Path Benefits Toolkit

The Path Benefits Toolkit is designed as a resource to enable you to find out about Economic, Social and Environmental Benefits of path networks. It provides practical guidance on what data you need to collect and how to organise the collection of responses from users of the path network. We have also provided tools to make analysis of your data as easy as possible.

We have included a standard questionnaire that can be used on any path network and we hope that this will help to build a country-wide picture of path networks, allowing you to compare you results and learn from what other groups are doing. This toolkit has a specific function and may not provide you with all the answers to all the questions you might be asked about a path network. However, we hope that it will inspire you to find out more about the benefits that come from path networks.

About this toolkit

The toolkit was devised and written by Walking-the-Talk and was adapted from research conducted by the Sport Industry Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University. We are grateful to staff of Paths for All and Scottish Natural Heritage, as well as individuals from Borders Council and Culag Woods community group for assistance in the development and testing of the toolkit.

www.walking-the-talk.co.uk

Contents

1 Why find out about the benefits of a path network?

After the hard work of actually creating or extending a path network, you will probably want to find out whether the effort was worthwhile. You might begin to wonder how many people are using the network, who is benefiting from all your hard graft and how you might get more resources to look after these paths in the future. In order to keep everyone else interested in the fact that paths are for people to enjoy, you need to find out what the benefits are for your network, and to tell the world about them.

Here are some good reasons why it is useful to look more closely at the benefits of paths:

1.1 Improving the network for users' needs

While you were developing your network, you probably spent time thinking about who was going to use the paths and what their various needs might be. The big question is... did you get this right? Have you managed to meet the demand from all the groups in your area, and if not, what's missing?

1.2 Improving the way you manage the network

As well as knowing whether you have provided the right kinds of paths, you might find it useful to know whether you can manage them more effectively. Again, this depends on the expectations of users, now they have had a chance to try out the paths.

1.3 Helping to secure funding

You may be looking for more funding, whether it's to improve that wet section by the burn, or to help keep the vegetation under control. You might even be looking for the next major phase of investment.

A well presented funding bid is likely to score more highly if you can show what you have achieved so far, what benefits you have brought and what people think of the existing work. There will always be pressure on funds, so making your case in terms of benefits is one way to make it stand out from the crowd.

An equally useful outcome of finding out about the benefits of path networks is to justify the investment you have already made. This could be used to advise your funders of how much impact their money has had or to demonstrate to local organisations that it really was worth the effort of developing a network.

2 What you might discover

The purpose of evaluating the impact of a path network is to try to understand how people are benefitting from using the paths and to quantify the size of these benefits. We have developed a questionnaire that will help you to answer these questions, and the results will also show you how the network compares with others across Scotland.

The questionnaire is designed to highlight a range of social, economic and environmental benefits and gives a simple and standardised approach to collecting the data. In order to produce a full picture showing the scale of the benefits, you will also need to collect data on the use of the network. Guidance on this aspect of visitor monitoring will soon be available from SNH.

2.1 Social benefits

Health benefits

The physical and mental health benefits of regular exercise are well documented, and the questionnaire makes it possible to find out from users how these benefits are experienced locally.

For example, in a survey across five path networks in the Highlands and Islands, by HECLA Consulting (referred to as the HECLA survey from here onwards), 56% of respondents felt that using their local path network has increased their physical fitness and 90% reported that they feel less stressed as a result of using the paths.

Community benefits

Research has shown that there are direct benefits from path networks in supporting social relationships and indirectly, the process of network development brings benefits in terms of increasing 'community capacity'.

For example, over 80% of respondents in the HECLA survey indicated that their path network helped them to meet people and feel part of the community.

2.2 Environmental benefits

The questionnaire helps to identify whether paths in a network could help to reduce the traffic on the roads or provide alternative access to local services. This type of evaluation could also help to identify the need for paths that can help people to get to work or school.

For example, the HECLA survey revealed very low use of the networks for walking or cycling to work, and provides a challenge to encouraging greater use.

2.3 Economic benefits

The approach taken in this toolkit is called 'at least' - only visitors to the area are considered to be contributing economically, so you can be sure that the actual effect of the path network on the local economy is higher. This avoids overstating 'multiplier effects' of paths. However, beyond the raw calculation of how much money is brought in by tourists, there is much to be said for the potential for path networks to add to the attractiveness of an area for tourism.

For example, in a study of 4 local path networks undertaken by the Sport Industry Research Centre (referred to as the SIRC study from here onwards), the average spend per eligible respondent varied from £42.20 in Edinburgh to £24.11 at Abriachan (near Drumnadrochit).

3 What data you need to collect

We have developed the questionnaire to make it easy for you to collect data in a standard format and be able to analyse the results with confidence.

The data you need to collect can be broadly divided into four areas:

- Who is using the network
- How and why they use it
- How using the network affects them
- How many people use the network

The first three of these are covered by the questionnaire itself, and the fourth requires you to count people over an extended period, so is probably best done with an automatic counter!

3.1 Who is using the network

The information you need to collect includes:

- Age (usually grouped into a standard set of ranges)
- Gender
- Home postcode (relates to a group of houses rather than an individual dwelling)
- Where they are staying locally if they are a visitor
- How long they are staying
- How much they estimate they are spending whilst in the area
- Whether the presence of the paths influenced their decision to visit

As well as providing basic demographics, this information shows the proportion of visitors using the network and how much money they spend. You can then demonstrate the economic benefit directly attributed to the path network. This will tell you the ‘at least’ amount of economic activity generated by the network - other studies may have taken other factors into account to estimate economic impact (such as the additional money that local people spend in the area) but they are generally more tenuous and can be difficult to disentangle.

For example, the SIRC study found that Peebles had an unusually large (27%) proportion of users who were over 65. They also found that 15% of users in Peebles were visitors who had come to use the paths.

3.2 How and why they use it

The information about uses of the network include:

- Type of activity (e.g. cycling, dog walking, running etc)
- Purpose of the 'journey' (e.g. shopping, commuting, recreation fitness etc)
- Frequency of Use

The information from these results will help you to work out the range of benefits brought by the network and how the paths contribute to, for example, reducing traffic congestion.

For example, the SIRC study found that 4.7% of users interviewed were on their way to or from work.

3.3 How it affects them

The types of information you need to collect include:

- levels of physical activity
- influence of the network on physical activity and mental health
- experiences whilst using the network

The responses will give you insight into the health benefits associated with the path network and the general levels of satisfaction with it. When this is combined with the demographic data you have also collected, it could help you to work out what contribution the path network is making to the health of the local community.

The SIRC study found that 72.9% of respondents used the path network at least once a week and that overall 38.8% had significantly increased their physical activity as a result of having the path network available.

3.4 How many people use the network

This question is probably best answered by taking measurements - either by someone actually counting people over a period of time, or by using automatic people counters.

However, if you do not have years' worth of data showing how many people have used the path network this shouldn't stop you from finding out about the benefits. Use local knowledge to work out which parts of the network attract the most people, and when might be the best time to meet them. This will ensure that you collect data in the most effective way and get the most representative sample to interview.

You can find more information about using people counters on the Scottish Outdoor Access Code website.

The reason this data is necessary is that it will help you determine the overall size of the benefits from a path network - you can use these figures to make calculations from the other data you collect to estimate the total impacts.

For example, the automatic visitor counter figures for Abriachan in 2006 showed that there were almost 27,000 visits to the path network. On the basis of the calculated expenditure per visitor in different seasons, the SIRC study concluded that the economic benefit to the local economy in 2006 was at least £190,000.

4 Going through the process

4.1 Defining your network

You need to decide which paths are you including in the survey and find out how many people use them. It is useful to produce a map with the paths marked, so that you can make sure that both the interviewers and respondents have a clear idea of what you mean by 'path network'.

4.2 How many people are using the network

If you have data available from people counters, this will be very helpful and it is probably best to interview people near to a counter - this adds value to your data allowing you to extrapolate the results more easily. This assumes that the people counters are properly placed and working at the time of the evaluation.

If there are no counters, use local knowledge of the network to inform your decision where to collect data and get an estimate of how many people are likely to use the path(s). Choose locations that will give you a range of users and will enable you to collect enough responses.

However, it is easy to use a lack of path user data as an excuse for inaction. Even without accurate counter data your results can still be presented to show the impact of the path network, for example the size of benefit per 1000 users.

If the respondents from outside the local area spend, on average, £25 this means that for every 1,000 tourists, the network brings a benefit of £25,000 to the local economy. The survey should allow you to estimate the ratio of local users versus tourists during the period of survey, and if 1 in every 5 visitors were classed as a tourist, then overall, for every 1000 path users, the economic benefit would be £5,000.

This will not give you a complete picture, or provide an accurate indication of the actual size of the economic benefit, but it will give you figures to work with until you have information about how many people use the network.

4.3 Defining the 'local economy'

The purpose of the evaluation is to identify the benefits of the path network to the local area, but you need to be sure that you measure the economic benefits brought by people from outwith that area. This is the most reliable method of calculating the 'at least' economic benefit (see 2.3) brought by path networks.

Unfortunately there is no agreed 'definition' of a local economy in Scotland, except in general terms as being the area where products and services are supplied. This means that it is difficult to compare economic impact between different studies, and worse, it makes it hard for local groups to be certain that their evaluation has any credibility.

The Path Benefits Toolkit therefore uses a 'standardised' approach to defining the local economy based on the postcode(s) through which a path network passes. We have used the Postcode Sectors, as defined by the General Register of Scotland for Census data, to identify areas that are likely to provide the necessary services (i.e. food, fuel / transport links, accommodation etc.) for visitors.

You can download a map of postcode sectors in Scotland from the SCROL website: www.scrol.gov.uk/scrol/metadata/maps/Scotland%20-%20Postcode%20Sectors.pdf

A postcode sector is defined as an area encompassing a range of postcodes (depending on population density), and is usually a whole postcode minus the last two digits (e.g. IV27 1). A map of postcode sectors in Scotland is available on the SCROL website (Scottish Census Results On Line), and an accompanying list defines where multiple postcodes are amalgamated to create a Postcode Sector of acceptable population size for statistical purposes. Although these Postcode Sectors do not necessarily reflect identifiable communities or service provision areas, this is the most coherent framework available that will lead to a consistent approach to measuring benefit across different parts of the country.

This is, necessarily, a compromise, but we anticipate that this will provide the most robust basis for comparing evaluations, and has the added benefit of being comparable with the 2001 (and future) Census data. In addition, postcode sectors can be 'aggregated' to form Local Authority areas, which means that eventually it should be possible to build a picture of path benefits across different Local Authorities.

By linking the postcode sector(s) with section 4.1 above, you could produce a map that shows the extent of the path network and its relationship with the area of the local economy, which is one or more a postcode sectors.

NOTE: once you have confirmed the extent of your local economy, the questions about visitors' expenditure must relate to this area - you can't measure expenditure in the region instead of the local economy. For example if you define your local economy as IV27 1, you are only interested in their expenditure in that area, not in Inverness, or 'The Highlands'.

4.4 Deciding how much data you need to collect

The target number of interviews will depend on the number of users and how accurate you would like your data to be and can be expressed in terms of confidence intervals and probability. It will also be partly dependent on the resources you have available.

The statistical aspect of all evaluations can cause a headache for many people but we have included some technical information to ensure that it is clear what you are actually measuring. There is no single or definitive answer to the question ‘what is the economic benefit of the path network?’ because you cannot interview every user. The statistics presented are designed to give you an idea of the accuracy of the responses and how confident you can be that they reflect the ‘real’ situation. We recognise that this is complex, but information about the level of confidence is a vital part of any report and should always be included - it will give your evaluation more credibility in statistical terms to provide the reliability of your conclusions.

Whom to interview

Because you are only interviewing a sample of all users, you need to decide whom to interview without introducing any bias to the evaluation. The simplest method is to invite the next person who passes, and if this is a group, to select one respondent as the person whose birthday is next.

To comply with good practice guidelines for conducting research, you should not interview anyone who is, or appears to be under 16, without their parents’ consent.

Interview numbers

The actual number of interviews (sample size) required can be statistically related to the degree of accuracy you are seeking. There is a balance between having enough responses to be confident that the results are reliable and interviewing more people than necessary (although the latter is rarely a problem). The final decision may also be influenced by the resources you have available to collect responses, but having a good idea of how to make your results more accurate may help you to plan what resources you need.

For example, you will probably want to be at least 95% certain that, if you find that 50% of the path users are visitors, there really are somewhere between 45% and 55% visitors who use the network (i.e. a 10% range or a 5% confidence interval). To attain this level of confidence in your data you would need to interview 384 people. If you want to be sure that visitors actually make up between 47.5% and 52.5% of the total users (the narrower range is a smaller confidence interval of 2.5%), you would need to interview 1,537 people. The reason that this is important is highlighted in section 5.1.

If you only interview 100 people then it means that the confidence in your data is much lower: you can be 95% certain that the proportion of visitors lies somewhere between 40.2% and 59.8% which, statistically, is a wide range (19.6%, or a 9.8% confidence interval). This doesn’t mean that your data is wrong, but it is really important to give these figures so that it is possible to work out how big a pinch of salt to use.

4.5 Deciding how to conduct the survey

In designing the fieldwork, you need to consider the following aspects:

Where to conduct interviews

Using one fixed point is a consistent approach, but it may not give you access to all the users of the network. Similarly, choosing the busiest place might help you reach the target number of interviews quickly, but the results may not be representative of the range of users on the network. If there are people counters installed, it makes sense to interview somewhere that you can use the data from the counter to aggregate your results.

How long it will take

The hardest part of the survey to get right is estimating how much time you will need to reach your target number of responses. The Visitor Monitoring Manual currently being developed by SNH suggests that you can expect to conduct 1.6 to 2.5 interviews per hour (based on a 12 minute interview). That's between 10 and 15 interviews on a 6-hour shift. So to collect 384 responses (to meet the 5% confidence interval described in section 4.4 above) at this rate you would need to arrange between 25 and 35 days worth of interview time. The path benefits questionnaire usually takes 6-8 minutes and although this is unlikely to halve the amount of time required for data collection, you may need between 20 and 25 days of labour available in total.

The best time of day

There may be particular patterns of use on a network, such as early morning dog walking or commuters. If you want the evaluation to reach a wide range you need to make sure that these times are included. However, concentrating on busy times could miss the people who prefer to use the network when it is quiet. One particular issue is getting responses from people who are on their way to or from work. You might need to produce a flyer and invite them to answer the questionnaire directly online. Contact the Partnership for details of how to set this up.

The best time of year

If possible, you should try to collect data at different times of the year. This should help to give you a flavour of any seasonal differences, but there are a number of issues that you need to consider. Choosing to include or exclude main holiday periods (such as Easter or October 'half-term') could affect the proportion of visitors to locals that you interview.

Equally, you need to consider interviewing on weekdays and at weekends, as there may be differences in who is using the network at these times. Whichever options you choose there are compromises, the important aspect of this is to recognise these when you are analysing the data - there is no right or wrong answer.

In the development of the methodology, the researchers from SIRC undertook three periods of data collection: summer, autumn and winter in order to get a view of who was using the networks at different times of year. During each period, they used two researchers who spent three days interviewing people, working 8 hours each day.

The following timetable can be used to help plan the evaluation, and is based on fitting with a 'project' within one financial year:

April	May	July/August	October	Jan/February	Feb/March
Project planning	Session 1 data collection	Session 2 data collection	Session 3 data collection	Session 4 data collection	Data analysis and reporting
	3 days, 2 people	3 days, 2 people	3 days, 2 people	3 days, 2 people	

4.6 Getting hold of the survey

Once you have planned where, when and how many interviews to conduct, you need to gain access to the questionnaire. The survey is available to download from the Paths for All Partnership's website - it is a 'PDF' file, which requires a 'PDF reader' programme (such as Adobe Reader). This questionnaire can then be printed for use in data collection.

However, in order to reduce the effort in making sense of results, the initial data analysis for the survey is done using Survey Monkey, an online service. The Survey Monkey website holds all the data from Path Benefits Evaluations and each path group is responsible for transferring the data from paper questionnaires to the online 'database'.

The responses from each network are stored in a separate 'collector' to avoid the data getting mixed up. Therefore, in order to use the questionnaire you will need to request a link to your collector - this will allow you to input the responses and have the initial analysis completed automatically. You will be given a password that is unique to your collector. Please safeguard this password to prevent spurious data being added.

Once you have a collector link for your network, print enough copies of the blank form for your surveyors (do not complete this version of the form on a computer as the answers cannot be saved) and ensure that each interviewer understands the questions and can complete the form accurately on paper.

4.7 Collecting responses

There are a number of issues that you need to consider about conducting the interviews to make sure that you comply with both good practice and legislation. These include the safety of the interviewers, compliance with the data protection act and ensuring that all interviews are conducted in a similar manner.

Consistency of interviews

The interviewers should use the same explanations of questions and if necessary use a script and 'show cards' to make sure that there are no differences between interviewers. 'Show cards' give the list of standard responses to questions and can sometimes help to speed up the interview - it can take longer to read out the questions, but if there are a number of choices to a question the cards can help to clarify the options (the respondent doesn't need to memorise things before answering). If you decide to use the show cards, laminate them for use outside.

Safety of interviewers

When the interviewers are collecting responses make sure they are safe by ensuring that:

- someone knows where the interviews are being conducted
- they are not working alone
- they have a mobile phone and know where phone reception is available
- they are suitably dressed for the conditions (including sunscreen in summer)
- they are advised of 'common sense' issues relating to personal safety during interviews

You will need to ensure that you understand risks that are posed at each collection point, probably by making a site visit, and complete a simple risk assessment to give to the interviewers. You can use the guidelines in the Annex to this toolkit to make sure that all interviewers are aware of their own safety considerations. This sheet should be given to all interviewers prior to their first session and a signed copy returned before they begin. We have also included instructions for interviewers in this Annex - you need to fill in the postcode sectors and provide contact details for the interviewer to use.

Completing the form

Make sure that the interviewers complete the first question as it provides an 'identity' to each response. The majority of the questions are 'closed' - i.e. there is a defined response to the question. However, there is space to record additional information related to a number of questions. This is useful for capturing qualitative data, particularly opinions of respondents about their experiences of the network. It is not necessary (or desirable) to 'force' respondents to add extra information, but this space is given as a means of recording useful points that do not directly answer the question.

The postcode sector question (q13)

This is the most important question in the interview as it defines whether it is 'long' or 'short' - you do not need to ask this question as it is based on the answer to their postcode, which should be compared with the list of those included in the 'local economy' (please refer to section 4.3). Please ensure that each interviewer has a list of the postcode sectors.

4.8 Transferring your results to the internet

Once you have collected responses they can be entered into the Survey Monkey online survey. Please take great care when choosing which ‘collector’ to use. The password needs to be used on each response: this is both a security check and ensures that you have clicked on the correct ‘collector’. You do not need to wait until all the interviews have been conducted before entering them into Survey Monkey and it will be a much less onerous task to complete the responses in small batches (it is also likely to increase the accuracy of transcribing the data).

Figure 1 Data entry in Survey Monkey

Figure 2 Displaying results online

It should be possible to enter each response in approximately 2 minutes, depending on the speed of your typing and the quality of your internet connection. So this means that you can expect to enter around 25 - 30 responses per hour. Survey Monkey is set up to allow the input of multiple responses at once, so you may be able to get volunteers to enter the data - most public libraries have good broadband connections.

Before beginning the data entry, check the response to the final question. Where the respondent has decided not to take part, it is helpful to complete question 1 for each of these - it will help to make sure that you have recorded that an interview took place, but will not add the response to the ‘collector’. These responses should then be shredded.

Once all the responses have been entered into Survey Monkey they should be securely filed. It is useful to keep the original responses until the data has been analysed in case there are any oddities that need to be checked. Once you have completed the evaluation and you are satisfied that the electronic version of your data is correct, the paper questionnaires can be shredded.

The postcode sector question (again)

The answer to this question defines whether or not you are taken through questions 14 to 25 - if the answer is ‘postcode not on the list’, you will be directed straight to the final question. This helps to speed up the process of data input.

4.9 Analysing your results

In order to analyse the data that you have entered, you will need another password for the data analysis page. This password is changed on a regular basis, so if you find that the password given no longer works, please make a further request.

From this link you will see ALL the data that has been entered (i.e. you are getting a National picture). In order to see the data for your network you need to filter the data by the name of your ‘collector’, which allows you to display just the responses from your network. The first thing to do is to check that the data that has been entered is accurate (e.g. number of responses matches number of interviews conducted) before undertaking any analysis.

In addition to selecting results from your ‘collector’, you can choose to view results that are based on particular answers (choose filter by responses). The most obvious selection is to use the response to ‘How would you describe yourself?’ to show results that are from residents or visitors. This will help you to calculate the economic impact of the network (see section 5 below).

The filtering of results can be a powerful tool in helping to analyse your results. However, you need to spend some time thinking about the ‘logic’ of these filters, and the potential complexity makes it difficult to provide useful guidance for every scenario within this toolkit. As a general guide, you can use the filters to narrow down the responses from particular groups of respondents, with specific help in creating filters being available from Survey Monkey. The following are some examples of filtered results:

- People living locally AND aged 65+
- People living locally AND aged 44 - 55 OR aged 65+
- Visitors AND staying at home
- Visitors AND NOT staying at home

You may find that there are already a series of filters available - please do not change any existing filters, but you may find it useful to investigate how others have selected different responses to analyse.

Caution: when you are filtering the data to produce a ‘subset’ of responses, you still need to make sure that there are enough responses to be confident that the results are meaningful. Drawing conclusions about the economic impact of these respondents (e.g. visitors who are not staying at home) can be dangerous if you only have 5 responses in this category.

Once you have created the filters to give the sub-set of results, you can view the responses on the screen or download them. The results can be downloaded either as a summary report, or with the individual responses included (remember to tick the box to download the sub-set using your filtered results). To download a copy of the responses in spreadsheet format that you can use to make calculations choose ‘condensed format’ and ‘actual text’ options. You will need to format the columns of the downloaded file using your spreadsheet programme (e.g. Microsoft Excel or Open Office) in order to read the responses easily.

5 Making sense of your results

The initial analysis that can be viewed online will give you some useful insight into the benefits of a path network, but you need to make some calculations in order to find out specific answers, such as the economic benefit.

Summarising the responses is an important part of the whole evaluation and you need to decide which questions have given you the most useful answers. Based on these figures, you can formulate statements that help to highlight the benefits as well as any short-comings or challenges.

Using the spreadsheet, you can Sum the various totals that relate to expenditure by visitors to give you the amount that people expect to spend. In Microsoft Excel it is possible to filter this data further, which would allow you to select, for example, respondents from outwith the postcode sector of the local economy (answered 'visitor' to question 13) who chose to visit because of the path network (answered 'quite a lot' or 'specific reason' to question 20). These are the people who directly CONTRIBUTE to the economic benefit of the path network.

You can then calculate the mean value of EXPENDITURE for those who contribute to the economic benefit and the proportion of total users that are people who are CONTRIBUTORS. You can then calculate the economic benefit per user in the following way:

BENEFIT PER USER (£) **=** *mean EXPENDITURE (£)* ***x*** *CONTRIBUTOR proportion (%)*

5.1 Being careful with your interpretation

The analysis of your responses gives you a 'snapshot' of the people who were using the network during the time of the survey. The difficult part is to extrapolate those results to estimate the total benefits for the network. Unfortunately, there are too many factors that could affect your results so this toolkit cannot give you a simple way of calculating the total.

Once the responses have been collected, you need to consider how representative your data is likely to be - it is difficult to make any meaningful adjustments to any figures, but if you have unusually high or low figures (compared with your anecdotal 'gut feeling' for the network), it is worthwhile outlining where the 'errors' might have occurred.

For example, collecting data only on sunny days during the peak season may give you an unusually high proportion of CONTRIBUTORS that doesn't represent the overall pattern for the year. This would inflate the BENEFIT PER USER and give an over-estimate of the total economic benefit. The converse is true if rainy days in the depths of winter are the only source of responses.

However, a reasonable estimate can be made for each season where you have collected responses, and this could be combined with automatic visitor counter figures. Assuming that there are 9000 users in summer and that the BENEFIT PER PERSON is £9.10, you could show that the total economic benefit for summer is £81,900 (these figures are approximations from the Abriachan path network in 2006).

Returning to the issue of statistics (highlighted in section 4.4), your completed analysis should show the upper and lower figures in your calculations, based on the degree of confidence in your data. The following table shows why it is important to collect a reasonable number of responses:

Estimated summer benefit: £81,900	**Minimum benefit**	**Maximum Benefit**	**Range**
1,537 interviews (2.5% confidence interval)	£79,852.50	£83,947.50	£4,095.00
384 interviews (5% confidence interval)	£77,805.00	£85,995.00	£8,190.00
100 interviews (9.8% confidence interval)	£65,683.80	£89,926.20	£24,242.40

The value of qualitative data

Remember that the evaluation is not just about figures. Take time to read through the comments that people have made - you can often find important opinions that cannot be drawn out by looking only at numbers. You may find it useful to include some ‘typical’ comments, and be sure to include any negative responses where they are relevant.

5.2 Doing something with the data

This is the ultimate aim of the evaluation - it is not an ‘end’ in itself. You should be able to select some aspects of the evaluation that show how successful you have been and it can even be viewed positively (when seeking additional funding) to show where there are gaps or areas that need further work. If you are able to write a report and ‘publish’ it on the internet, then the information can be shared and accessed by potential funders. The easiest way of doing so is to provide a copy of the report to the Partnership and this can then be placed on the pathsforall.org.uk website.

6 Further information / references

Sport Industry Research Centre (2008). What paths do for Scottish society: An economic and social impact study. Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report (ROAME No. RO6AA607)

HECLA consulting (2007). Socio-economic impacts of community local access networks. Paths for All Partnership Commissioned Report. Available at: http://www.pathsforall.org.uk/outdooraccess/article.asp?id=593

Postcode Sectors: General Register of Scotland (2003). Geography. Available at: http://www.scrol.gov.uk/scrol/metadata/index_geography.htm

Visitor monitoring manual - contact Caroline Fyfe at Scottish Natural Heritage in Inverness for more details

People counters: automatic People Counters - Fact Sheet and Inventory of Suppliers - available at: www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/upload/Counters%20Factsheet%20July%2006.pdf

6.1 Other Toolkits

Quantifying the health effects of cycling and walking - available at: http://www.euro.who.int/eprise/main/WHO/Progs/TRT/policy/20070503_1

Greenspace quality: a guide to assessment, planning and strategic development - available at: http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/default.asp?page=438

Walking Researcher Toolkit (Health Walks) - available at: http://www.pathsforall.org.uk/pathstohealth/article.asp?id=575

Path Benefits Toolkit - Annex

Working safely to collect responses

These are guidelines to ensure the Health and Safety of interviewers. Please note that your own vigilance while working with the public is essential for reducing any risk to yourself.

General Procedures

When undertaking fieldwork for this project your safety is paramount. All of the interviewing points to be included have been visited before the start of fieldwork and any specific hazards have been identified. Please note the following points:

- Ensure that a family member or friend is aware of where you have gone to work and an approximate time of return.
- Wear suitable footwear with good ankle support and adequate tread. Also dress for the weather and carry waterproof and warm clothing.
- Take a mobile phone with you. If you do not have a mobile phone keep a phone card in your pocket to use in an emergency.
- Take care when reaching the survey point and watch out for damaged or slippery paths / roads and take extra care on steps.
- If you are driving on a site remain within the maximum speed limit and slow down for other users, especially people on foot, cycle or horseback. Also pay heed and slow down if you seen warning signs. Do not pass No Entry or Forest Operation signs if machines are on or close to the road.
- When approaching visitors watch out for dogs and other animals (in rural areas). If you feel you may be at risk, do not enter.
- In hot weather please ensure that you protect yourself from sunburn, wear a hat, take regular breaks in the shade and drink plenty of water.
- Leave valuables at home. Avoid carrying handbags.

What to do if you are in an accident, attacked or threatened

- Find a place of safety
- Do not put yourself in danger; assess the situation before attempting to help others.
- Call accident and emergency services if necessary
- Report to the police. (Obtain a crime number).
- Phone home / family or ask police to contact home / family.
- Report to the 'Project Manager' and confirm in writing what happened.

Declaration

I have read and understood the safety guidelines and agree to abide by them.

Signed: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

Interviewer Name: ______________________________

Interview instructions

This survey is being undertaken on behalf of Paths for All. The purpose of the survey is to measure the economic, social and environmental benefits of the local path network.

Important information

The following list of 'postcode sectors' defines the 'local economy' for the path network - you are interested in finding out about the benefits within this area.

A 'postcode sector' is the full postcode minus the last two digits - please ask people for their full postcode to make sure that you record the correct information.

If you have any problems whilst undertaking the survey, please contact the following person:

Name:		Telephone:	

How to conduct the survey

When you have arrived at the survey point and are ready to begin, please approach the next who passes. You may invite any adults (aged 16 or over) to take part in the survey. If a person does not wish to take part, please be courteous and allow them to move away before asking someone else.

If a group passes, please only interview one person - in order to make sure that the sample is random, ask whose birthday comes next and then use this person for your interview. If there is a large group (e.g. a coach tour), you may interview more than one person, providing that it is only one from each of the parties within the group (e.g. a family).

Please ensure that you do not interview anyone who has already taken part in the survey - please check as part of your introduction to the survey.

During your survey period, please conduct as many interviews as possible. Each interview should take between 5 and 8 minutes. If you are able to exceed your target number of interviews, please do so - it will help with the overall interview numbers in case of quiet periods. If you do not reach your target don't worry, but please note any reasons - such as poor weather or few visitors.

The Questionnaire

Please ensure respondents answer each question asked and that their answer makes sense. If they wish to add additional information, try to probe fully for as much detail as possible. It may be helpful to read the answer back to the respondent to check that you have understood them correctly. You should not change any answers or fill blanks after finishing the interview - please mark the blank questions as unanswered.

Please show the appropriate cards and maps to help the respondent to answer the questions.

On the basis of the answer to question 12, make a decision for question 13 - this is a crucial point in the survey as it determines whether you need to ask questions 14-24 (the postcode is not on the list above) or whether to go straight to question 24 (the postcode is on the list).

Thank you very much for your help and good luck.