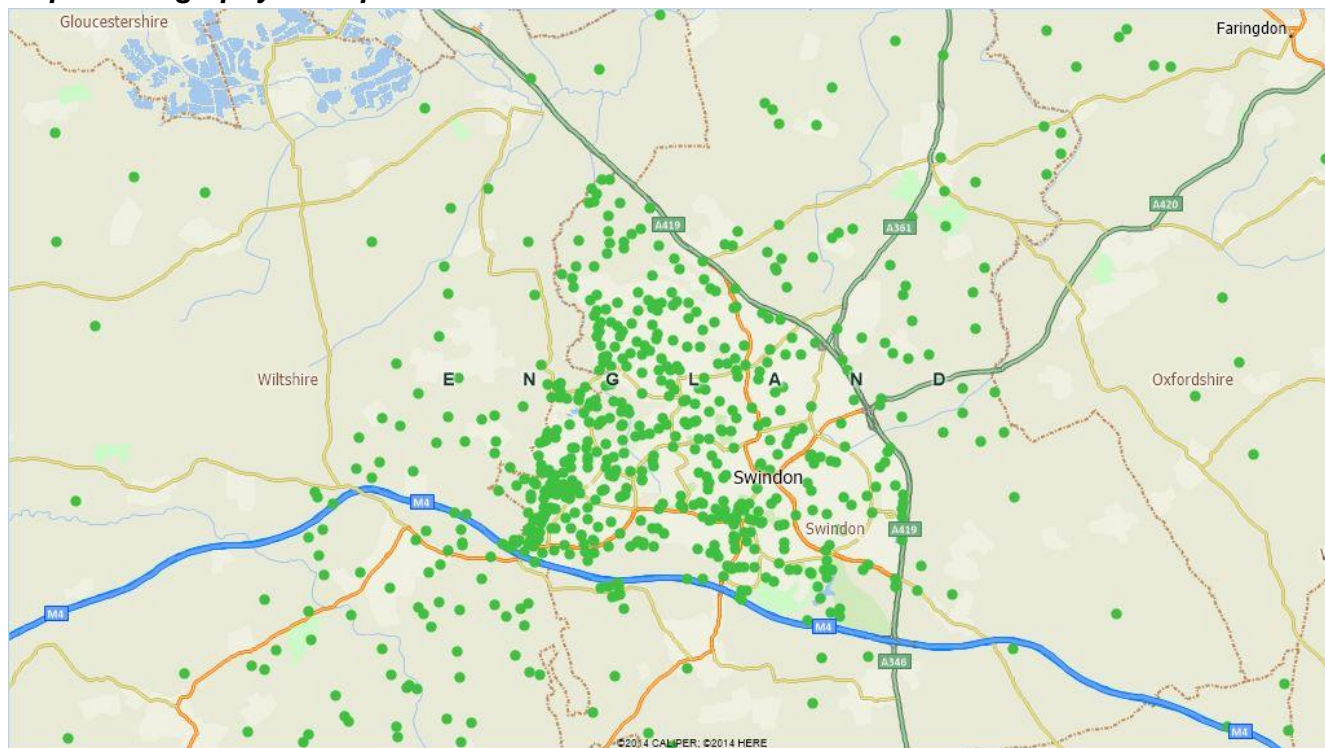


Almost three quarters of respondents identify themselves as local residents, and four fifths are visitors of Lydiard. There are also some responses from staff, volunteers and local Councillors. Those who indicated an interest in the survey in other ways were mainly providing more detail about their purpose for visiting i.e. Parkrun, 'dog walker', 'visitor', and among these were a small number of responses on behalf of local organisations.

2.2 Geography

Respondents were asked to supply a postcode, and those who gave enough information in this respect (774 respondents) have been included in the map below:

Map 1: Geography of response



The pattern of response is from all over Swindon, as well as from more outlying areas. The response is especially concentrated in the west of the Borough, with strong response from North Swindon and the central areas. However, there is a more limited response from Eastern Swindon, with only patchy participation from Parks, Walcot, and Covingham, and also little response from Highworth. A larger map would show responses from as far away as Newport, West London and even Brighton.

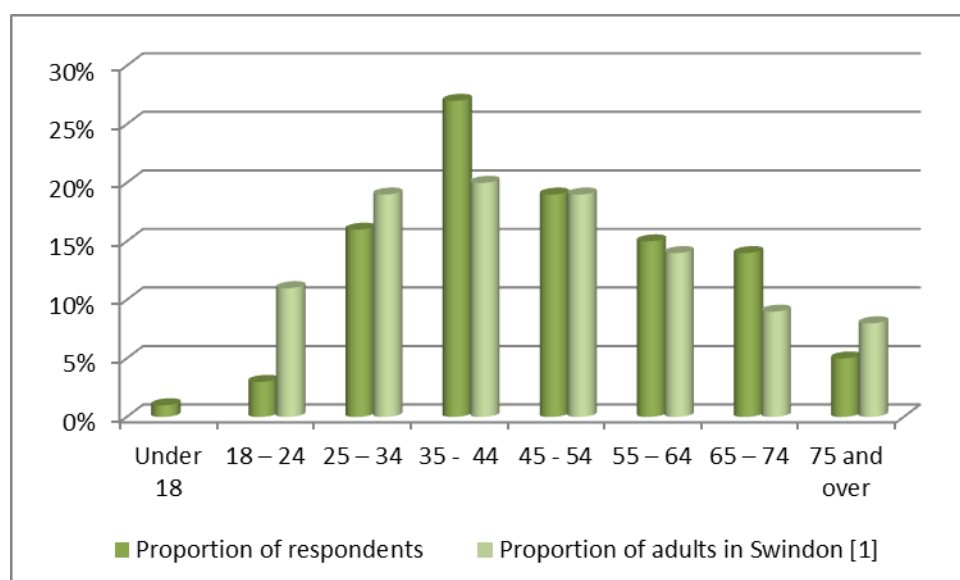
2.3 Age

Respondents were asked to disclose their age, and the results have been grouped into broad age bands, as in this table:

Table 2: Respondent age

Age-group	Proportion of respondents	Proportion of adults in Swindon ¹
Under 18	1%	
18 – 24	3%	11%
25 – 34	16%	19%
35 - 44	27%	20%
45 - 54	19%	19%
55 – 64	15%	14%
65 – 74	14%	9%
75 and over	5.%	8%
<i>N (=100%)</i>		<i>162,633</i>

Chart 2: Respondent age



There are respondents from all age-groups, but there are significantly more respondents in the 35 – 44 and 55- 74 age ranges, and fewer in the youngest and oldest age groups than is reflected in the Borough population as a whole².

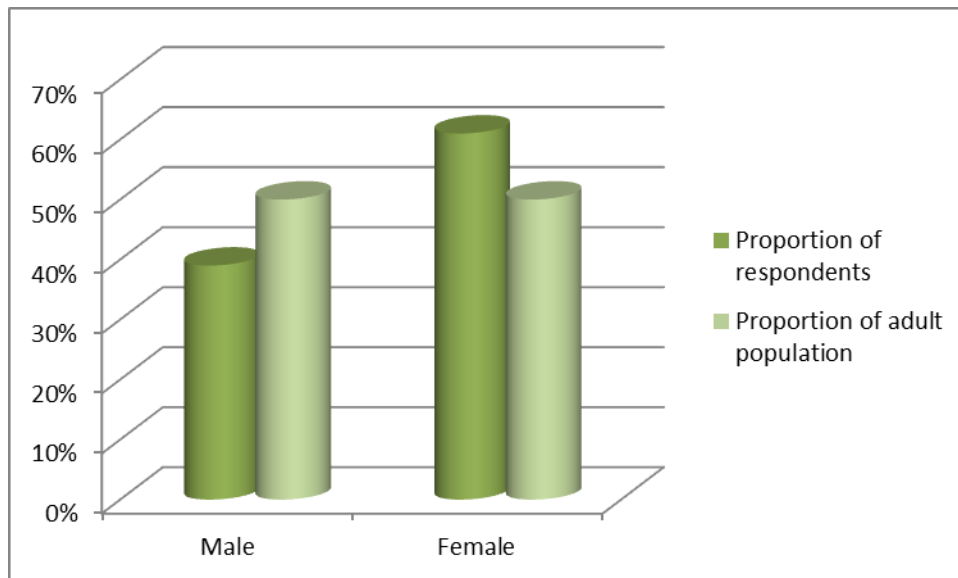
¹ All population data in this chapter are drawn from Neighbourhood Statistics, 2011 Census, for the Borough of Swindon. *

2.4 Gender

Table 3: Respondent Gender

Gender	Proportion of respondents	Proportion of adult population
Male	39%	50%
Female	61%	50%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>874</i>	<i>162,633</i>

Chart 3: Respondent gender



Two fifths of respondents are male, while three fifths are female. In the adult population, there is an even split between males and females in the Borough, so the survey response includes a much higher proportion of females than might be inferred from population data.

² This comparison is not strictly accurate, due to the presence in the survey response of a small number of non-adults; but the picture of uneven response across adult age-groups is nevertheless clear.

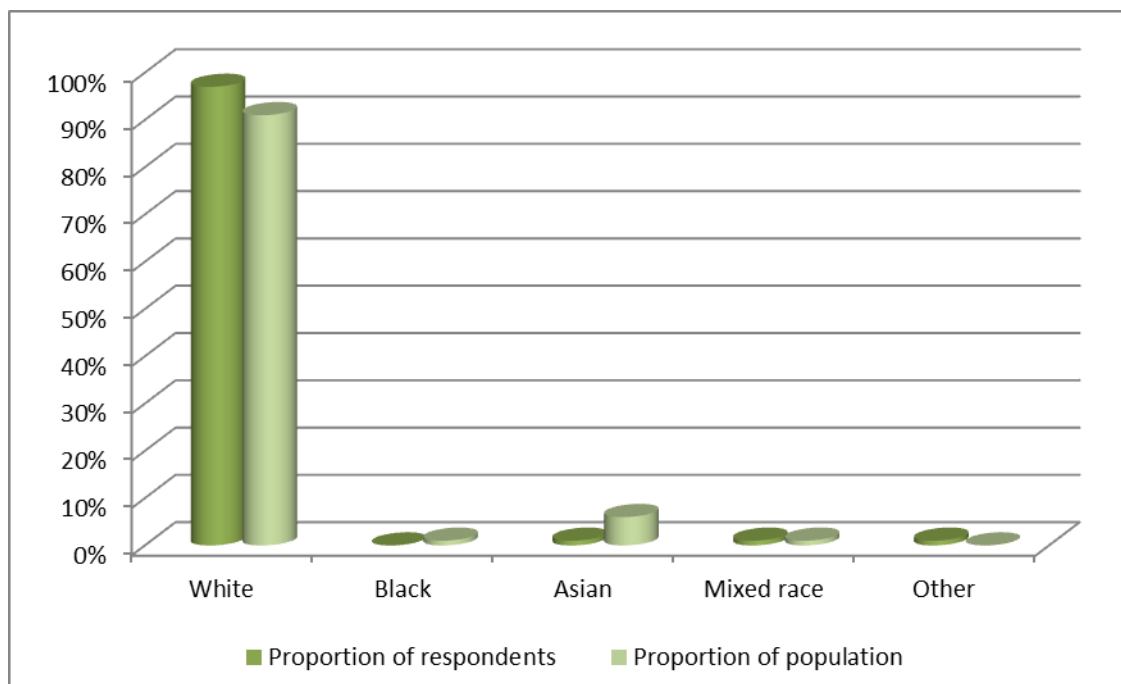
2.5 Ethnicity

Ethnic group as indicated by respondents is shown here:

Table 4: Respondent ethnicity

Ethnicity	Proportion of respondents	Proportion of population
White	97%	91%
Black	*	1%
Asian	1%	6%
Mixed race	1%	1%
Other	1%	*
<i>N</i> (=100%)	852	162,633

Chart 4: Respondent ethnicity



The response is heavily concentrated in the white population of the Borough; 97% of responses come from this part of the community. Other ethnicities are represented although these are proportionately fewer than might have been expected from their presence in the local population.

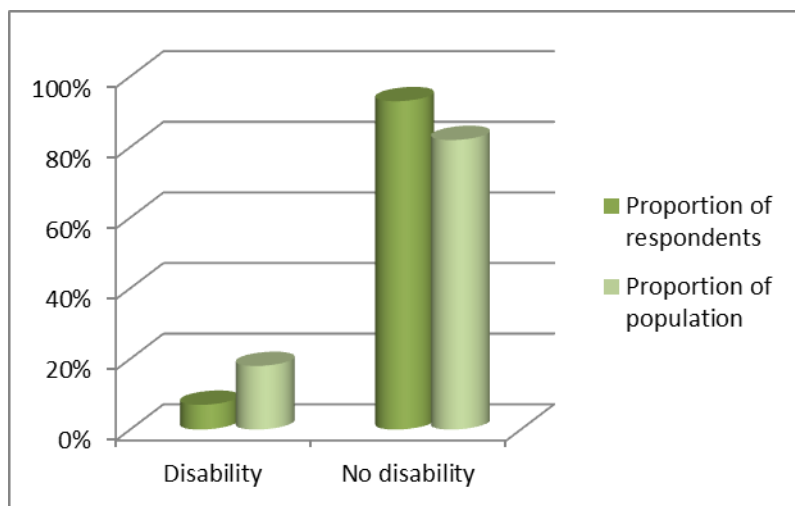
2.6 Disability

Levels of disability in the response are shown in this table:

Table 5: Do you consider yourself to have a disability that limits your outdoor activity?

	Proportion of respondents	Proportion of adult population ³
Disability	7%	18%
No disability	93%	82%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>857</i>	<i>167,744</i>

Chart 5: Respondent disability



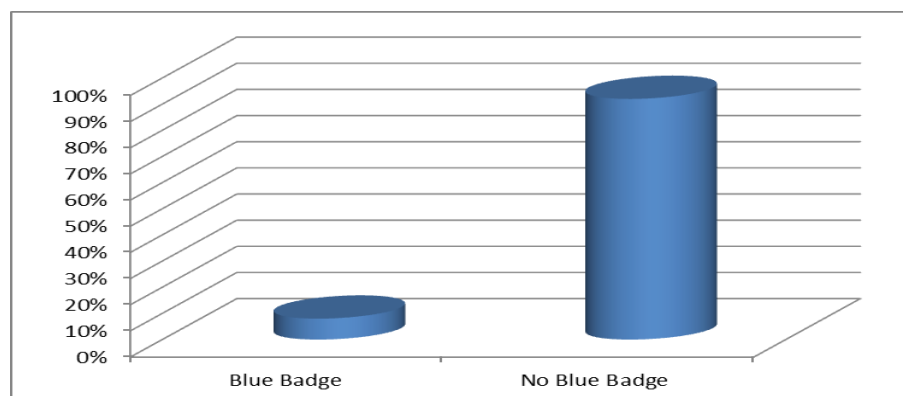
³ The Swindon adult population base used here is aged 16 plus, this column actually includes 16 and 17 year olds as well as adults, hence the slightly higher base number than in other comparisons we have made. Also the 2011 Census question asked about 'long-term health problem or disability' which limits day to day activities' so is used as a proxy rather than direct comparison.

Less than one in ten respondents identify themselves as having some form of disability. This is lower than would be expected from the general population data, but is likely to reflect the smaller proportion of people aged over 75 in the age profile and may also be influenced by the number of Park Runners in the response. The figure is similar to those indicating that they hold a 'Blue Badge' although there are slightly more in this category, indicating that some respondents are likely to be drivers for blue badge holders rather than disabled themselves.

Table 6: Blue Badge Holder

	Proportion of respondents
Blue Badge	8%
No Blue Badge	92%
<i>N</i> (=100%)	865

Chart 6: Blue Badge Holders



2.7 Working status

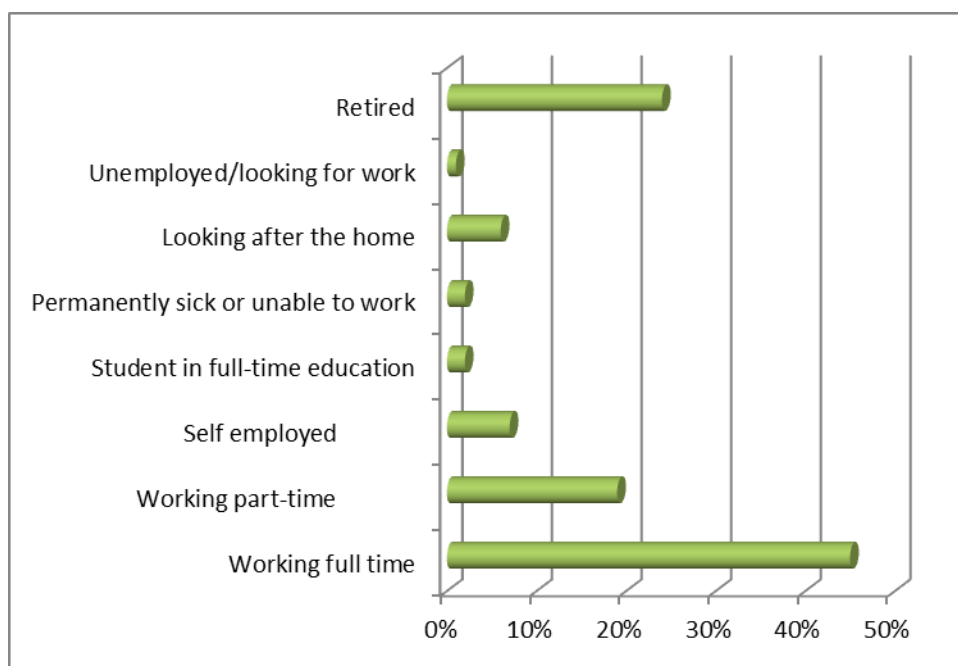
The working status of respondents is shown in this table:

Table 7: Working status

Employment status	Proportion of respondents
Working full time	45%
Working part-time	19%
Self employed	7%
Student in full-time education	2%
Permanently sick or unable to work	2%
Looking after the home	6%
Unemployed/looking for work	1%
Retired	24%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>874</i>

+ Multiple answers were invited for this question so percentages will not sum to 100%

Chart 7: Respondent working status



One in seven respondents to the survey are working in some form; Over two fifths work full-time, and one fifth part-time, with a small group of self-employed people making this group add up to 71% of respondents. A quarter of the remainder are retired people.

3.0 Visiting Lydiard

3.1 Frequency of visits to Lydiard

Respondents were asked how often they visit Lydiard Country Park. The results are shown here:

Table 8: How often, if at all do you visit Lydiard?

	Proportion of respondents
This was my first visit	2%
Nearly every day	4%
At least 4-5 times a week	4%
2-3 times a week	16%
Once a week	25%
1-2 times a month	25%
A few times a year	22%
Less often	2%
Never visit	1%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	966

The majority of respondents are regular visitors to Lydiard. A quarter of respondents visit more than once a week, a quarter visit weekly, and a similar proportion once or twice a month. A fifth visit a few times a year but few less often than that. A small number were making their first visit but very few were contributing to the consultation having never visited at all.

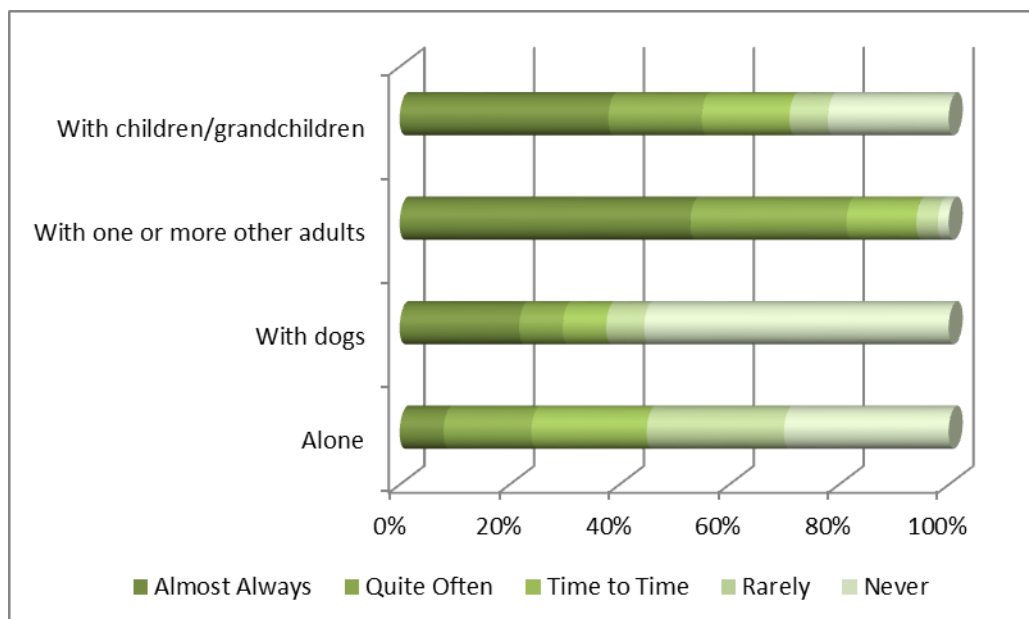
3.2 Visitor type

Respondents were asked to indicate who they visit Lydiard with and how often. The answers to this question are shown below but it should be noted that these categories are not mutually exclusive, all respondents were asked to provide an answer regarding each visitor grouping.

Table 9: When you visit, do you visit.....?

	Proportion of respondents					
	Almost Always	Quite Often	Time to Time	Rarely	Never	N (=100%)
Alone	8%	16%	21%	25%	30%	757
With dogs	22%	8%	8%	7%	56%	756
With one or more other adults	54%	29%	13%	4%	2%	894
With children/grandchildren	38%	17%	16%	7%	22%	862

Chart 8 : Visitor groups



Four fifths of respondents (83%) visit say they almost always or often visit with one or more other adults, over half visit almost always or often visit with children (54%) , almost a third

(30%) visit most often with dogs and quarter (24%) say they almost always or most often visit alone.

In terms of answers to this question by different demographic groups almost a third of male respondents (31%) said they visit alone, almost always or often, compared with one fifth (20%) of female respondents. Whilst the main pattern of visiting across both genders is with other adults, three fifths (63%) of females report almost always or often visiting with children, compared to two fifths (44%) of male respondents. .

The number of disabled respondents is relatively small so it is difficult to establish significant differences although slightly fewer report visiting regularly with children (43%), and a slightly higher proportion than the survey average say they almost always or most often with dogs (39%).

Differences in visitor patterns by age of the respondent are not especially marked except amongst respondents aged 35 – 44 – these are most likely to be visiting (almost always or most often) with children. Three fifths of this age group do compared with two fifths of the sample as a whole. Older age groups also visit with children/grandchildren but do so less regularly; a quarter of those aged 55 – 74 (23%) say they visit with children 'from time to time'.

3.3 Timing of visits to Lydiard

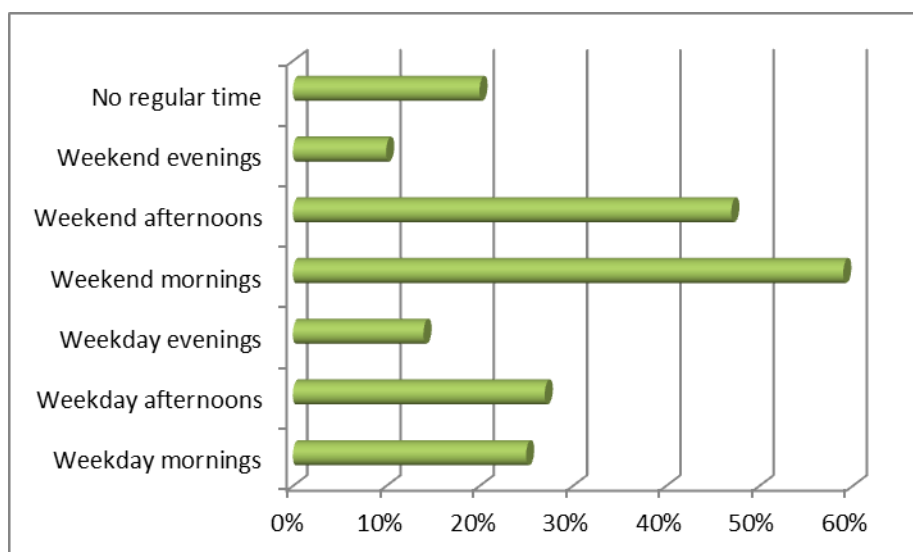
This table shows the times of day that respondents generally visit Lydiard.

Table 10: And at what times of day do you generally visit?

Timing	Proportion of respondents
Weekday mornings	25%
Weekday afternoons	27%
Weekday evenings	14%
Weekend mornings	59%
Weekend afternoons	47%
Weekend evenings	10%
No regular time	20%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>940</i>

+ Multiple answers were invited for this question so percentages will not sum to 100%

Chart 9: Respondent visiting patterns



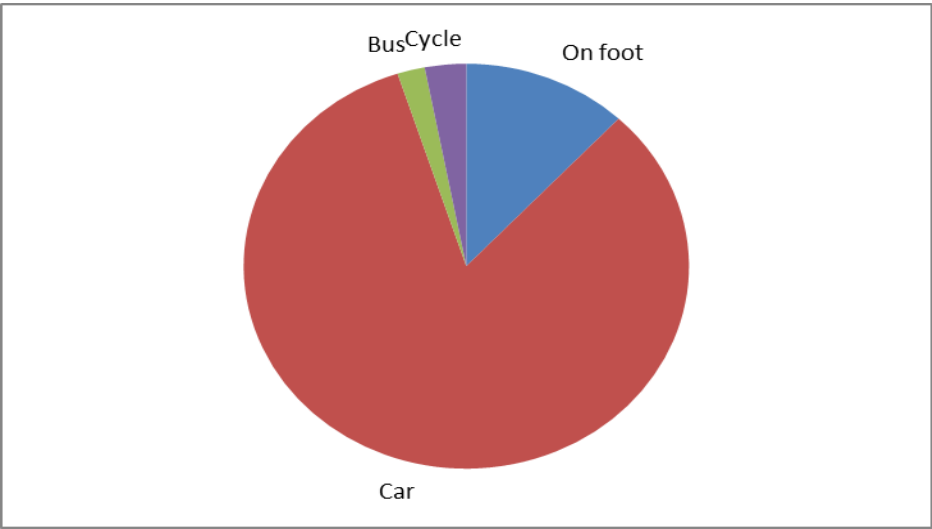
Respondents are most likely to visit weekend mornings and weekend afternoons. During the week, weekday mornings and afternoons are similarly busy. One in five visitors have no regular pattern of visiting.

3.4 Travel

Table 11: Usual mode of travel to Lydiard

Mode	Proportion of respondents
On foot	12%
Car	83%
Bus	2%
Cycle	3%
Other	*
N (=100%)	920

Chart 10: Respondent usual mode of travel to Lydiard



More than four out of every five visitors to Lydiard arrive by car. Two thirds of the remainder come on foot, but few travel by bike or by bus.

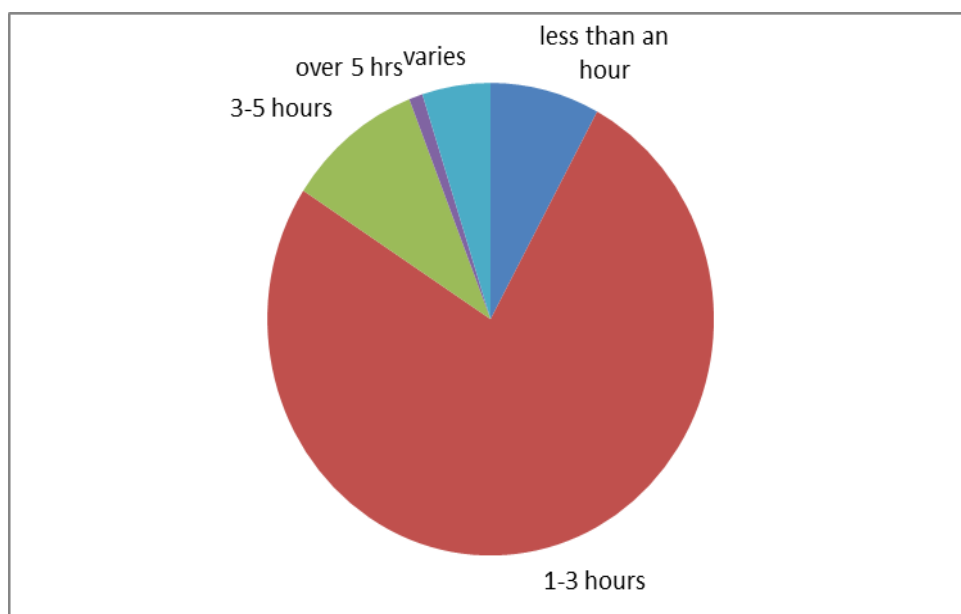
In terms of gender, more male respondents travel on foot or by cycle than females. There is no particular pattern among respondents by age group, but people with disabilities are more likely to report travelling by car or by bus.

3.5 Length of visit

Table 12: Usual length of visit at Lydiard

	Proportion of respondents
less than an hour	8%
1-3 hours	77%
3-5 hours	10%
over 5 hrs	1%
Varies	5%
N (=100%)	929

Chart 11: Usual length of visit



Three quarters of visits last between one and three hours; only a few are shorter, or longer, than this. Those who visit on foot are more likely to stay for a shorter time, but even so most stay for between one and three hours. Those who visit most often are also more likely to stay for a shorter time, whilst those who only visit occasionally tend to stay for longer; but in all cases, the majority of people stay for between one and three hours.

4.0 Car Parking at Lydiard⁴

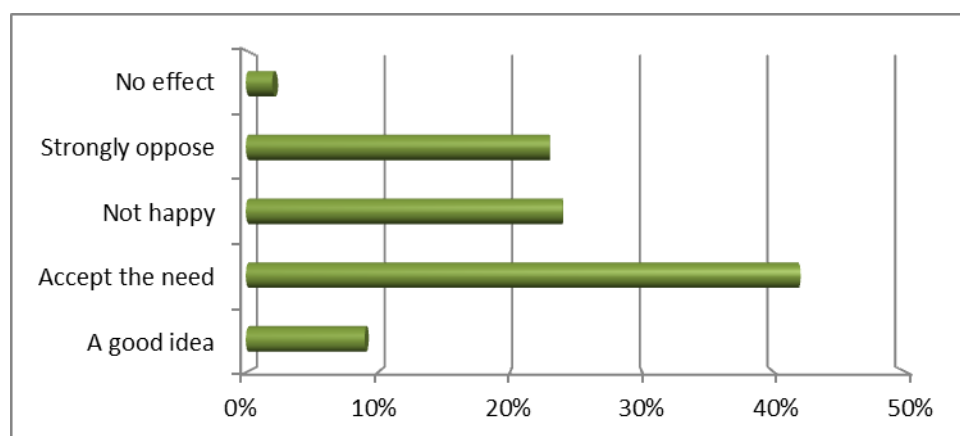
4.1 The principle of charging

Table 13: Respondents views on the principle of introducing car park charges

	Proportion of respondents
A good idea	9%
Accept the need	41%
Not happy	24%
Strongly oppose	23%
No effect	3%
N (=100%)	877

⁴ Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding

Chart 12 Respondent views on principle of introducing car park charges at Lydiard



About half of all respondents express acceptance of the principle of charging at Lydiard, but just one in eleven respondents think this is a good idea. Most of those who accept the principle do so with a degree of reluctance, and wish that this was not necessary. The other half of respondents are discontent about charging, and half of these express strong opposition, while the remainder want the Council to look at alternative revenue-raising measures at Lydiard.

The principle of charging is more likely to be accepted, or welcomed, by those who visit less often. Objections to charging are highest among those who visit at least weekly, but reduce among those who visit less often; those who visit fortnightly, or less frequently, are more likely to accept the principle of charging, albeit reluctantly.

People making shorter visits are more likely to oppose charges. Over half (56%) of those who visit for less than an hour are opposed to charging, and a third of this group are strongly opposed.

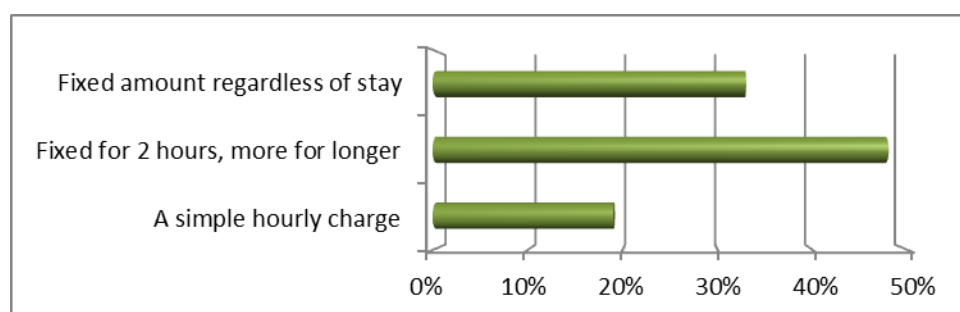
Older respondents tend to be more accepting of the possibility of charging, with three in five (62%) of over 65s either supporting or accepting the principle. Those who are more negative about the principle of charging are concentrated most heavily among those of working age, and opposition falls away quite sharply among those of retirement age. People with disabilities reflect the overall picture, with no significant differences, but those who have blue badges are slightly more accepting of the principle of charging. Men and women accept and oppose in equal measure, but men tend to feel more strongly about the issue.

4.2 The basis for a trial

Table 14: Respondents views on charging periods for the trial

	Proportion of respondents
A simple hourly charge	19%
Fixed for 2 hours, more for longer	48%
Fixed amount regardless of stay	34%
Total response	747

Chart 13: Respondent views on charging periods for the trial



The most popular option is for a fixed fee for a stay of up to two hours, with additional charges for longer stays; half of those who responded to this question select this option. A third think a fixed charge regardless of stay would be their preference, while one in five select the simple hourly charge.

Those who think charging is a good idea are strongly in favour of a charge fixed for 2 hours, with additional payment for longer; three in five (60%) support this option. The same is true of those who accept the need for charging (52%), and to a lesser extent those who are unhappy and want the Council to look elsewhere (45%). Those who strongly oppose charges, however, tend to prefer a fixed amount regardless of time spent, with two in five (42%) favouring this option.

A simple hourly charge is more likely to be preferred by those who visit most frequently, while those who visit less than twice a month are more likely to favour the other two options. Apart from those who visit every day, the preference across the board is for a fixed amount for two hours, with additional charges for longer stays. Those who make short visits are much more supportive of a simple hourly charge, but those whose stay is longer prefer the other options: those who stay for between 1-3 hours tend to like the fixed amount for two hours, but those staying for longer tend towards the fixed amount regardless of length of stay.

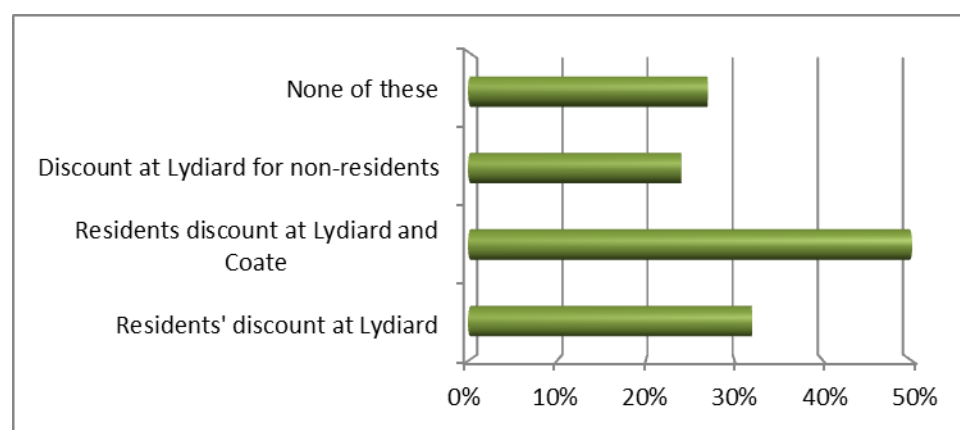
There is no pattern as regards age-group opinions on this question, although there are indications that under 35s are a little more likely to prefer a simple hourly charge, and are less enthusiastic about a fixed amount for 2 hours. People with disabilities are less likely to support a fixed amount for two hours with additional charges for longer stays, and more likely to choose a fixed amount regardless of length of stay.

4.3 Season tickets

Table 15: Respondents views on the introduction of season tickets

	Proportion of respondents
Residents' discount at Lydiard	32%
Residents discount at Lydiard and Coate	50%
Discount at Lydiard for non-residents	24%
None of these	27%
Total response	812

Chart 14 Respondent views on the introduction of season tickets



The most popular option is for a residents' discount at both Lydiard and Coate; half of those who respond suggest this choice. A third suggest a discounted price for visits to Lydiard, and a quarter would extend the discount advantage to non-residents willing to pay the fee. However, a quarter of those who respond want none of these options.

Lydiard only season tickets are more popular among those who visit frequently, and their popularity wanes as frequency diminishes. However, joint season tickets are reasonably popular regardless of frequency of visit. A non-resident discount is more popular with Lydiard regulars, but those who visit most often are also the most likely to reject all the options offered in the question; a third (31%) of those who visit between 2 and 5 times a week say they want none of these choices.

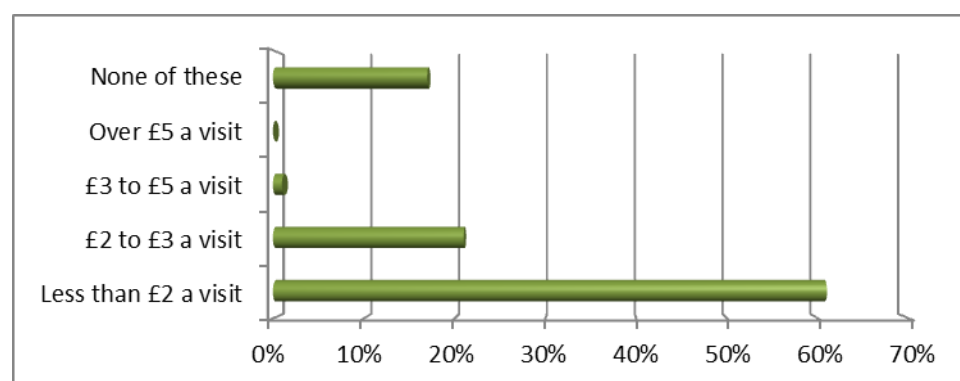
Those who dislike all three options are primarily younger residents, under the age of 35, but age differences are not especially marked. People with disabilities are more likely to prefer a 'Lydiard only' season ticket, and are a little less supportive of visitors being given this privilege.

4.4 Views on reasonable charges for a single visit

Table 16: Respondents' views on 'reasonable charges' for car parking

	Proportion of respondents
Less than £2 a visit	61%
£2 to £3 a visit	21%
£3 to £5 a visit	1%
Over £5 a visit	0%
None of these	17%
Total response	857

Chart 15: Respondent views on reasonable charges' for car parking



One in six people say no charge should be made, but among those who accept the idea of a charge the most popular solution is a parking fee of less than £2 a visit; this option is chosen by three in five people overall, and three quarters of those who are willing to pay. Almost everyone else opts for the £2 to £3 choice, and there is virtually nobody willing to pay more than £3 for a visit to Lydiard.

The preference for a low charge arises regardless of the frequency with which people visit, but willingness to pay more than £2 is most likely among first-time visitors and those who visit less than once a month. Rejection of all charging options is greatest among those who visit several times a week. Similarly, those who make short visits of less than an hour are

those most supportive of a charge of less than £2, and also the most likely to reject all the charging options offered in the question.

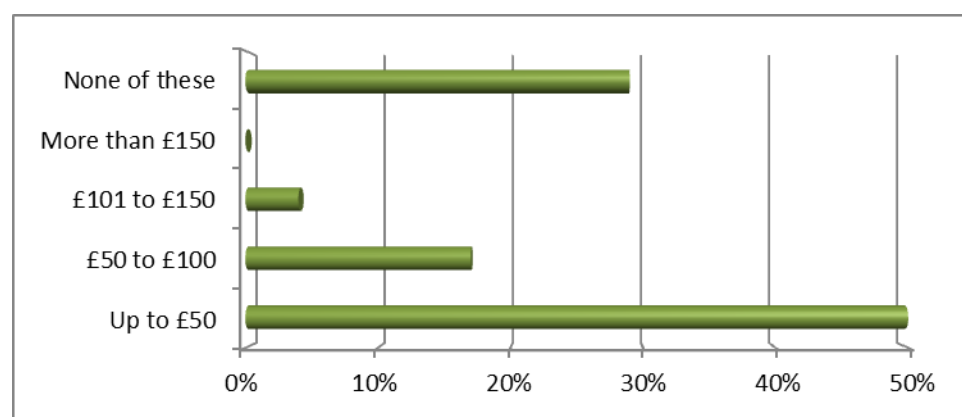
Differences of opinion by the age of the respondent are not especially significant, except that the oldest residents are also the most supportive of lower levels of charge, while 45-74s are the most likely to oppose charges altogether. People with disabilities are also less likely to favour charges above £2, and more likely to support none of the options offered.

4.5 Views on reasonable charges for an annual season ticket at Coate and Lydiard

Table 17 respondents' views on 'reasonable charges' for an annual season ticket at both venues

	Proportion of respondents
Up to £50	50%
£50 to £100	17%
£101 to £150	4%
More than £150	0%
None of these	29%
Total response	787

Chart 16: 'Reasonable charges' for an annual season ticket at both venues



As to an annual season ticket charge covering both parks, over a quarter of respondents reject all the options. Among those who accept a charge, the most popular option by some distance is the lowest figure, of up to £50; half of respondents, and over two thirds of those willing to pay, suggest this figure. Most of the remainder choose the £50 to £100 option, and although there are a handful of people willing to pay more, this is rejected by the vast majority.

Again, the preference for a low charge occurs regardless of the frequency with which people visit; even among those who visit least often, and where a season ticket might have less value, the preference is to keep charges low. Rejection of all the charging options on the question is highest among the most frequent visitors to the park, who would be expected to gain most from a season ticket but would prefer to avoid charges altogether. The lowest charge finds favour regardless of the length of an individual's stay, but there is no significant variation in the proportions rejecting all charges.

Opposition to all options is highest among 26-34 year-olds, while support for the lowest level of annual charge is higher among younger residents. Those aged over 75 are more likely to choose the £50 to £100 option than their younger counterparts. People with disabilities are very likely to reject all the options, with two in five (41%) doing so, while a similar proportion (39%) choose the lowest level of season ticket fee.

In all, two in five respondents (39%) say the charges should be the lowest option for both a one-off payment and for an annual ticket. Two thirds of respondents (65%) choose a permutation of a per visit charge of less than £3 and an annual charge of less than £100. One in six (16%) reject both sets of charges and say 'None of these' to both questions, leaving a small proportion willing to pay more than £3 per visit and more than £100 for an annual season.

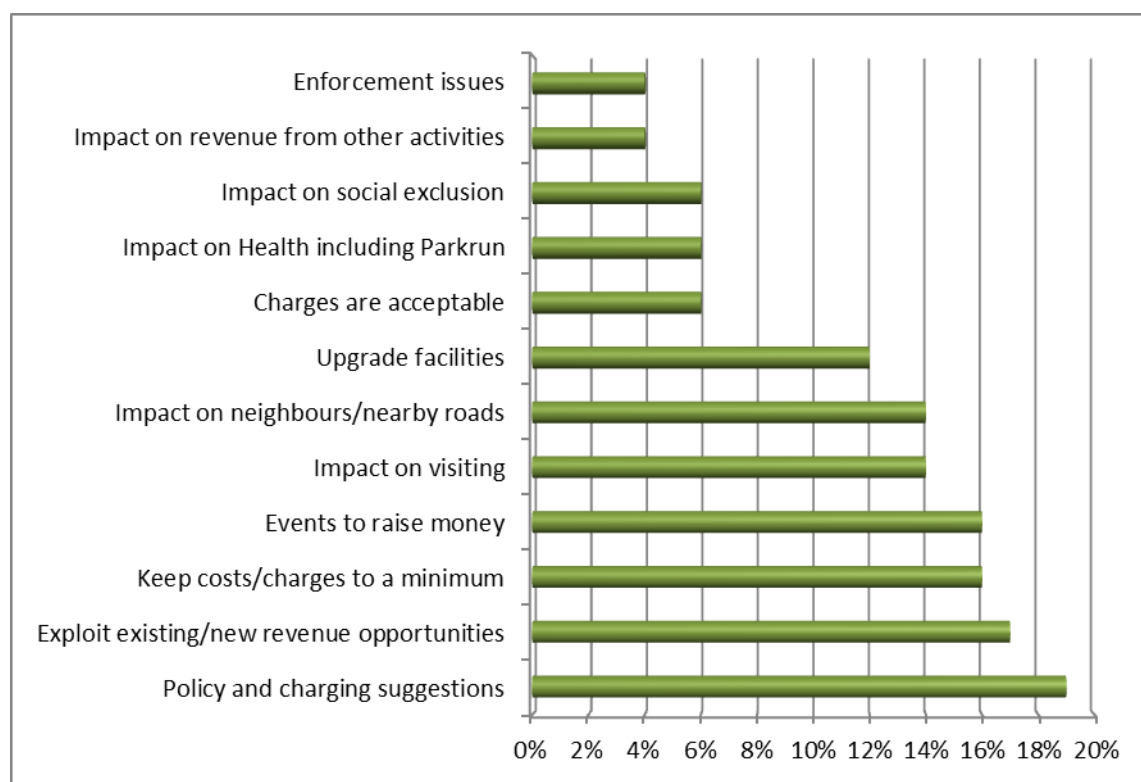
4.6 Comments and Observations

Respondents were invited to add any further comments they wished concerning car parking or income generation at Lydiard, and several did so. Their answers have been analysed according to the broad theme they raise, and grouped accordingly. Many residents have more than one observation to make, so the total number of comments exceeds the numbers of those making a comment. Only those areas of comment identified by more than twenty people are included in the table.

Table 18: Comments on car parking/income generation

	No. of comments	Proportion of those making a comment
Policy and charging suggestions	101	19%
Exploit existing/new revenue opportunities	90	17%
Keep costs/charges to a minimum	87	16%
Events to raise money	85	16%
Impact on visiting	76	14%
Impact on neighbours/nearby roads	75	14%
Upgrade facilities	65	12%
Charges are acceptable	34	6%
Impact on Health including Parkrun	31	6%
Impact on social exclusion	31	6%
Impact on revenue from other activities	23	4%
Enforcement issues	20	4%
Total numbers commenting	538	

Chart 17: Comments on car parking/income generation



The most frequent area of comment is a set of alternative suggestions as to the policy or level of charges to be applied to Lydiard. One in five respondents has an alternative suggestion to make. These include the idea of a free or nominal cost first hour, or two hours, so as to cater for local dog walkers, runners and joggers, and not discourage those making frequent but shorter visits, as well as suggestions for seasonal variations to reduce the cost of a winter visit, or variations according to the day of the visit.

People also ask for options as to ways to pay; several point out that those coming to run at Lydiard often bring no cash, and payment by card or phone would be welcomed. There are questions as to free passes for employees and/or volunteers working in the park, and about the possibility of parking charges being redeemable against spend in the park. Some people also ask the Council to compare its ideas with charges elsewhere, such as at Bowood, and to compare the cost of an annual season ticket with the price of National Trust membership, which includes free parking at a large number of similar properties.

Several respondents ask the Council to ensure that charges for parking at Lydiard are kept as low as possible, or dropped from consideration. A much smaller number, on the other hand, think charges for parking at Lydiard are acceptable in principle. There are several people, including a number who live in the vicinity of Lydiard, who think the natural consequence of charges will be an increased level of parking on nearby streets, to the detriment of local quality of life. Some add that the cost of enforcement, or of collection, will significantly erode any revenue gain to be made from charges.

A large number of respondents ask the Council to look more fully at the existing facilities in Lydiard and to develop these to exploit their fundraising potential more fully. Chief among these is the catering offer, which many feel could be improved considerably, and used to

generate both increased footfall within the cafes and even higher prices for better quality product and environment. Plant propagation and sales are among suggestions made here, as are charges for barbecues. There are also other suggestions about revenue raising, such as the increased use of the park for events where a charge is made, including concerts, open-air theatre, country fairs, shows and the like.

There is also a view that charging for parking should, or must, be accompanied by improvements in the parking facilities at Lydiard, with surface improvements, bay marking and expansion of provision all included here.

Adverse consequences from parking charges also focus on the use of Lydiard for Parkrun at the weekend. This is a popular activity that attracts a wide level of participation, which some say will fall away if charges (or excessive charges) are made; some respondents note the impact of introducing charges at another Parkrun site, at Stoke Gifford, and say their participation will be likely to fall away if they have to pay to take part. There are views that this in turn will have an adverse impact on a healthy activity which people feel the Council should be encouraging and supporting. There is also some concern the charges will also potentially discourage those whose economic circumstances are straitened from enjoying Lydiard, and from participating in activities like Parkrun, widening inequalities locally.

One in seven of those making comments say that the introduction of charges for parking will have an adverse effect on levels of visiting at Lydiard, and some suggest that other activities within Lydiard, such as catering, ice-cream sales and so on, will suffer accordingly from loss of footfall. Some visitors from further afield say they have alternative destinations which may become preferable if Lydiard is charged for; some local people say they will no longer visit, either because they can't afford to pay, or because they object strongly enough to boycott the venue, and some question whether a drop in visiting has been factored into the Council's calculations.

Coate Water Country Park

5.0 Respondent Profile

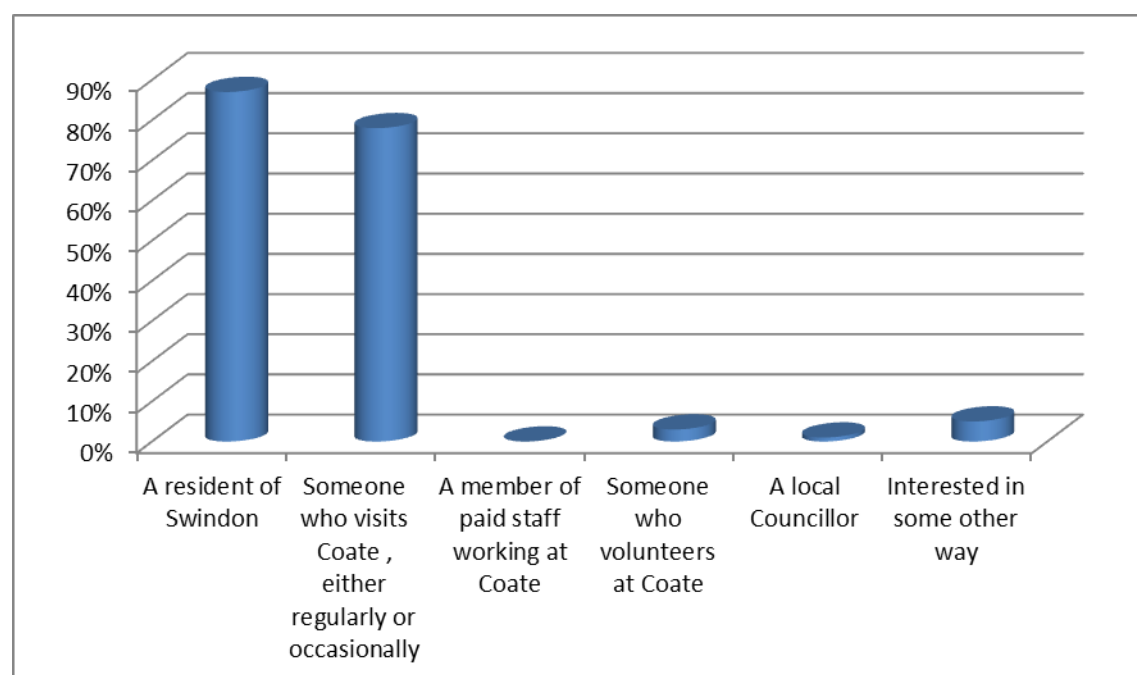
5.1 Nature of interest in the consultation

Respondents were invited to indicate the nature of their interest in the consultation, and responded as follows:

Table 19: Nature of interest in Coate consultation

Interest	Proportion of respondents
A resident of Swindon	87%
Someone who visits Coate , either regularly or occasionally	78%
A member of paid staff working at Coate	*
Someone who volunteers at Coate	3%
A local Councillor	1%
Interested in some other way	5%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	598

Chart 18: Nature of interest in Coate consultation

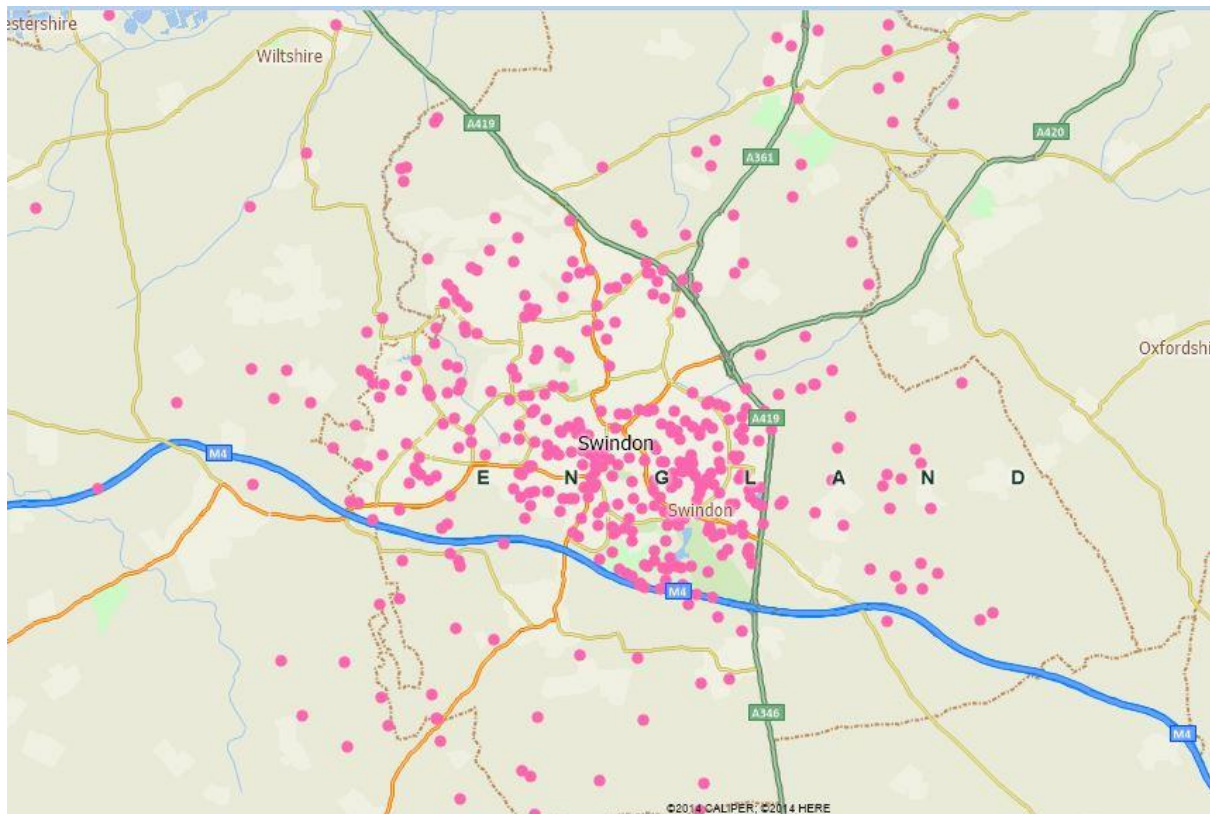


Almost nine in ten respondents identify themselves as local residents, and four fifths are visitors of Lydiard. Small numbers of volunteers and local Councillors (Council and Parish) are also present. Those interested in the survey in other ways were mainly providing more detail about their purpose for visiting i.e. runner/Shin Splints', 'wildlife' etc, and among these there were a small number of responses on behalf of local organisations.

:

5.2 Geography

Respondents were asked to supply a postcode, and those who gave enough information in this respect (478 respondents) have been included in the map below:



The map shows responses from all over Swindon and further afield as well, showing that Coate is a Borough-wide facility, although it has to be noted that response from North and West Swindon is more patchy, and there is little response from Penhill/Gorse Hill, or from Highworth. In contrast, there is a concentration of response in the central area and the southeast of the Borough, with the density of response increasing with proximity to the park itself. Covingham, Liden, Parks and Old Town all appear well represented in the response.

5.3 Age

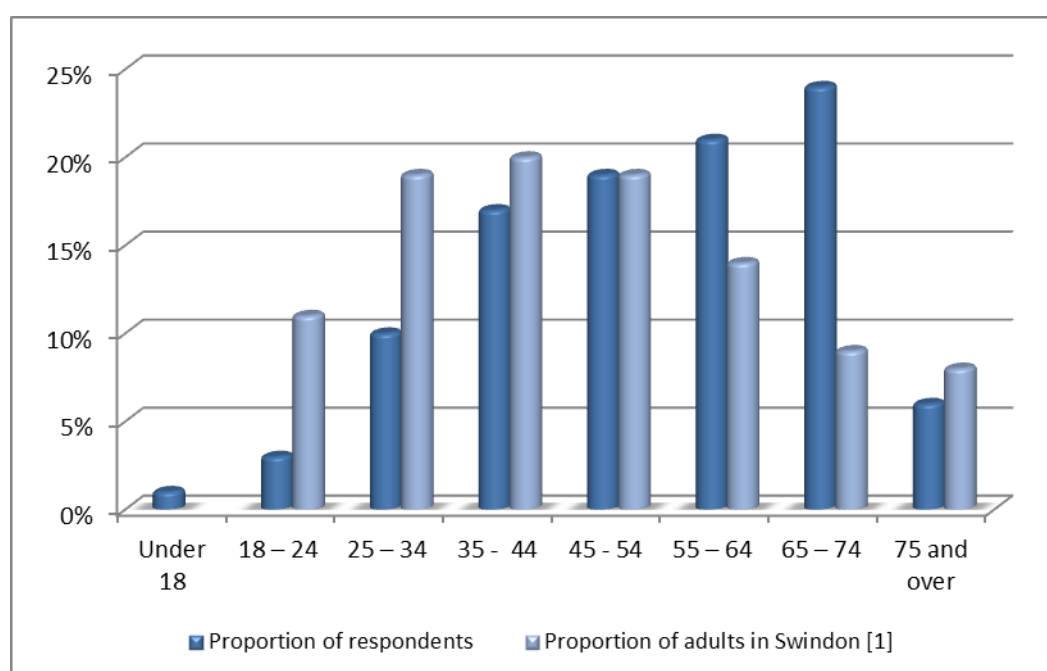
Respondents were asked to disclose their age, and the results have been grouped into broad age bands, as in this table:

Table 20: Respondent age

Age-group	Proportion of respondents	Proportion of adults in Swindon ⁵
Under 18	1%	
18 – 24	3%	11%
25 – 34	10%	19%
35 - 44	17%	20%
45 - 54	19%	19%
55 – 64	21%	14%
65 – 74	24%	9%
75 and over	6%	8%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>540</i>	<i>162,633</i>

⁵ All population data in this chapter are drawn from Neighbourhood Statistics, 2011 Census, for the Borough of Swindon. This comparison is not absolutely accurate, due to the presence in the survey response of a small number of non-adults; but the picture of uneven response across adult age-groups is nevertheless clear.

Chart 19: Respondent age



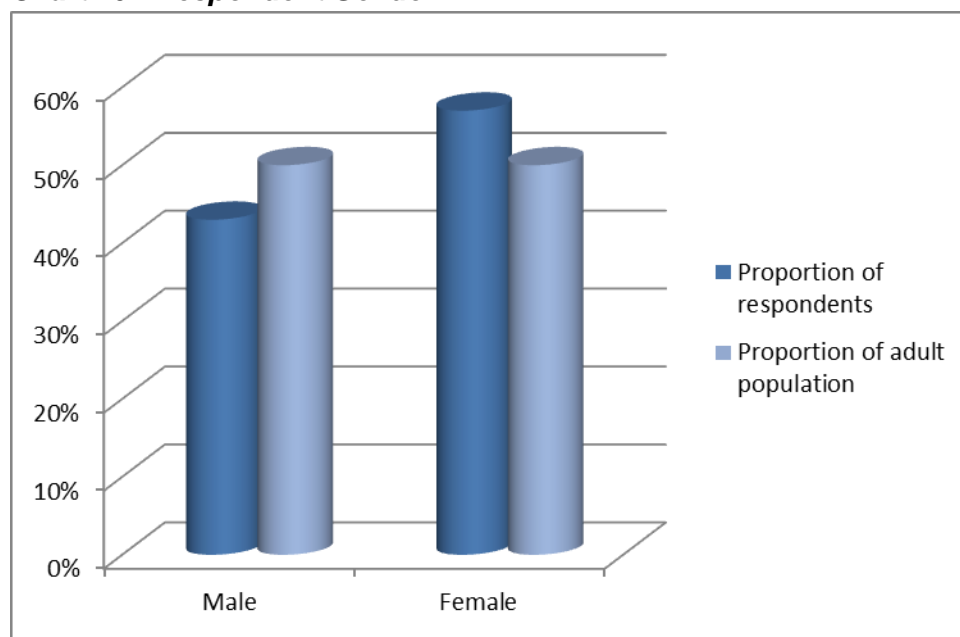
Although there are respondents from all age-groups, there is a clear preponderance of response from older sections. Almost a third of those taking part in the survey are aged 65 or over, and some seven in ten are over 45 years of age. Although there are participants from younger age-groups, including a very small number of responses made from, or on behalf of, children, just 14% of those taking part are under 35 years of age.

5.4 Gender

Table 21: Respondent Gender

Gender	Proportion of respondents	Proportion of adult population
Male	43%	50%
Female	57%	50%
N (=100%)	545	162,633

Chart 20: Respondent Gender



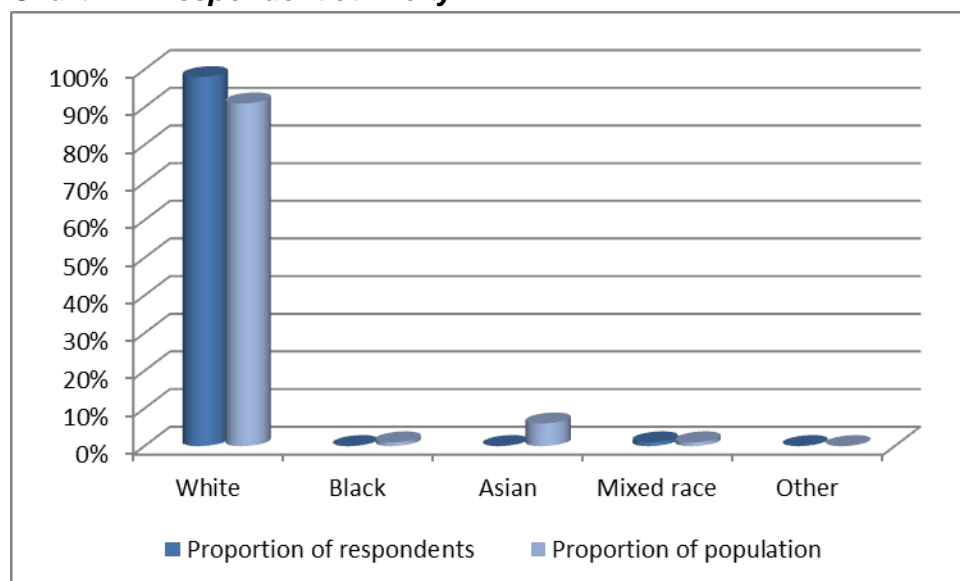
Just over two fifths of respondents are male, while slightly less than three fifths are female. In the adult population, there is an even split between males and females in the Borough, so the survey response includes a higher proportion of females than might be inferred from population data.

5.5 Ethnicity

Table 22: Respondent ethnicity

Ethnicity	Proportion of respondents	Proportion of adult population
White	98%	90%
Black	*	1%
Asian	*	6%
Mixed race	1%	1%
Other	*	*
<i>N (=100%)</i>	532	162,633

Chart 21: Respondent ethnicity



The majority of the response is from the white population of the Borough; 98% of responses come from this part of the community. Other ethnicities are represented to a much lesser degree than might have been expected from their presence in the local population.

5.6 Disability

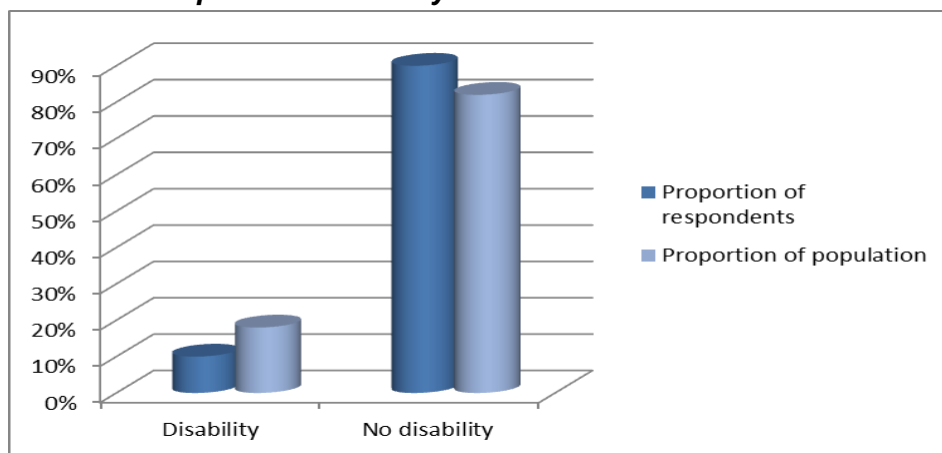
Levels of disability in the response are shown in this table:

Table 23: Respondent disability

	Proportion of respondents	Proportion of adult population ⁶
Disability	10%	18%
No disability	90%	82%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	542	167,744

⁶ The Swindon adult population base used here is aged 16 plus, this column actually includes 16 and 17 year olds as well as adults, hence the slightly higher base number than in other comparisons we have made. Also the 2011 Census question asked about 'long-term health problem or disability' which limits day to day activities' so is used as a proxy rather than direct comparison.

Chart 22 Respondent disability

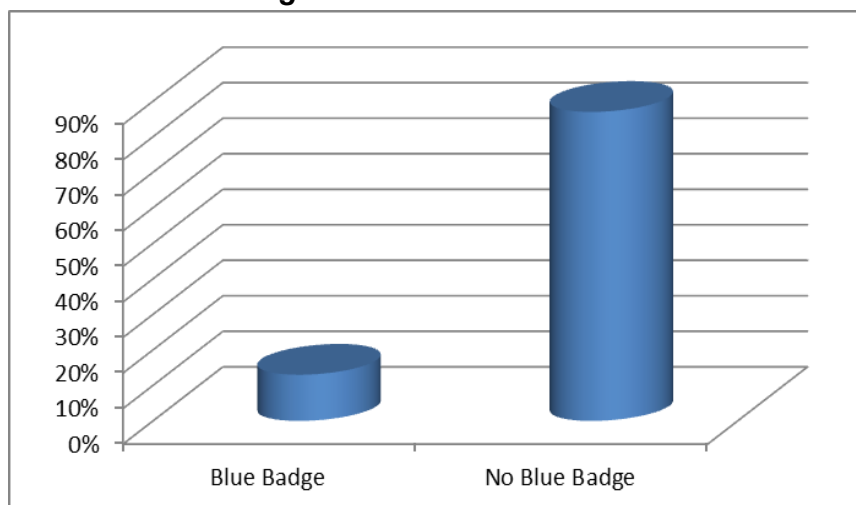


One in ten respondents identify themselves as having some form of disability. This is lower than would be expected from the general population data, The figure is similar to those indicating that they hold a 'Blue Badge' although there are slightly more in this category,.

Table 24: Blue Badge Holder

	Proportion of respondents
Blue Badge	13%
No Blue Badge	87%
N (=100%)	545

Chart 23 : Blue Badge Holders



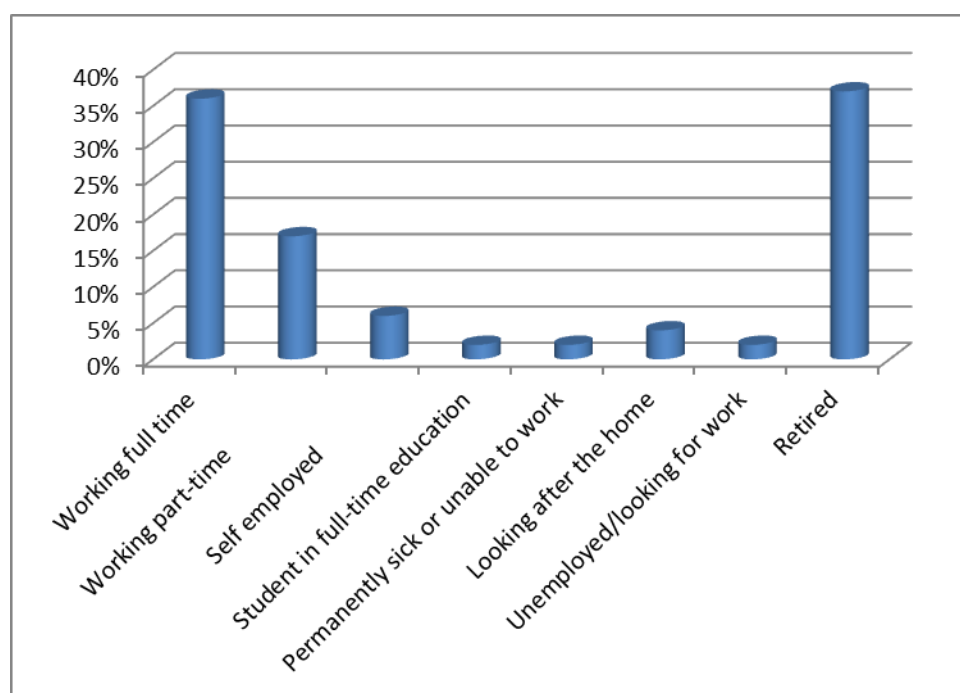
5.7 Working status

The working status of respondents is shown in this table:

Table 25: Working status

Employment status	Proportion of respondents
Working full time	36%
Working part-time	17%
Self employed	6%
Student in full-time education	2%
Permanently sick or unable to work	2%
Looking after the home	4%
Unemployed/looking for work	2%
Retired	37%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	547

Chart 24 Respondent working status



Three fifths of respondents to the survey are working in some form; over a third work full-time and less than a fifth part-time. A small group of self-employed people make this group add up to 59% of respondents. A large proportion of the remainder are retired people, who account for an equal proportion to those working full time.. Although there are people from the other employment status groups in the survey, their numbers are relatively small in comparison.

6.0 Visiting Coate

6.1 Frequency of visits to Coate

Respondents were asked how often they visit Coate Water Country Park. The results are shown here:

Table 26: How often, if at all do you visit Coate?

	Proportion of respondents
This was my first visit	1%
Nearly every day	5%
At least 4-5 times a week	5%
2-3 times a week	21%
Once a week	14%
1-2 times a month	26%
A few times a year	25%
Less often	3%
Never visit	1%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	596

Over two fifths (45%) of respondents to the consultation visit Coate at least once a week, and many visit more often than that. A quarter visit once or twice a month, and a quarter less often than that.

6.2 Visitor type

Table 27 When you visit, do you visit.....?

Respondents were asked to indicate who they visit Coate Country Park with and how often. The answers to this question are shown below but it should be noted that these categories

are not mutually exclusive, all respondents were asked to provide an answer regarding each visitor grouping.

	Proportion of respondents					
	Almost Always	Quite Often	Time to Time	Rarely	Never	<i>N</i> (=100%)
Alone	14%	17%	22%	20%	27%	444
With dogs	26%	10%	9%	5%	49%	432
With one or more other adults	52%	26%	17%	4%	1%	535
With children/grandchildren	25%	21%	19%	9%	26%	466

Almost four fifths of respondents (78%) visit say they almost always or often visit with one or more other adults, over two fifths visit almost always or often visit with children (46%), over a third (36%) visit most often with dogs and almost a third (31%) say they almost always or most often visit alone.

In terms of answers to this question by different demographic groups two fifths of male respondents (40%) said they visit alone, almost always or often, compared with one quarter (24%) of female respondents. Whilst the main pattern of visiting across both genders is with other adults, over half (53%) of female respondents report almost always or often visit with children, compared to under two fifths (37%) of male respondents.

Respondents aged 25 – 44 are most likely to be visiting (almost always or most often) with children. Two thirds of this age group do, compared with less than half of the sample as a whole.

6.3 Timing of visits to Coate

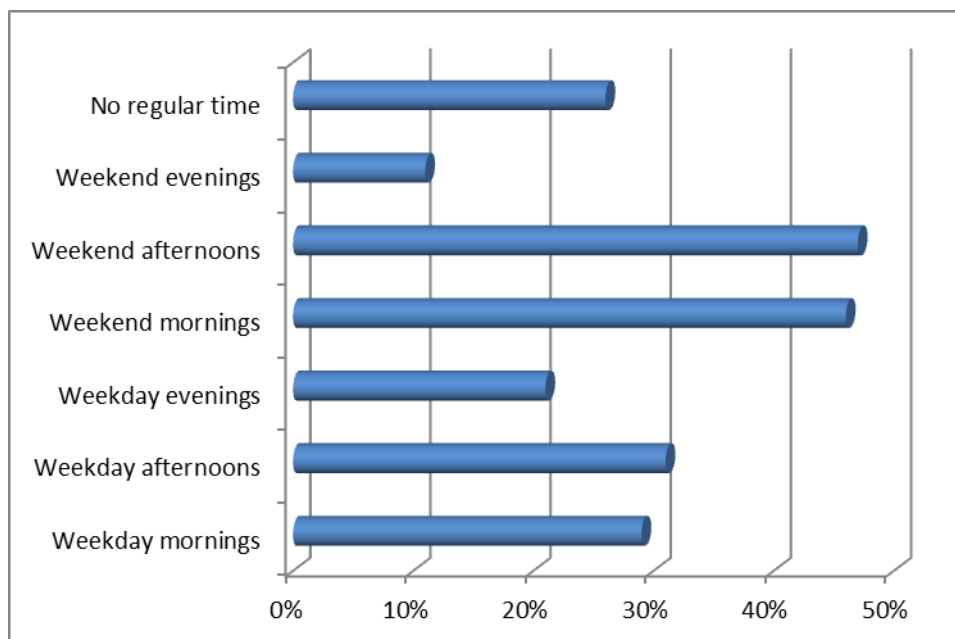
This table shows the times of day that respondents generally visit Coate.

Table 28: And at what times of day do you generally visit?

Timing	Proportion of respondents
Weekday mornings	29%
Weekday afternoons	31%
Weekday evenings	21%
Weekend mornings	46%
Weekend afternoons	47%
Weekend evenings	11%
No regular time	26%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>586</i>

+ Multiple answers were invited for this question so percentages will not sum to 100%

Chart 26: Respondent visiting patterns



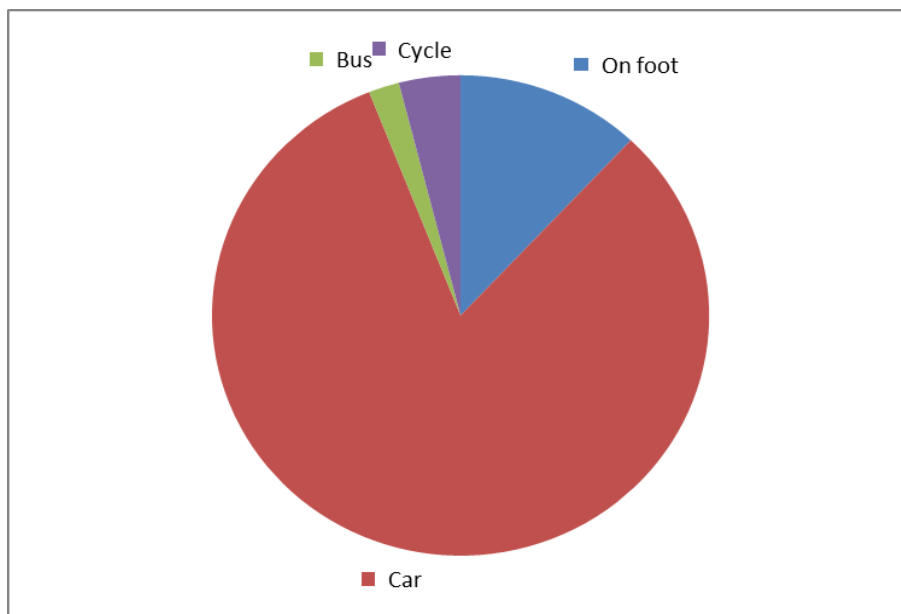
Respondents are most likely to visit weekend mornings and weekend afternoons. During the week, weekday mornings and afternoons are similarly busy. One in four visitors have no regular pattern of visiting.

6.5 Travel

Table 29: Usual mode of travel to Coate

Mode	Proportion of respondents
On foot	12%
Car	82%
Bus	2%
Cycle	4%
Other	*
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>560</i>

Chart 27: Respondent usual mode of travel to Coate



More than four out of every five respondents arrive by car. Two thirds of the remainder come on foot, but few travel by bike or by bus.

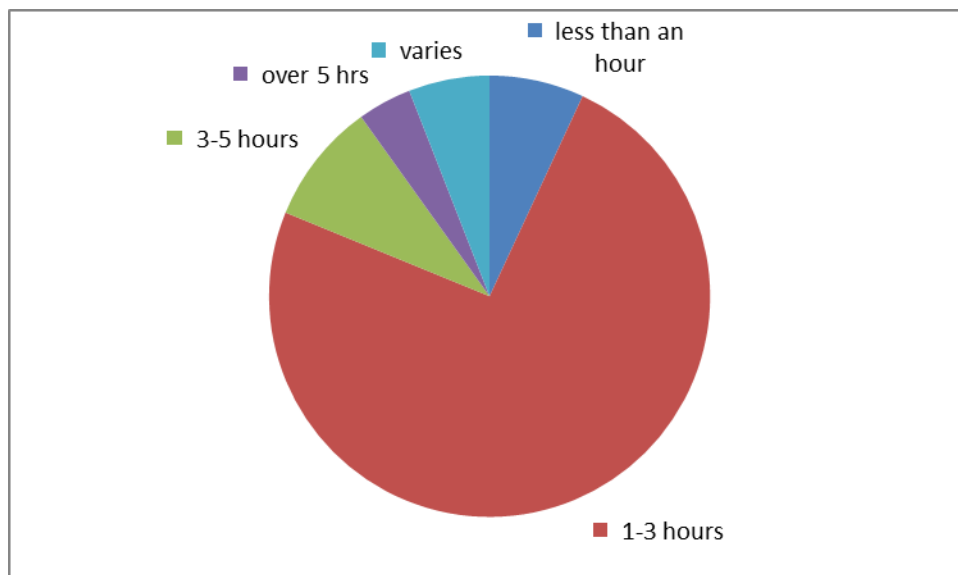
There are slightly higher numbers in the 45- 54 age group traveling on foot or by cycle than the sample as a whole. There is no particular pattern among respondents by gender, but people with disabilities are more likely to report travelling by car or by bus.

6.6 Length of visit

Table 30: Usual length of visit at Coate

	Proportion of respondents
less than an hour	7%
1-3 hours	75%
3-5 hours	9%
over 5 hrs	4%
varies	6%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>578</i>

Chart 28: Usual length of visit



Visits tend to last between one and three hours; few stay longer than this. Visitors on foot are more likely to pay a shorter visit to Coate, but even so most stay between one and three hours. Frequency of visiting has no impact on the length of stay, except that those who visit every day are more likely to spend a shorter time in the park.

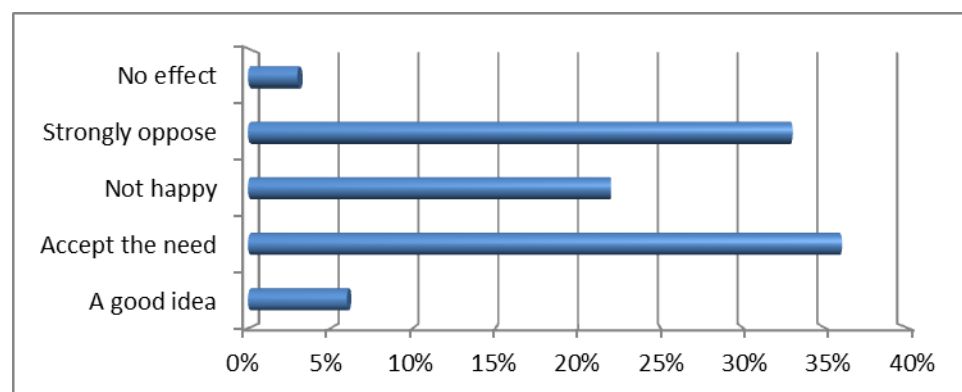
7.0 Car Parking at Coate ⁷

7.1 The principle of charging

Table 31: Respondents views on the principle of introducing car park charges

	Proportion of respondents
A good idea	6%
Accept the need	36%
Not happy	22%
Strongly oppose	32%
No effect	3%
Total response	550

Chart 29 Respondent views on principle of introducing car park charges at Coate



Two in five respondents express acceptance of the principle of charging at Coate, but just one in seventeen thinks this is a good idea. Most of those who accept the principle do so with a degree of reluctance, and wish that this was not necessary. The other 55% of respondents are discontent about charging, and three-fifths of these express strong opposition, while the remainder want the Council to look at alternative revenue-raising measures at Coate.

The more frequently a person visits, the more likely they are to oppose charges for parking at Coate. Almost three in five (56%) of those who visit at least four times a week strongly oppose charges, and virtually no-one who visits this often thinks they are a good idea. Conversely, acceptance of charges rises among those who visit less often, with three in five

⁷ Percentage may not sum to 100% due to rounding

(60%) of those who visit only a few times each year accepting the principle. Opposition to charges is also highest among those who visit for a short time, whilst those whose visit lasts for more than 3 hours are more likely to accept the principle.

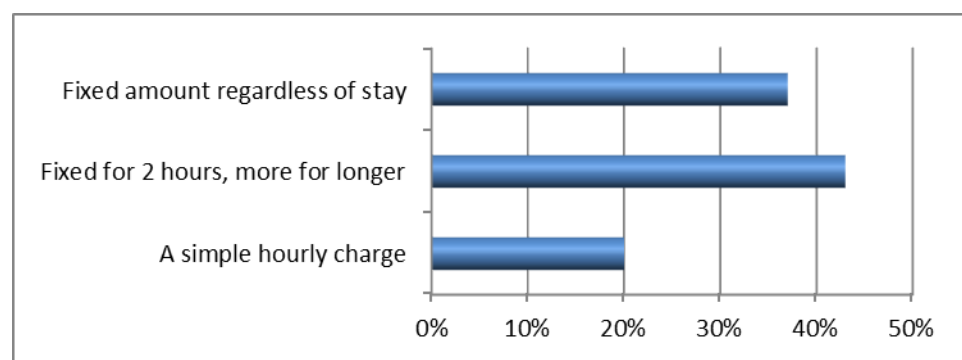
Age is not a major determinant of attitude to charging, although opposition to charging tends to be higher among those of working age. Women are much more likely than men to accept the need for charges, but there is no difference of view according to disability.

7.2 The basis for a trial

Table 32 Respondents views on charging periods for the trial

	Proportion of respondents
A simple hourly charge	20%
Fixed for 2 hours, more for longer	43%
Fixed amount regardless of stay	37%
Total response	445

Chart 30: Respondent views on charging periods for the trial



The most popular option is for a fixed fee for a stay of up to two hours, with additional charges for longer stays; two in five of those who responded to this question select this option. A similar proportion, just under two in five, think a fixed charge regardless of stay would be their preference, while one in five select the simple hourly charge.

Those who visit Coate most often are more likely to favour a simple hourly charge; enthusiasm for this approach reduces in relation to frequency of visit. Those who visit less frequently are more likely to look for a fixed amount for up to two hours with an additional charge for longer stays. Those who make short visits of less than an hour are much more enthusiastic about a fixed amount; those who visit for 1-3 hours are more likely to prefer a fixed amount for up to two hours, and those who visit for a longer stay like the idea of a fixed amount regardless of length of stay.

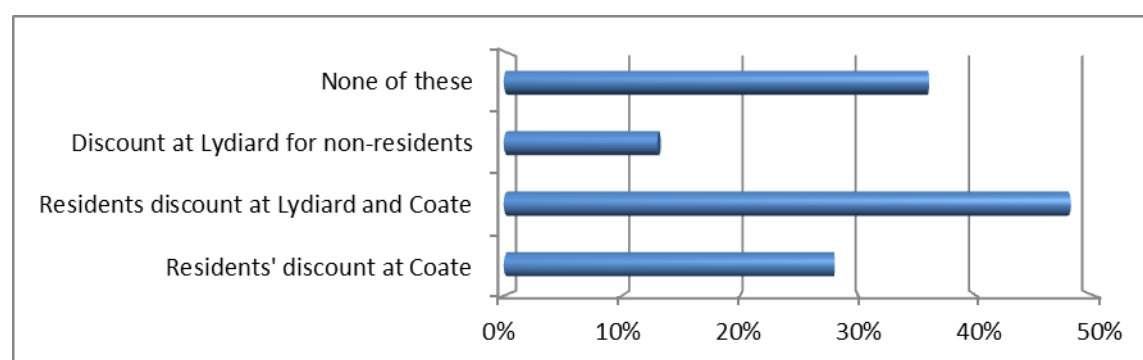
Age is not a factor in preference as regards a trial; there are no significant differences in view by age, or by disability; women are a little more likely to favour a fixed amount for up to two hours.

7.3 Season tickets

Table 33: Respondents views on the introduction of season tickets

	Proportion of respondents
Residents' discount at Coate	28%
Residents discount at Lydiard and Coate	48%
Discount at Coate for non-residents	13%
None of these	36%
Total response	513

Chart 31: Respondent views on the introduction of season tickets



The most popular option is for a residents' discount at both Coate and Lydiard; half of those who respond suggest this choice. A quarter suggest a discounted price for visits to Coate, and one in eight would extend the discount advantage to non-residents willing to pay the fee. However, over a third of those who respond want none of these options.

The most frequent Coate visitors are also the most likely to reject all these season ticket options; half (48%) of all who visit at least four times a week do so. Those who visit less than weekly are more enthusiastic about season tickets, and especially the combined Coate and Lydiard option, which half (48%) would prefer. Among those frequent visitors who accept season tickets, the preference is for a combined ticket covering both parks.

Those who visit for longest are the people most interested in a season ticket for Coate only, and tend not to support a shared ticket for Lydiard as well. Those who make the shortest visits to Coate are most likely to reject all the options presented in the question, with two in five (41%) doing so.

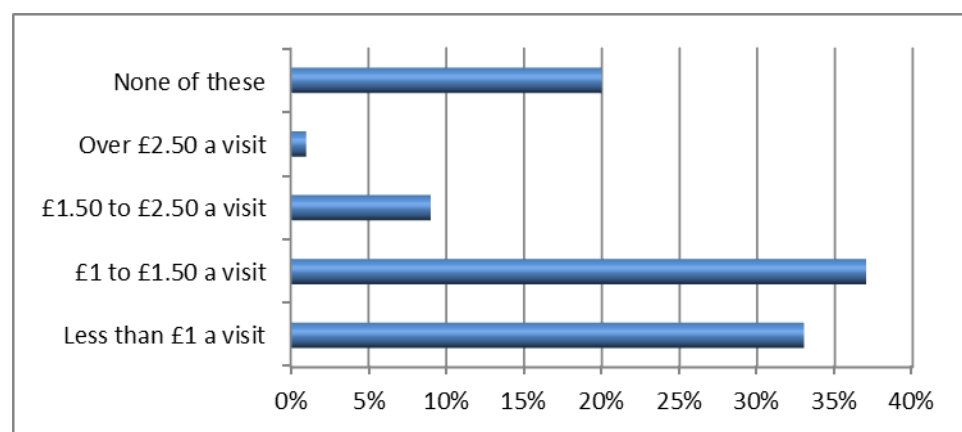
There are few patterns as regards age, except that rejection of all options tends to rise with age up to the age of 74, as does enthusiasm for a shared season ticket with Lydiard. People with disabilities support both the Coate only and the joint season ticket more than their non-disabled counterparts do.

7.4 Views on reasonable charges for a single visit

Table 34: Respondent's views on 'reasonable charges' for car parking

	Proportion of respondents
Less than £1 a visit	33%
£1 to £1.50 a visit	37%
£1.50 to £2.50 a visit	9%
Over £2.50 a visit	1%
None of these	20%
Total response	539

Chart 32: Respondent views on reasonable charges' for car parking



One in five people support none of the options, but among those who accept the idea of a charge the most popular solution is a parking fee of between £1 and £1.50 a visit; this option is chosen by almost two in five people overall, and almost half of those who are willing to pay. Almost everyone else opts for a fee of less than £1, and there is virtually nobody willing to pay more than £2.50 for a visit to Coate.

Those who visit Coate most often are most likely to choose a lower parking charge, and also the most likely to reject all the options. Opposition to charges reduces among those who visit less often, and relatively few who visit less than weekly have any issue with the charges proposed in this question. As to the length of stay, those who make the shortest visits are the most enthusiastic about a lower level of charging, whilst those who visit for 1- 3 hours tend to go for the slightly higher level of charge. Only those who make longer stays show

any support for the £1.50 to £2.50 range. Rejection of all the options is highest among those who stay for more than five hours.

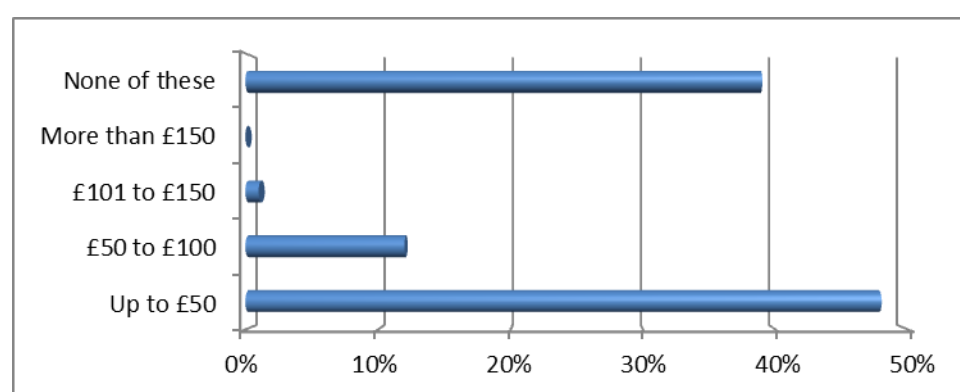
Respondents under the age of 45 are more likely to choose a charge of less than £1, whilst those over this age tend to favour a slightly higher charge; over 65s prefer the £1 to £1.50 option by some distance. However, rejection of charging is also higher among those aged 45-64, so there is little uniformity of view according to age. Women seem more disposed to the slightly higher charge, as are people with disabilities.

7.5 Views on reasonable charges for an annual season ticket at Coate and Lydiard

Table 35: respondents' views on 'reasonable charges' for an annual season ticket at both venues

	Proportion of respondents
Up to £50	48%
£50 to £100	13%
£101 to £150	1%
More than £150	0%
None of these	39%
Total response	486

Chart 33: 'Reasonable charges' for an annual season ticket at both venues



As to an annual season ticket charge covering both parks, two in five respondents reject all the options. Among those who accept a charge, the most popular option by some distance is the lowest figure, of up to £50; half of respondents, and over three quarters of those willing to pay, suggest this figure. One person in eight chooses the £50 to £100 option, and although there are a handful of people willing to pay more, this is rejected by the vast majority.

The more frequently people visit Coate, the more likely they are to reject all the options offered here; well over half (54%) of the most frequent visitors do so. Those who visit less than weekly, on the other hand, are keener on a season ticket costing up to £50. Those who stay for a short time tend to favour the lowest price band, but this is popular with people regardless of stay; rejection of all the options is highest among those staying for more than 5 hours, and nearly half of these (47%) turn down all the options offered in the question.

There is little variation in preference according to the age of the respondent, although those aged 65-74 are more likely to reject all the options and half (50%) do so. Women however are more willing to go along with the £50 to £100 charge, while people with disabilities are much more likely to reject all the options: well over half (56%) do so.

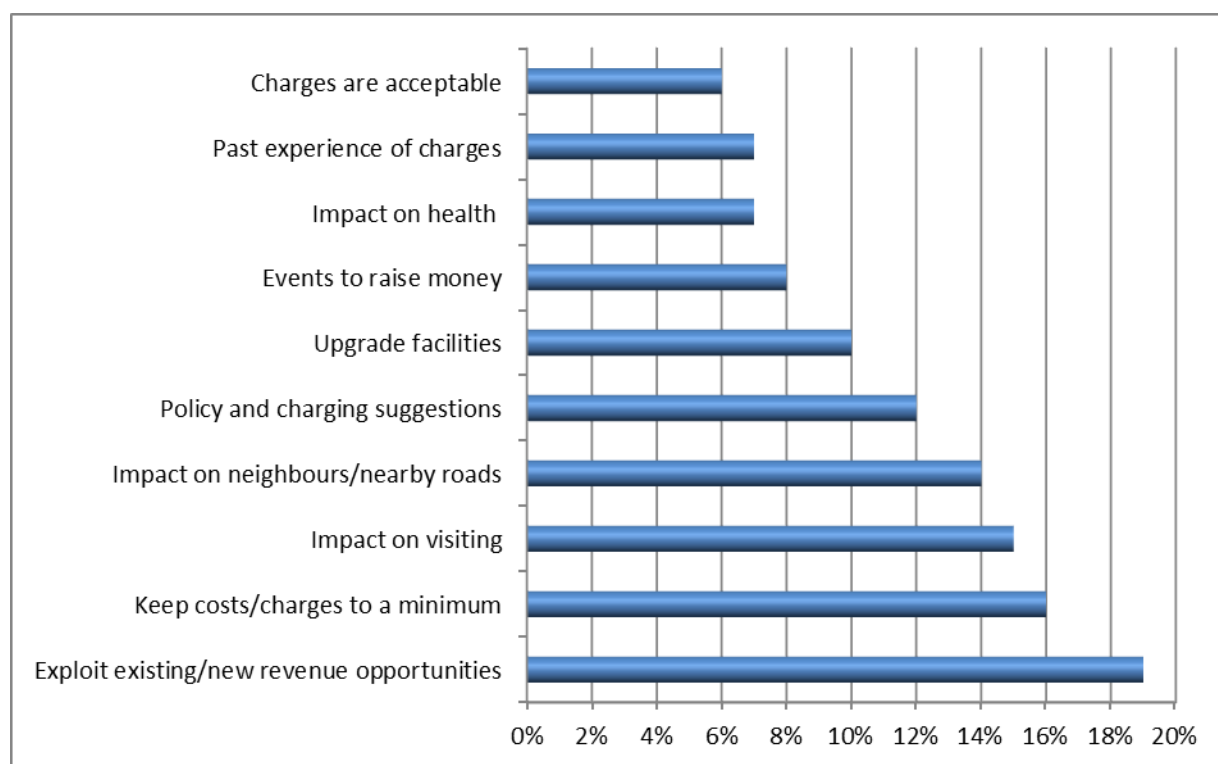
7.6 Comments and Observations

Respondents were invited to add any further comments they wished concerning car parking or income generation at Coate, and several did so. Their answers have been analysed according to the broad theme they raise, and grouped accordingly. Many residents have more than one observation to make, so the total number of comments exceeds the numbers of those making a comment. Only those areas of comment identified by more than twenty people are included in the table.

Table 36: Comments on car parking/income generation

	No. of comments	Proportion of those making a comment
Exploit existing/new revenue opportunities	66	19%
Keep costs/charges to a minimum	58	16%
Impact on visiting	52	15%
Impact on neighbours/nearby roads	49	14%
Policy and charging suggestions	44	12%
Upgrade facilities	35	10%
Events to raise money	27	8%
Impact on health	23	7%
Past experience of charges	23	7%
Charges are acceptable	20	6%
Total numbers commenting	353	

Chart 34: Comments on car parking/income generation



The most frequently expressed view is that the Council should do more to exploit other revenue raising opportunities at Coate. These include making more of the catering facilities, which are frequently closed at busier times in the park, small charges for the toilets, and the use of the site for events and shows where an entry charge could be made. Several people also suggest events run specifically with the aim of fundraising to support Coate. Upgraded park facilities and increased opportunities on the lake would also attract greater footfall, with spin-off benefits for the revenue streams in the park. Alongside these possible upgrades is a frequently-expressed view that charging for parking should be preceded or accompanied by improved parking facilities such as surfacing and bay marking.

A significant proportion of respondents urge the authority to keep parking charges low, or not to proceed with them at all; a much smaller proportion indicate that charges are acceptable. Several people express concern that parking charges will encourage people to park on nearby streets instead, causing detriment to local quality of life; some recall an earlier experiment with charging for parking at Coate which had exactly this consequence and which was later dropped.

A number of people make suggestions about the policy the Council should apply in respect of charges at Coate, and about the levels at which any charges should be set. These suggestions include the idea that parking should be free for the first hour (or longer), so as to accommodate those who visit to walk dogs or to jog in the park, as well as the observation by those who pay for fishing permits that these should include permission to park without further charge, and by others that charges for activities (such as sailing or golf) should exempt from additional charges for parking at Coate. People also seek choices as to the

method of payment, including by phone, and have concerns over effective enforcement of any charges.

Several people suggest that charges will discourage visiting, either by themselves or by others, and regret this impact. There are also some who link this to a detrimental impact on health, through making the cost of exercise more expensive and thus reducing the numbers taking part. This is seen as contradictory to public health messages about exercise and healthy lifestyles.