

The State of the National Park²⁰⁰⁶



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Introduction

Welcome to the first report on the State of the Brecon Beacons National Park!

This report, containing 23 indicators, can only be a snapshot of the Park's life and work. But these indicators, carefully chosen from the data that is available, represent more than just themselves. They are used to indicate the condition of the wider situation. As they are monitored over the years, and trends are noted, these indicators will help to give a picture of the state of health of the Park's environment, visitor provision and communities.

The purpose of a State of the Park Report (SOPR) is to give an indication of trends in relation to:

- the Park's special qualities, environment and cultural assets,
- how well public enjoyment of these is being provided for, and
- the well-being of the local community.

Monitored over time, it will:

- show whether the policies in the National Park Management Plan are being effective,
- help identify key issues,
- help target resources where they are most needed, and,
- support bids for funding.

Like the National Park Management Plan, the SOPR relates to the Park area and its people, not just to the work of the National Park Authority (NPA). It measures outcomes (what is happening in the real world) not outputs; the work done by the NPA and its partner organisations. The latter are monitored by means of Performance Indicators, available from each organisation.

The indicators which make up the SOPR are arranged under the headings and sub-headings used in the Brecon Beacons National Park Future Directions 2005, the document which sets out the NPA's statement of its aims, vision and strategic intentions. They cover the whole of the National Park, its landscapes, its visitors and the life and work of the people who live in it, although the focus is on those aspects for which the NPA has some responsibility.

Choosing useful indicators has been quite a challenge. The key criterion was the current availability of data for the Park area. Future editions of the State of the Park Report may include other indicators as more data collection work is done.

The SOPR contains only a selection of the data available for the Park. It will be supported by a more technical document, the Baseline Data Report prepared for the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the National Park Management Plan and Local Development Plan. Fuller details of some of the SOPR indicators will be found in that report, which will be made available on the website www.breconbeacons.org Further details are available from the Strategy and Policy Team on 01874 624437.

Choosing and arranging the data

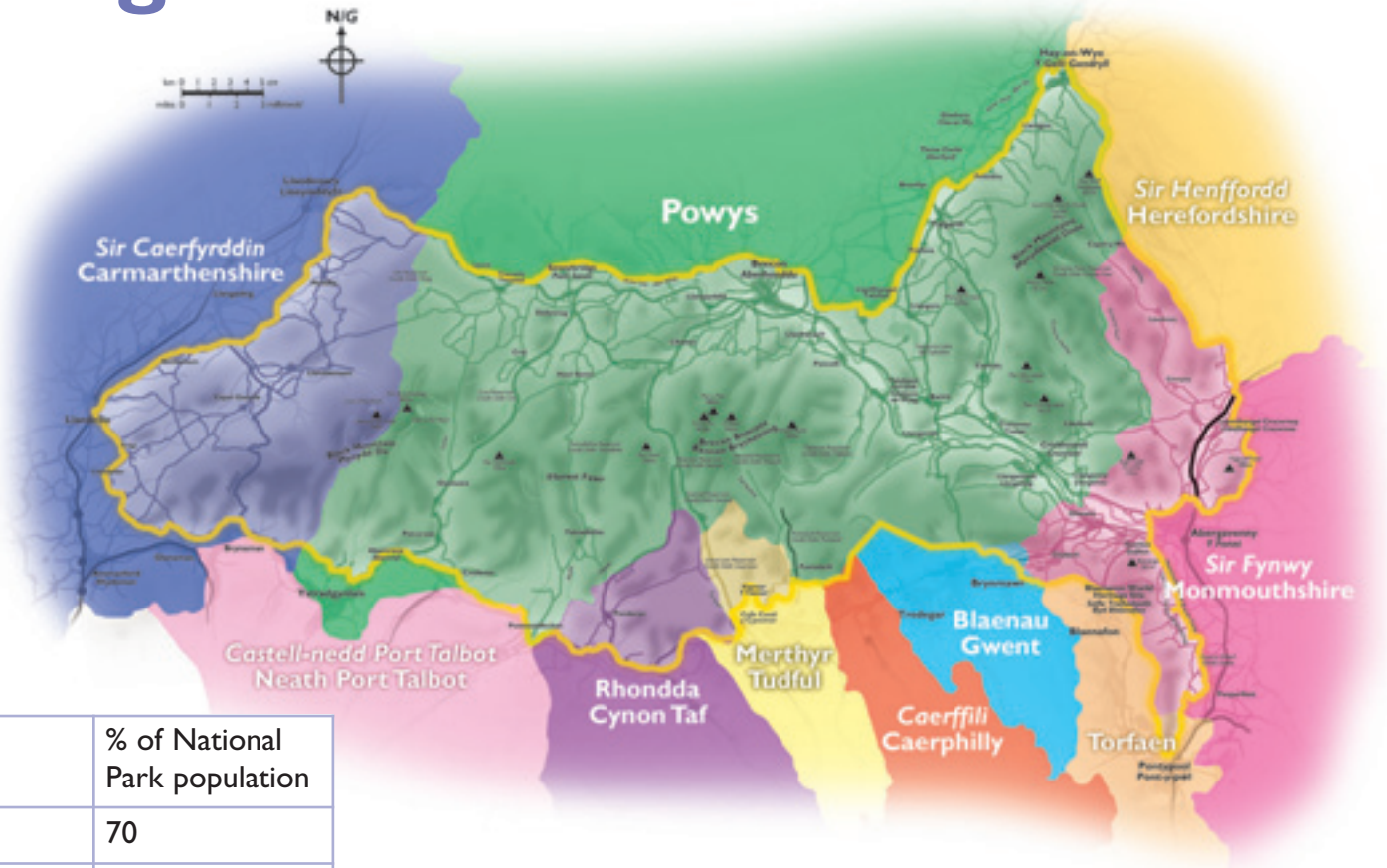
A landscape photograph showing rolling hills covered in golden-brown grass. A stream flows through the center of the valley, surrounded by tall grasses. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

Introduction

Regional Setting

The Brecon Beacons National Park as an administrative area covers parts of 9 of Wales' 22 Unitary Authorities.

The National Park Authority is the planning authority for the National Park area, while the constituent Unitary Authorities retain responsibility for all other local government services within their areas of the Park. The NPA therefore works in close partnership with these authorities, who all (except those with no population) appoint members to serve on the Authority.



Unitary Authority	% of Park area	% of National Park population
Powys	66.1	70
Carmarthenshire	16.7	5
Monmouthshire	11.1	21
Rhondda Cynon Taff	3.9	3
Merthyr Tydfil	1.8	1
Blaenau Gwent	0.2	0.1
Torfaen	0.1	0.1
Neath Port Talbot	negligible	0
Caerphilly	negligible	0



Description

The Brecon Beacons National Park contains some of the most spectacular and distinctive upland landform in southern Britain. The highest point in the Park is Pen y Fan in the Brecon Beacons, at the centre of the National Park. Its distinctive table-topped summit stands at 886m, and it is climbed by hundreds of thousands of people each year.

Despite its name, the National Park is much more than the Brecon Beacons. It also includes the Black Mountains in the east and Y Mynydd Du (The Black Mountain) in the west. In the south are some of the plateaux and ridges that form the northern rim of the South Wales Coalfield. The broad valley of the River Usk cuts across these mountains, and the rivers Tywi and Wye border the Park.

The Park covers 520 square miles (1346 square kilometres) and lies between rural Mid Wales and the industrial South Wales Valleys. It is a diverse landscape, where sweeping uplands contrast with green valleys, with dramatic waterfalls, ancient woodland, caves, forests and reservoirs.

The bulk of the Park is underlain by Old Red Sandstone rocks of Devonian age. These form the characteristic north and north-east facing escarpments of Y Mynydd Du, Fforest Fawr, the Brecon Beacons and Black Mountains, and give the Park its highest peaks.

The older Ordovician and Silurian rocks of Mid Wales cross into the north-western corner of the Park, giving a landscape of south west - north east trending ridges and valleys. In the south of the Park lie Carboniferous rocks, with limestone forming a conspicuous escarpment in some places. The Park's limestone pavements and cave systems are of European





significance. South of this are Millstone Grit scarps and plateaux, while Coal Measures outcrop along the Park's southern boundary.

The Park was glaciated during the last Ice Age, as shown by the characteristic U shape of the valleys and the presence of moraines, kames, drumlins and outwash sand and gravels. The drainage pattern is generally north-south or *vice versa*, reflecting the dip of the strata, although the major rivers, the Tywi, Usk and Wye, have west - east courses in the Park area. The value of the Park's Earth science heritage has been acknowledged by the European/UNESCO Geopark Network who granted Geopark status to the Fforest Fawr Geopark in October 2005.

Fforest Fawr (the Great Forest) is the range of mountains between the Black Mountain and the central Brecon Beacons. The Geopark includes the whole of the western half of the Brecon Beacons National Park. The designation has been granted to recognise and protect an area which is blessed with one of the most geologically interesting landscapes in southern Britain - the rocks within the western Brecon Beacons record 470 million years of geological history in some of the most outstanding scenery in the United Kingdom. It became the first Geopark in Wales, and the first Geopark in any UK National Park.

The National Park has many rich habitats for wildlife, such as upland heaths, bogs, unimproved grasslands, hay meadows, ancient woodlands and watercourses. But no part of the Park is totally 'natural': more than 90% is agricultural land, including hedged fields and the upland commons, grazed by sheep. Human influence can be seen everywhere, from Neolithic long cairns, Iron Age hillforts, Roman roads and Norman castles, to disused quarries and ironworks, managed woods and forest plantations, former railways, a canal and reservoirs, as well as the many farmsteads, villages and small market towns.

The Park is home to 33,000 people, and has a strong Welsh heritage and rich economic, social and cultural life. The largest settlement is the cathedral town of Brecon (population 7,500). Its name in Welsh is Aberhonddu, signifying the confluence of the Afon Honddu with the River Usk. It takes its English name from Brychan, a fifth century ruler whose kingdom was called Brycheiniog after him. This later became the county known as Breconshire, of which Brecon was the county town. The Romans built a fort near Brecon and the Normans had a castle here. The town thrived in mediaeval times, and the street pattern remains from those days. Now, Brecon is a busy market town with Georgian houses and Victorian shop fronts. It is an important administrative centre for Powys County Council and the Ministry of Defence as well as the National Park Authority.

Over three and a half million people a year come to the Brecon Beacons National Park to enjoy this unforgettable landscape. The mountains, uplands and valleys are all excellent walking country, and other activities include horse riding, cycling and mountain biking and water-based activities. There are major tourist attractions such as the Dan-yr-ogof Showcaves, and festivals such as the Brecon Jazz Festival, the Hay Festival of Literature and celebrations of locally produced food.





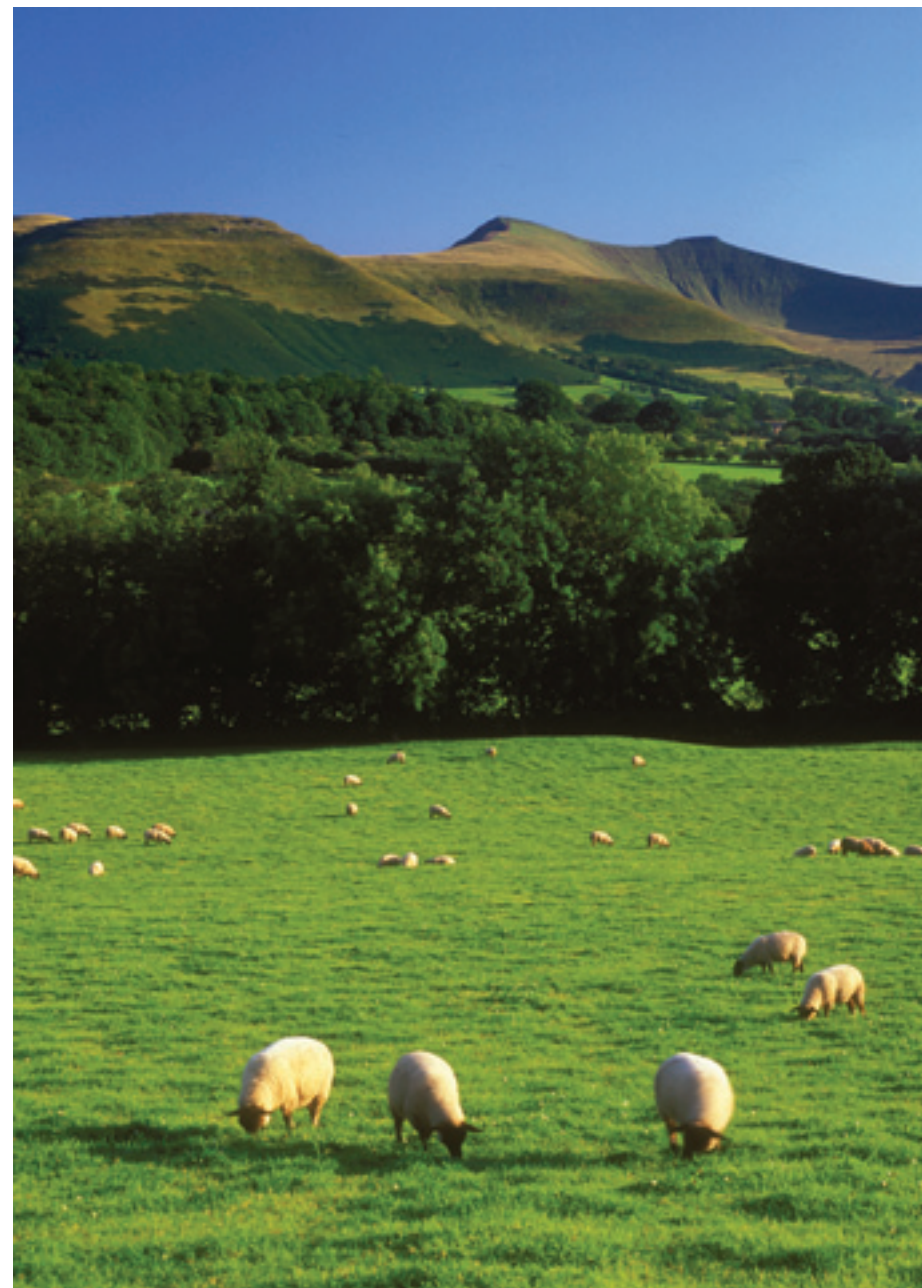
Land Ownership

National Park status does not mean that all the land within the Park is in public ownership. Most is privately owned, by estate owners, farmers and householders, but there are several large public and charitable landowners too, as shown in the table. The NPA itself owns large areas of land, mainly upland common land purchased with the help of grants to conserve it for the benefit of the public.

Landowner	Area owned (hectares)	% of the Park
Countryside Council for Wales	1049	0.8
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	5197	3.9
Forestry Commission land*	6401	4.8
Forestry Commission forests**	9622	7.1
National Park Authority	19791	14.3
National Trust	4942	3.7
Total area of Park	134600	100

* excludes land on long lease from Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water

** includes land on long lease from Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water





Indicators

Conservation & Enhancement

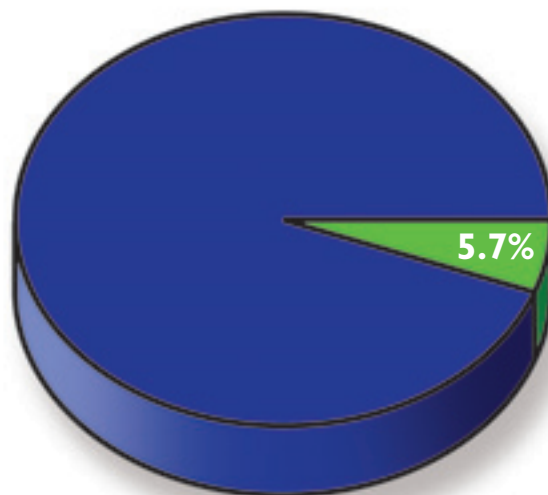
The first statutory purpose of National Park designation is to conserve and enhance the Park's "natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage". These include the visual landscape, Earth heritage (geology and geomorphology), biodiversity and the various aspects of culture, which are covered by the first set of indicators.

Landscape and Earth Heritage Indicators

It is difficult to identify suitable indicators to encapsulate the Park's landscape and how it may be changing. Broadleaved woodland and traditional field boundaries have been chosen because they are noticeable, characteristic and attractive landscape features and, importantly, because data exists for them.

Headline indicator I

Area and percentage of National Park with broadleaved tree cover



Comment

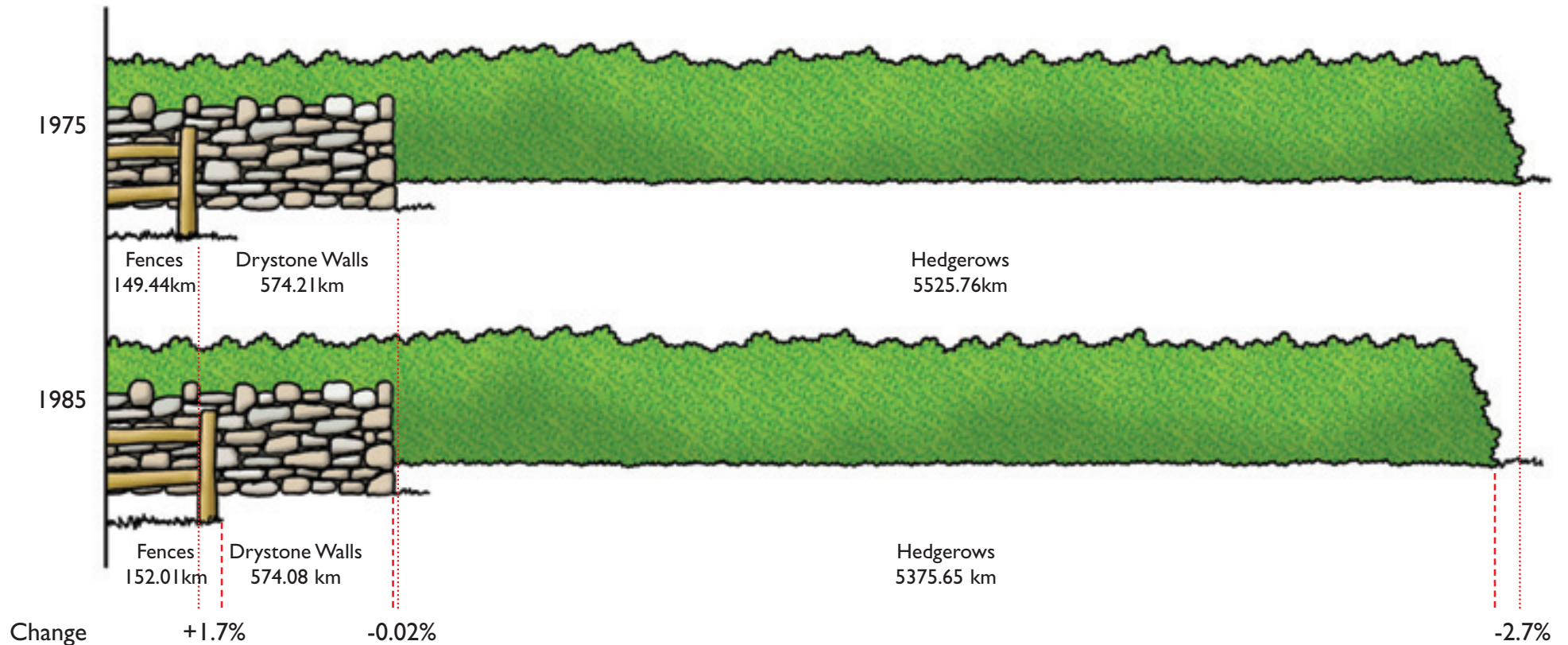
The Brecon Beacons National Park is not very heavily wooded; Wales as a whole has 6.0% broadleaved woodland cover [Forestry Statistics 2005 website]. This is partly because the Park has a high proportion of common land. However, broadleaved woodland is an important visual component of the Park's landscape, as well as being of biodiversity value. The figure given is a

benchmark with which future measurements of broadleaved woodland coverage can be compared. Any changes will affect the visual appearance of the Park's landscape. Whether more such woodland would constitute an improvement in the landscape in visual terms will be a matter of opinion, in part depending on what land uses the new woods replaced.



Indicator 2

Length of traditional field boundaries (hedges and drystone walls)



Comment

Hedgerows around fairly small fields, and drystone walls in higher parts and on the boundaries of common land, are very characteristic of the Brecon Beacons National Park. Recent data is not available, but changes in the 1970s and '80s show a small loss of hedgerows. As this was not matched by the increase in fence length, it must have been due to the creation of larger

fields. Hedgerows are now protected by law, but drystone walls are not. They are threatened by lack of maintenance and by the poaching of stone. Further loss in hedgerows and walls would change the Park's landscape in ways that many people would consider harmful. It could also harm biodiversity, as hedges are important wildlife corridors.

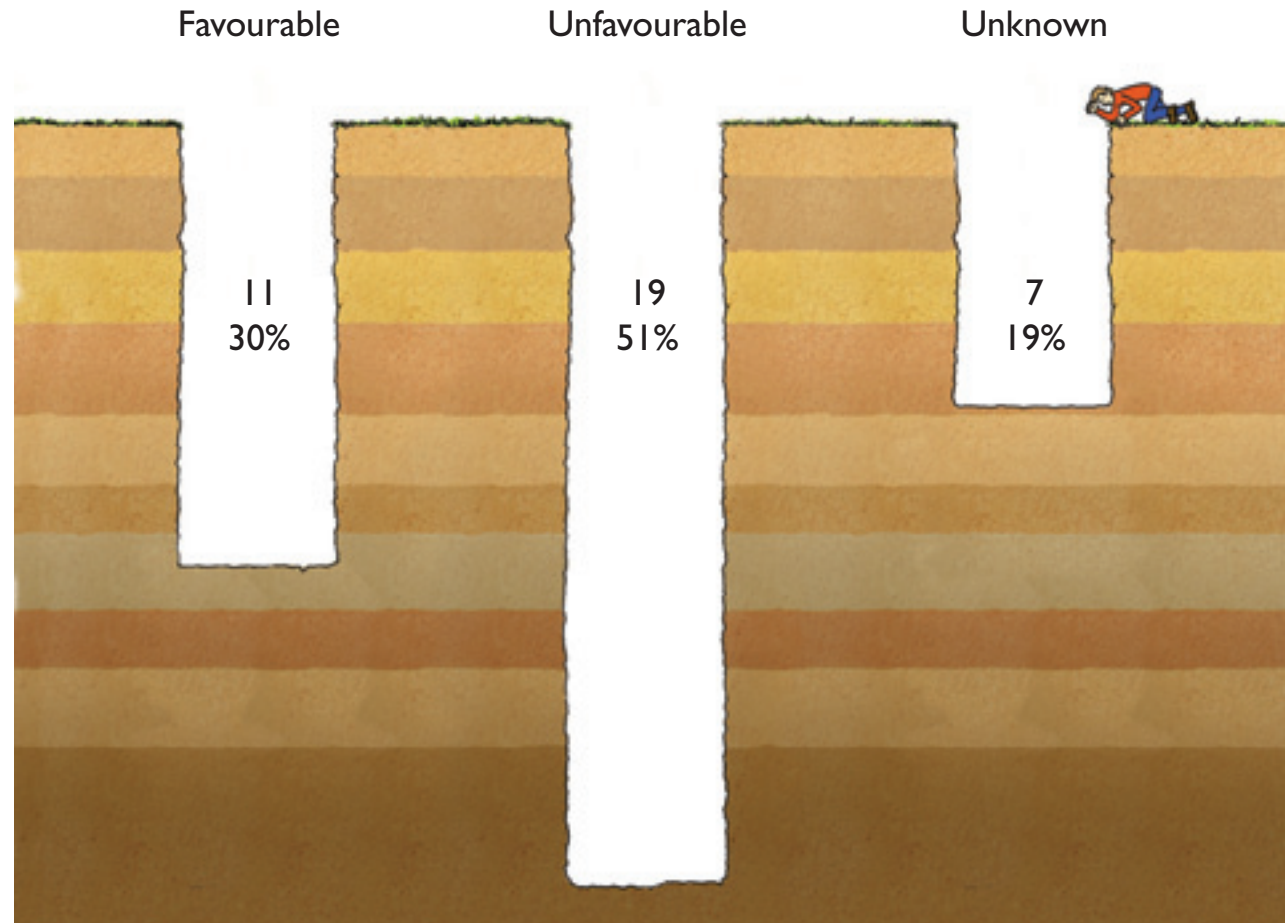
Indicator 3

Percentage of geological Sites of Special Scientific Interest in a favourable condition

There are 19 geological SSSIs within or partly in the Brecon Beacons National Park, covering 15808 ha within the Park, or 12% of the Park's area. Some of them are also designated for their biological importance. These 19 SSSIs include between them 37 different features of Earth science conservation importance. The condition of these is:

Comment

Though it is difficult to monitor the condition of the Park's geology and geomorphology, by and large, the rocks remain, and where they do not, that may also be part of a natural process. However, part of the purpose of geological SSSIs is to protect and demonstrate some important feature, so they need to be accessible and clear of vegetation, and perhaps to have a fresh rock-face. The Countryside Council for Wales works with owners of SSSIs to maintain or improve the condition of the features for which they were designated. The condition and accessibility of geological sites is particularly important in the Fforest Fawr Geopark, where the public is being encouraged to take an interest in geology, so the condition of the SSSIs is a good indicator.



4 Biodiversity Indicators

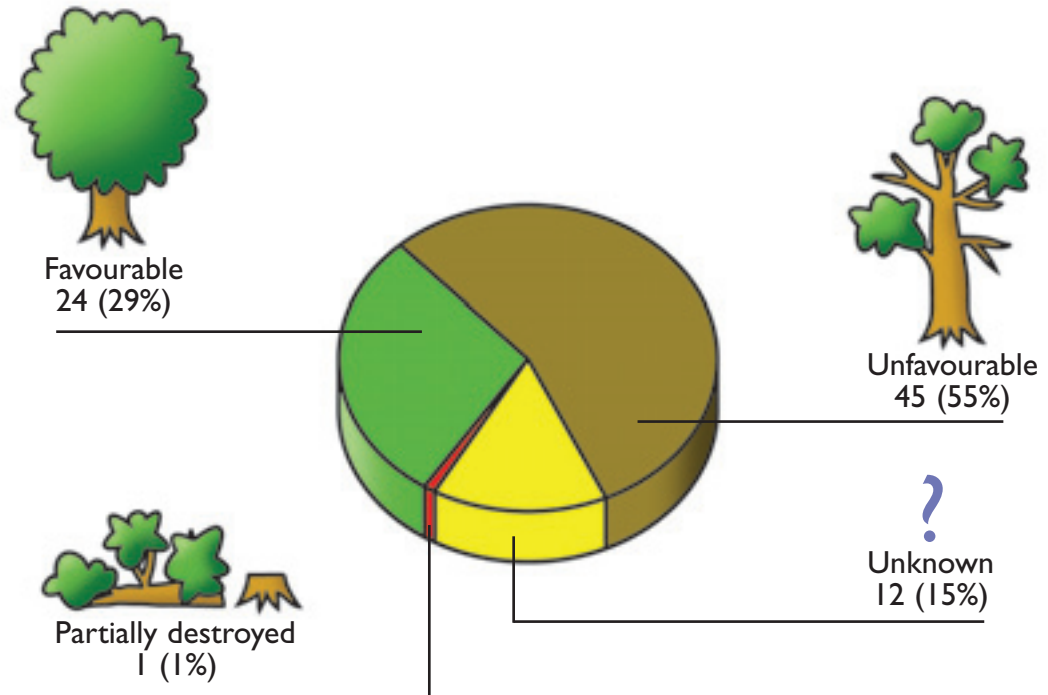
The Park's main habitats are described in the Introduction. The following indicators have been chosen to reflect some of the most important aspects of it.

Headline indicator 4

Area of the Park managed in line with conservation objectives, and its condition

The most important of the Park's natural features and habitats are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. There are a total of 75 SSSIs covering 26655ha within the Park, 20% of the Park's area. Some are designated for their geological importance, others for biodiversity, and some have importance for both. These have been counted twice in the areas given here and under indicator 3.

There are 64 biological SSSIs, covering 26047ha, 15% of the Park area. Between them these have a total of 82 different biological features of importance. The condition (i.e. whether the abundance, distribution and/or quality of the feature meets the target that the Countryside Council for Wales has set for it) of these features is:



The trend in condition of those in an unfavourable condition is:



Declining 11 (24%)



Recovering 11 (24%)



Unknown 23 (50%)

Of the 22 important features on SSSIs owned or managed by the NPA, 3 are in a favourable condition, 17 unfavourable and 2 unknown.

Source: CCW Rapid Review of Brecon Beacons NP supplied October 2005

Biological and habitat restoration is one aim of the Tir Gofal agri-environment scheme.

Farm holdings in Tir Gofal

201 holdings, 20993ha, 15.6% of the Park

No data on habitat restoration is currently available.

Source: NPA data May 2005

Comments

Many of the Park's SSSI are quite large, and include more than one feature of importance, such as grassland and rocky scree. Over half of the 82 biological features are in an unfavourable condition and less than a third are known to be in a favourable condition. The trends are not encouraging either, although there is no trend information for half the sites. For the SSSIs owned or managed by the NPA, the largest areas are on open and common land, where changes in legislation and agricultural policy are essential if favourable ecological conditions are to be achieved. Nationwide, CCW has reported that 70% of SSSIs are in an unfavourable condition, so those in the Park are better than average. CCW works with owners of SSSIs to maintain or improve the condition of the features for which they were designated.

Tir Gofal is Wales' whole farm agri-environment scheme, funded by the EU and the UK government and managed by CCW. It aims to encourage agricultural practices which will protect and enhance the landscapes of Wales, their cultural features and associated wildlife. Only 16% of the Park is currently in Tir Gofal and it has not been applied specifically to benefit particular species or habitats. The tie-in with SSSIs is low. However, a significant number of neighbouring farms are in Tir Gofal, particularly in the mid-west of the Park and along the Usk Valley, which might be of benefit to wildlife. It is fair to assume that a wider take up of agri-environment schemes and cross compliance could be of significant benefit. However, neither Tir Gofal nor cross compliance are being monitored in sufficient depth to give data for an indicator.

Indicator 5

Bats

Lesser horseshoe bat

Habitat:	Breeding: large enclosed spaces e.g. barns, lofts. Hibernation: cool, humid large enclosed spaces e.g. cellars, caves.
Status within the Park:	SAC* and LBAP** species. Well represented and may be on the increase, perhaps as a consequence of the recent series of mild winters.
Nursery sites:	At least 12, perhaps 15 known; new ones being discovered through radio tracking. Annual increases continue to be recorded at the largest nursery colony in the Park. Colony count data and observations show a general increase within the Park, whilst colonies outside the Park in the Wye Valley appear to be at risk. Of the 15 nursery sites recorded within the Park, 7 produced their highest ever counts of individuals during 2005.
Hibernation sites:	Innumerable. Data for 2003 and 2004 is available for 6 sites, and appears to show a slight increase at 5 of them. The precise relationship between the maternity roosts and hibernation roosts is unclear, though ongoing radio-tracking work is elucidating this.
Breeding females:	Probably about 1,100.
Others:	An assumed similar number of males or non-breeding females.

Daubenton's bat

Habitat:	Riparian forager, using tree and bridge roosts
Status within the Park:	Common and widespread. All records relate to trees, bridges and hibernation sites, with a few in domestic properties. A decline in this species due to disturbance of these habitats is not expected.

* Species for which a Special Area for Conservation may be designated.

** Local Biodiversity Action Plan

Source: National Bat Monitoring Programme and Brecknock Wildlife Trust annual data for Brecon Beacons National Park



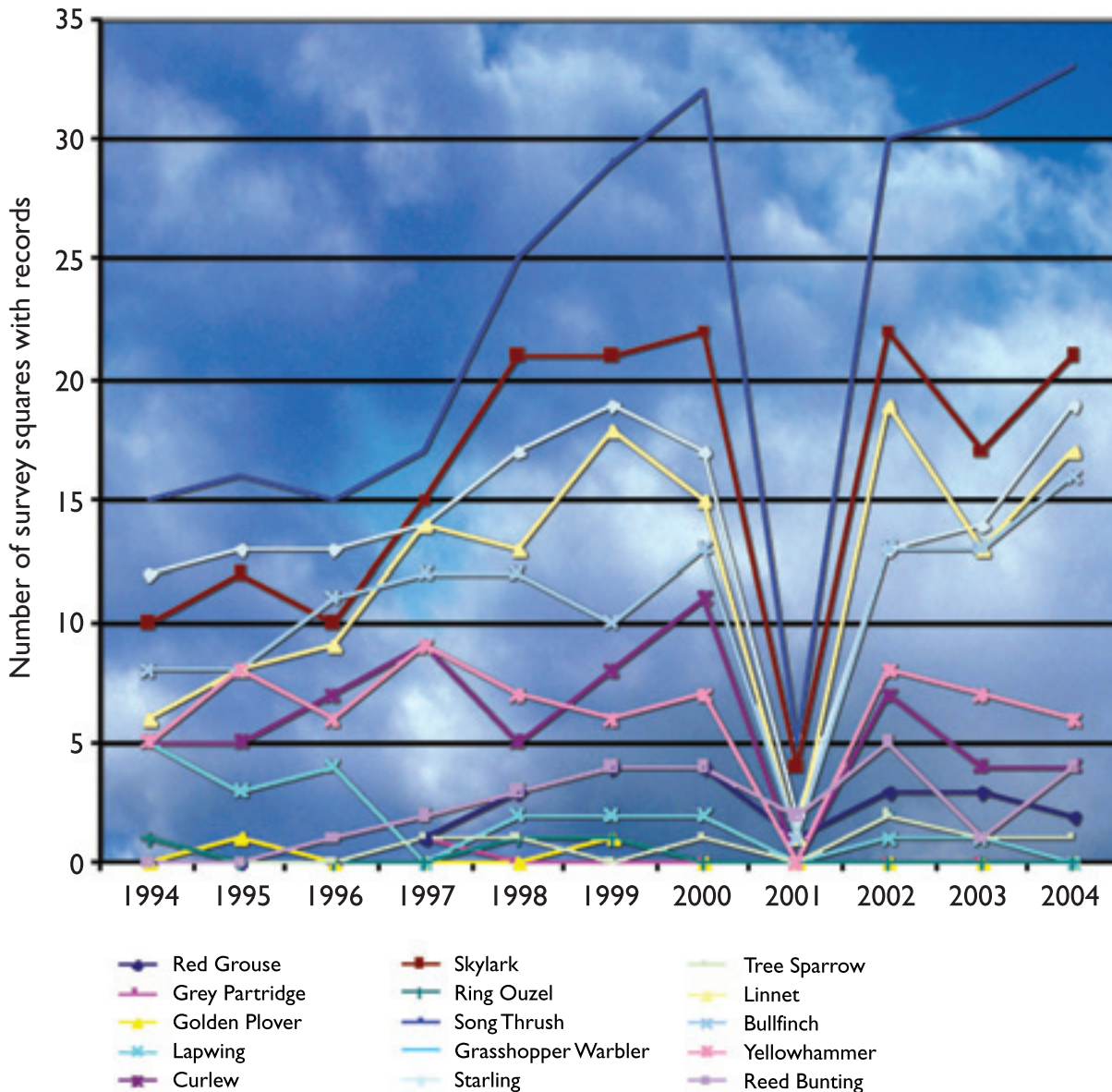
Comment.

Bats are important and protected species in themselves. They also make good indicators of the state of the Park's habitats and biodiversity, being sensitive to disturbance to their breeding and hibernation sites, which may be different, and to their insect food supply and the areas where they feed. These bat species were chosen as indicators because of their intrinsic importance as species within the Park, and because of the use they make of a variety of habitats. They are also the subject of major monitoring programmes.

The effect of Tir Gofal on both bats and birds is discussed under indicator 6 below.

Indicator 6

Breeding farmland birds



Comment.

The bird species included in the table are those LBAP species that can be termed farmland birds and for which Species Action Plans have been or will be prepared. Of these, lapwing and curlew show decreases over the years 1994-2004, song thrush and linnet show increases whilst other birds such as grey partridge, skylark, grasshopper warbler, starling, tree sparrow, bullfinch, yellowhammer and reed bunting show no overall change. There is insufficient data to describe the trends for golden plover and ring ouzel. The apparent increases appear to commence between 1996 and 1998. (Note: 2001 was the year of Foot and Mouth Disease).

There is no obvious link between farms in Tir Gofal and the distribution of lesser horseshoe bat. However, there might be a benefit to both bats and birds where a significant number of neighbouring farms are in Tir Gofal. Some woodland bird species may have increased in numbers due to Tir Gofal habitat improvements, but this might also relate to abandonment of land or an increase in gardens and landscaped areas created by development in the Park. There are declines in other priority bird species, for example lapwing and curlew, and no clear picture for golden plover or ring ouzel. Whilst lapwing is reliant on arable land and pasture for breeding, all these species are also reliant upon open country in the uplands. It is fair to assume that the abundance of farmland and woodland birds as well as bats could increase significantly with wider take up of agri-environment schemes and cross compliance.

Cultural Heritage Indicators

It is difficult to define cultural heritage, let alone identify suitable indicators for which data is available.

“Culture” has two distinct meanings:

- art, literature, architecture etc. and the appreciation of these, and
- the customs, institutions, and achievements of a particular group of people.

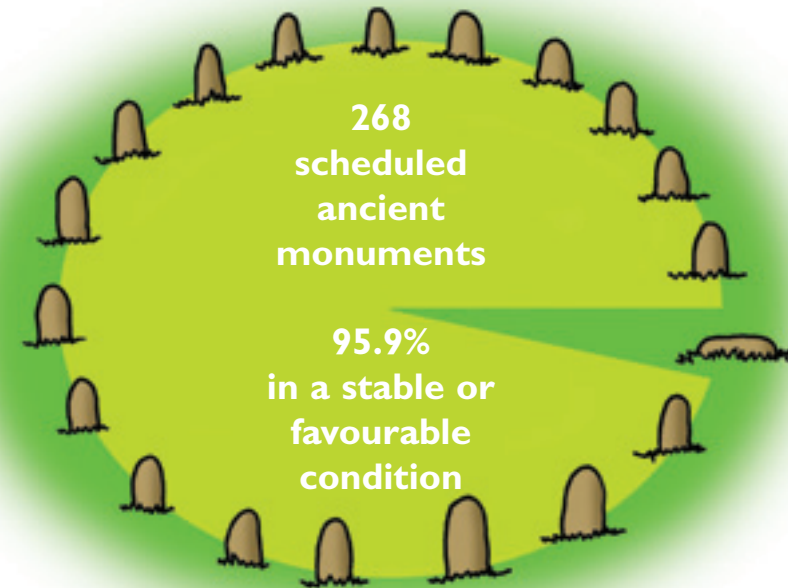
“Heritage” is:

- valued things, including buildings, that have been passed down from previous generations, and
- things of historic or cultural value that are worthy of preservation.

The chosen indicators cover three aspects of cultural heritage which are important within the National Park and for which information is available: ancient monuments, historic buildings and local cultural events.

Headline indicator 7

Percentage of scheduled ancient monuments in a stable or favourable condition



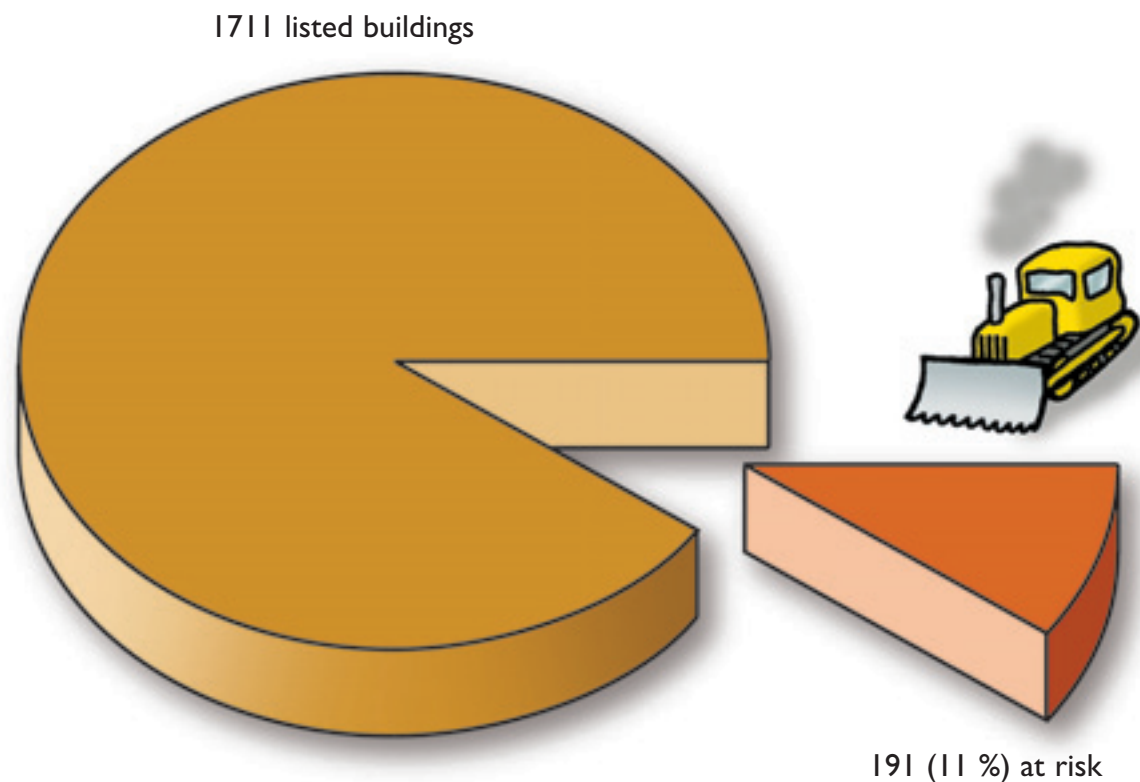
Comment

'Scheduling' is the process through which nationally important man-made sites and monuments are given legal protection by Cadw. The monuments need not be very old, nor visible above ground. They range from prehistoric standing stones and burial mounds, through medieval castles, abandoned farmsteads and villages to more recent limekilns and quarry inclines. There are many other similar features in the Park which have not been granted the protection of scheduling.

The number of scheduled monuments reflects those that exist or are known of. It does not indicate the state of the Park's cultural heritage. Cadw monitors the condition of scheduled monuments, and this has been chosen as an indicator of the state of the resource as a whole. It may over-estimate the good condition of all the Park's ancient monuments, because the un-scheduled ones are less protected from destruction or decay.

Indicator 8

Percentage of listed buildings 'at risk'



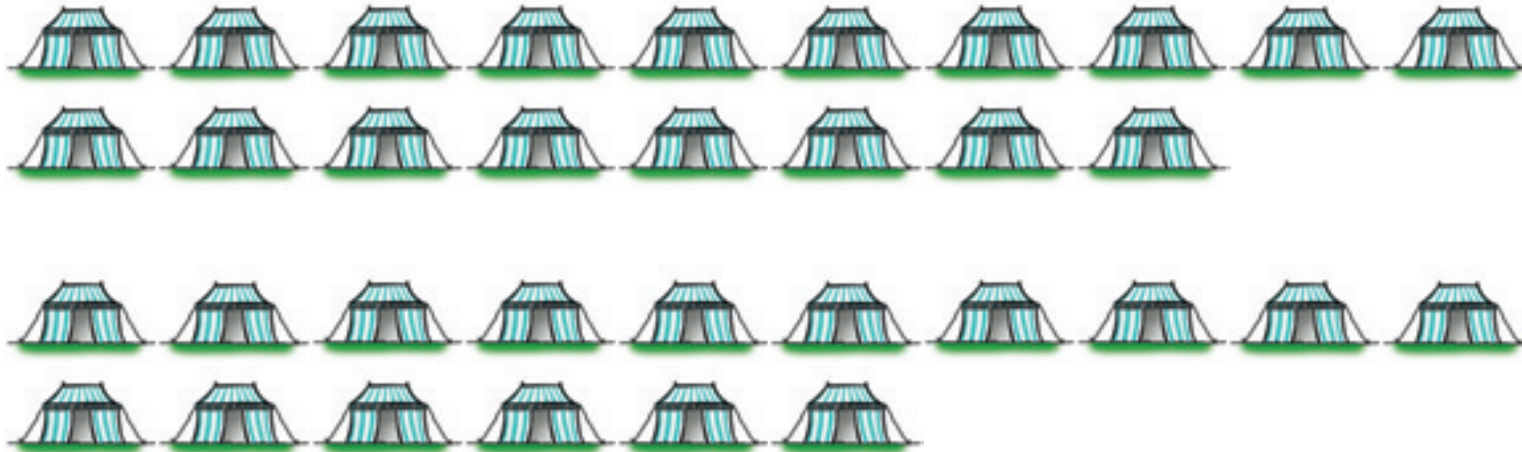
Comment

The Park has a rich heritage of buildings from many periods of history. Buildings that are or can be made usable are generally given legal protection by listing rather than scheduling. Buildings are said to be at risk if they are suffering from neglect and decay, or are vulnerable to becoming so. The figures will change during the coming 12 months as Cadw completes the resurvey of Wales, with buildings being added to or removed from the list. Any extra buildings will have to be surveyed for risk. Once this has been done, any changes to the at-risk figure will reflect changes in the state of the Park's listed buildings.

Source: Based on NPA Buildings at Risk survey, September 2005

Indicator 9

Number of local cultural events



18 agricultural shows and similar events;

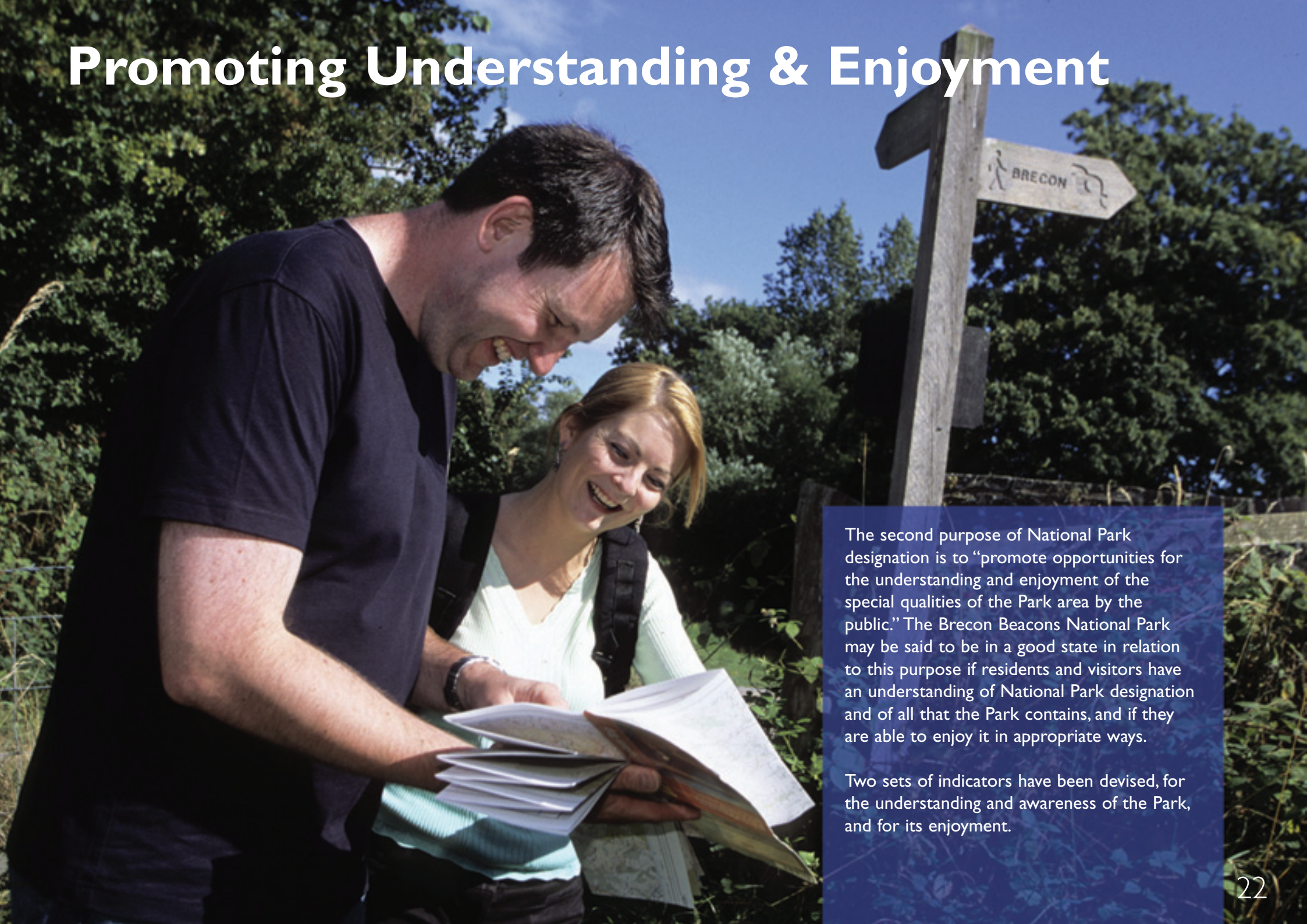
16 cultural and food related events

Source: Data for 2005 collected by NPA

Comment

It is very difficult to pinpoint what are “the customs, institutions, and achievements” of the people who live in the National Park area, let alone find a good indicator of their state. However, the number of shows and events does give some idea of the Park’s thriving cultural life. It may be possible to collect numbers attending these events for future State of the Park Reports. Records from future years will show trends and form an indicator of the strength of the Park’s cultural life.

Promoting Understanding & Enjoyment



The second purpose of National Park designation is to “promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park area by the public.” The Brecon Beacons National Park may be said to be in a good state in relation to this purpose if residents and visitors have an understanding of National Park designation and of all that the Park contains, and if they are able to enjoy it in appropriate ways.

Two sets of indicators have been devised, for the understanding and awareness of the Park, and for its enjoyment.

10

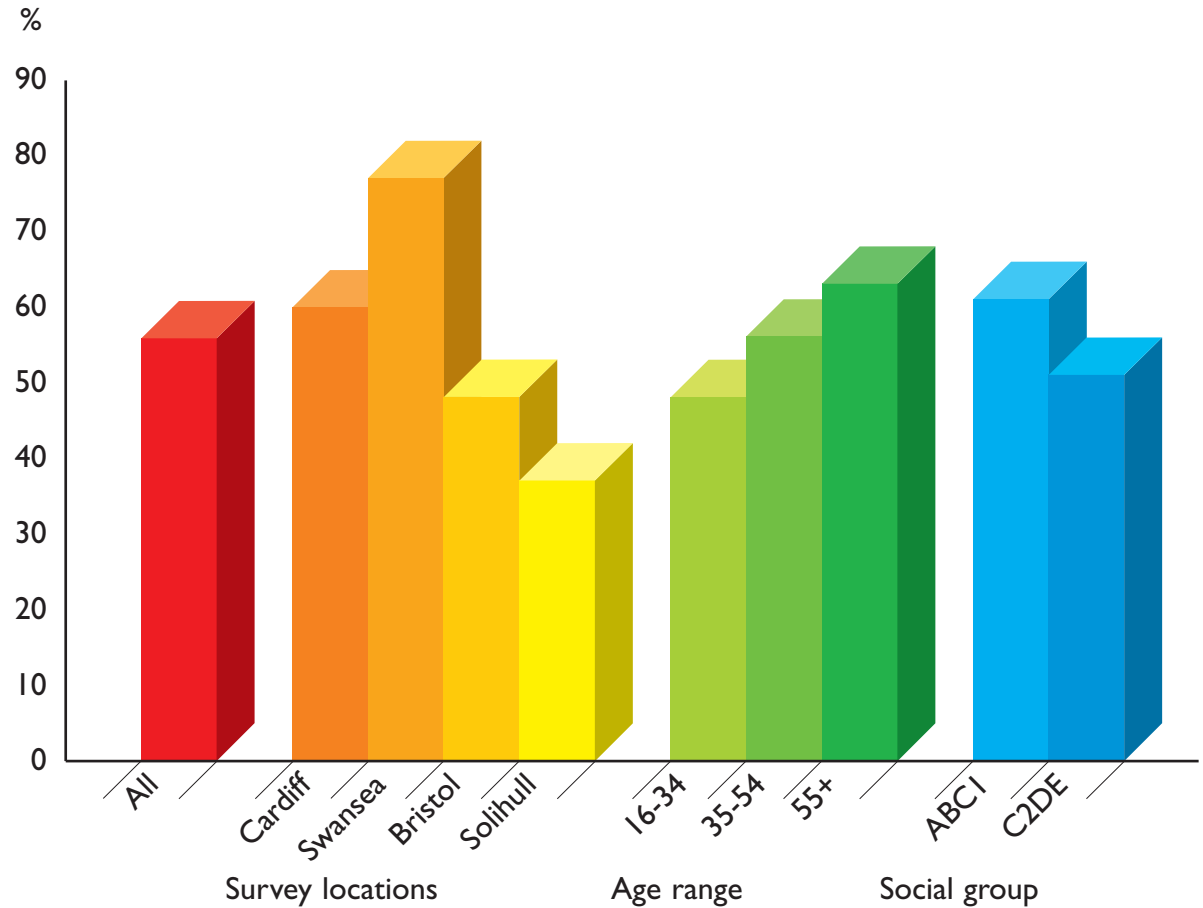
Raising Awareness Indicators

Raising Awareness Indicators

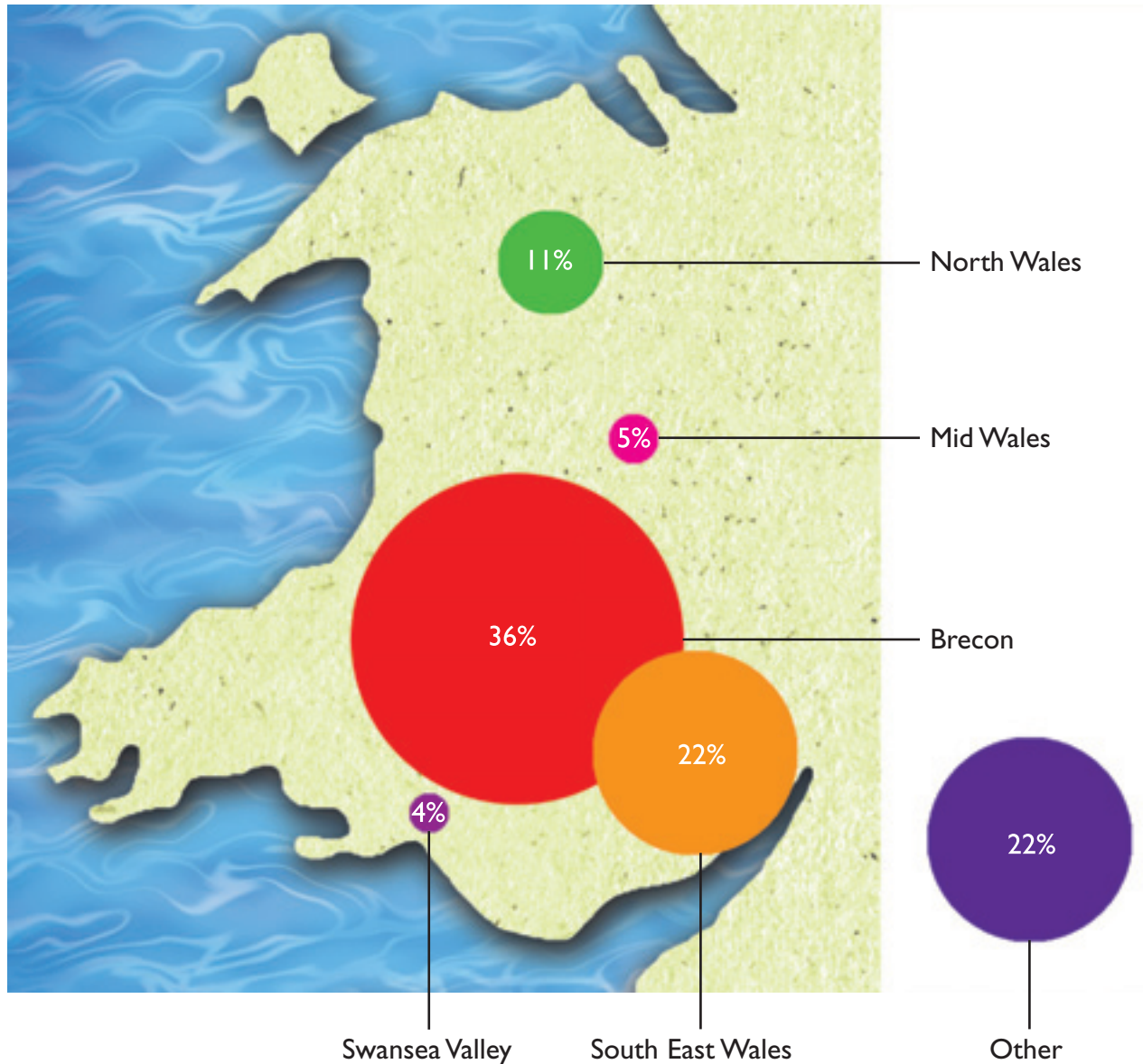
The NPA provides education and information about the Park’s “natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage,” and opportunities for enjoying these. It also works with others to educate the wider public about national parks in general and what they may have to offer. The chosen indicators cover both these aspects.

Headline indicator 10

Awareness of the Brecon Beacons National Park



Where the Brecon Beacons National Park is thought to be



Comment

In 2002 the NPA commissioned Market Research Wales to carry out a study to help its understanding of the information and interpretation needs of visitors and potential visitors. Part of the study involved a street survey in Cardiff, Swansea and Bristol, some of the Park's prime catchment areas, with Solihull also surveyed as a control.

Just over 50% of those questioned had heard of the Brecon Beacons National Park. There was more awareness among those in South Wales, and in older age-groups and higher social groups. 43% of those questioned claimed to know where the Park is, giving the locations shown in the second table. Given that the Park straddles the South East, South West and Mid Wales planning areas, and includes Brecon and the upper Swansea Valley, nearly 70% of them were to some degree correct.

Visitors to the Park were also interviewed about the quality and availability of information, but the amount of data was not sufficient to use the responses as an indicator.



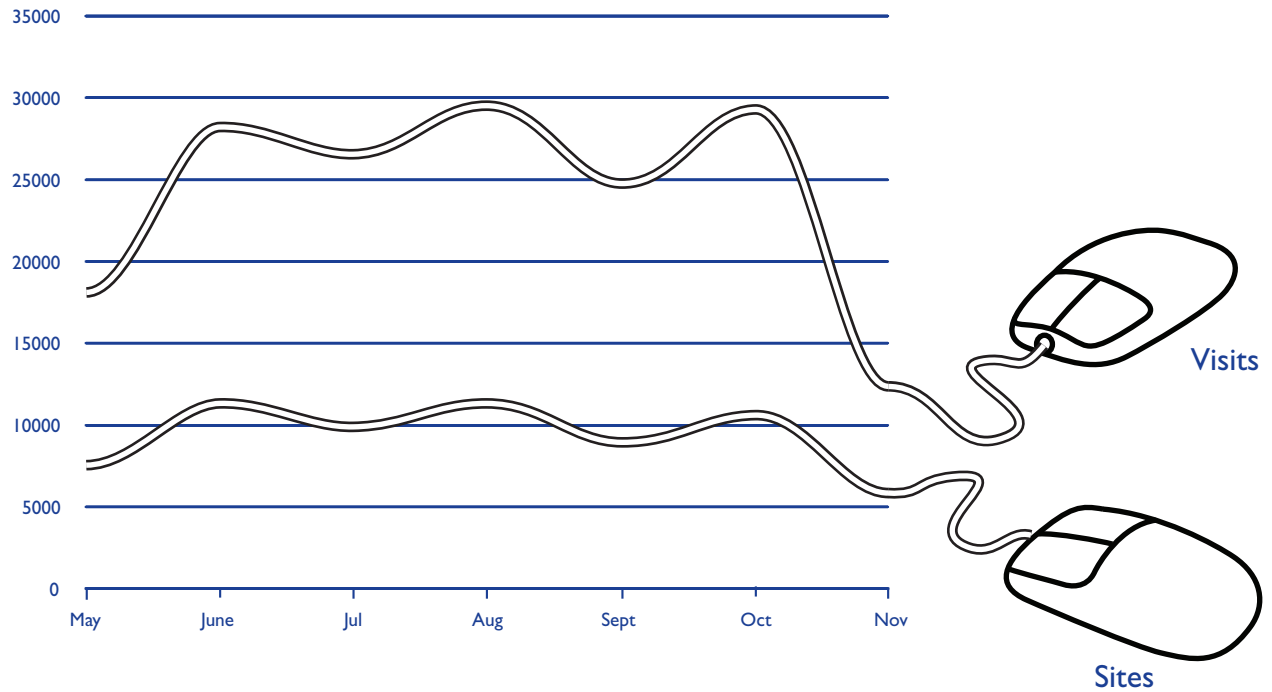
Indicator 11

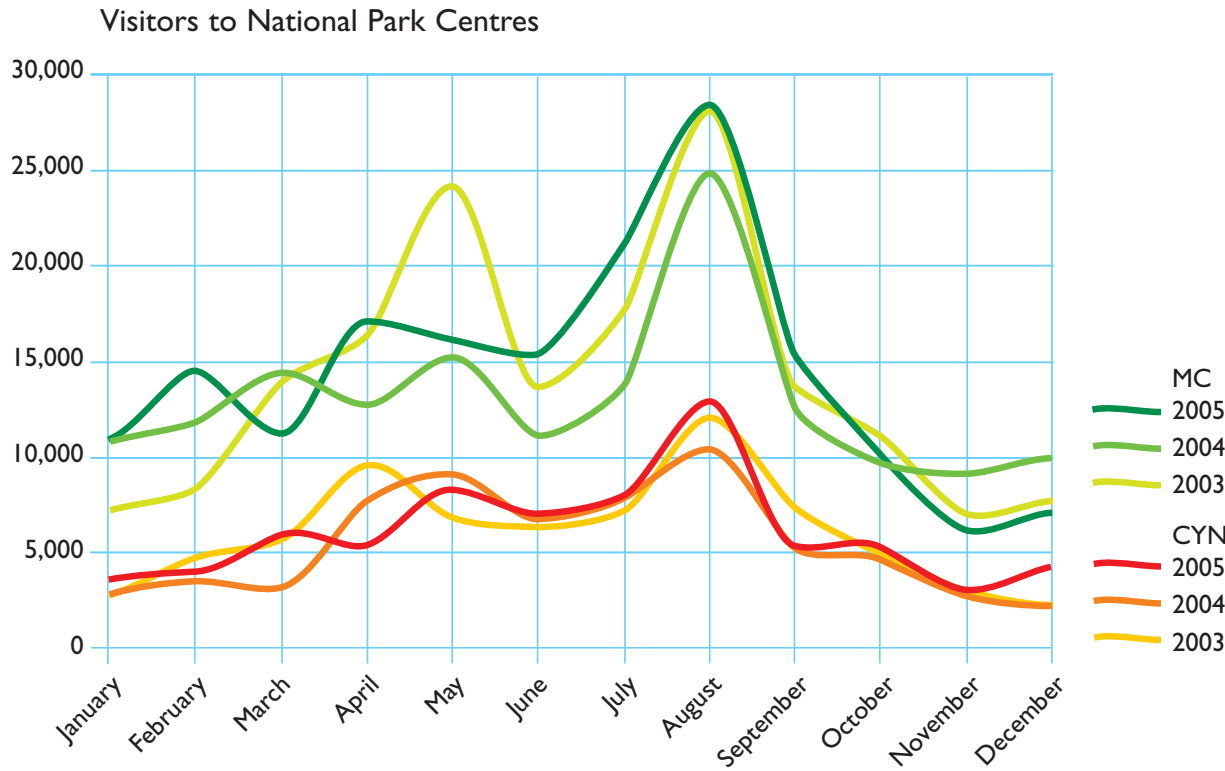
Numbers of visitors accessing the NPA's services

Visits to Brecon Beacons National Park website 2005

Visits. When a request is made to the server from a given site, the amount of time since a previous request is calculated. If the time difference is greater than a pre-configured value (currently 30 minutes) or it is the site's first visit, it is considered a 'new visit', and added to the site's total of visits. Due to technical limitations, this number is not absolutely accurate, but it is very close.

Sites. Each request to the NPA's web server comes from a unique 'site', referenced by a name or IP address. 'Sites' means the number of IP addresses that made requests to the server during the period. This is the closest that can be reached to the number of individual users who visited the site.





Source: visitor counts at Centres

Comment

The NPA’s website is one of the main ways in which visitors, potential visitors and other interested people can find out about the National Park and what it has to offer. Increasingly, the website is also a point of contact for other aspects of the NPA’s work, including its planning service. The website was completely rebuilt in early 2005, so figures for visits are only available from May.

Another important way for people use the NPA’s services is by visiting its visitor centres, the Mountain Centre (MC) and Craig-y-nos Country Park (CYN). Visitor numbers to these centres over the last three years are shown. Both centres offer information and interpretation about the Park and their local area, and the opportunity to enjoy the surroundings. The Mountain Centre’s Tearooms are also very popular. The fluctuations in counts for any given month could be caused by bad weather, especially at weekends or over holidays, by the date of Easter – usually a busy period – or by the breakdown of an automatic counter. (Manual counts are then made but these will tend to be underestimates.)

Indicator 12

Effectiveness of NPA's education services

The NPA plans to start assessing the effectiveness of its education services during 2006/7. Data should thereafter be available for this indicator.

Comment

It is important for the NPA to know whether its education services are effective, but difficult to devise ways of assessing this, especially as the groups involved may be based a long way from the Park, and only visit for a short time. This work is planned to start in 2006/7, and the results will be brought into the State of the Park Report when available.

Headline indicator 13

Percentage visitors satisfied with their visit to the Brecon Beacons National Park

Information on visitor satisfaction at 4 centres run by the NPA is being collected in 2005. Data will be available later in 2006.

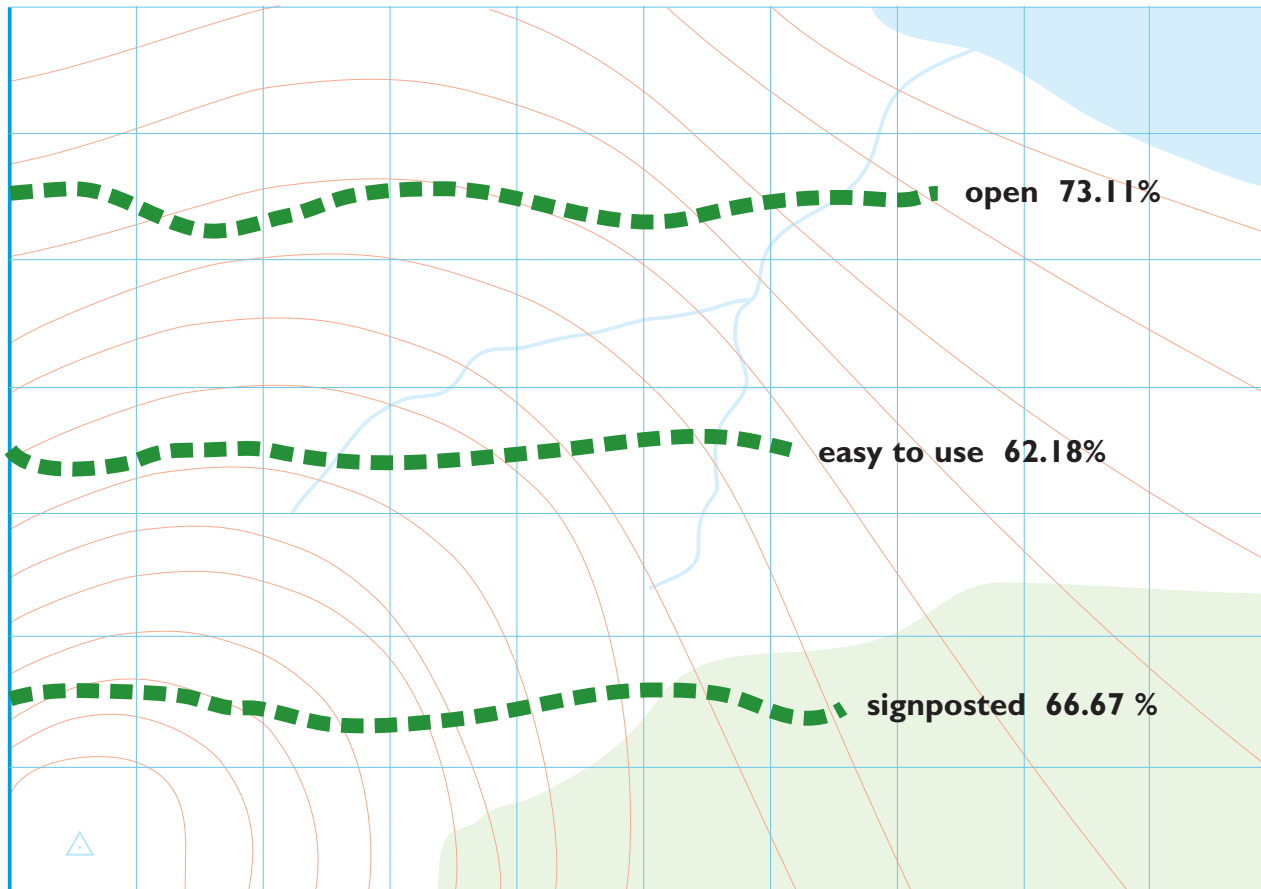
Comment

It is important for the NPA to know whether visitors are enjoying their visits to the Park and in particular to the centres provided by the NPA. The data currently being analysed will act as a baseline for future such surveys.

Indicator 14

Percentage of Public Rights of Way that are easy to use

There are 1983 km of public rights of way in the Park: 1415 km footpaths, 367 km bridleways and 200 km byways and roads used as public paths. The condition of these is:



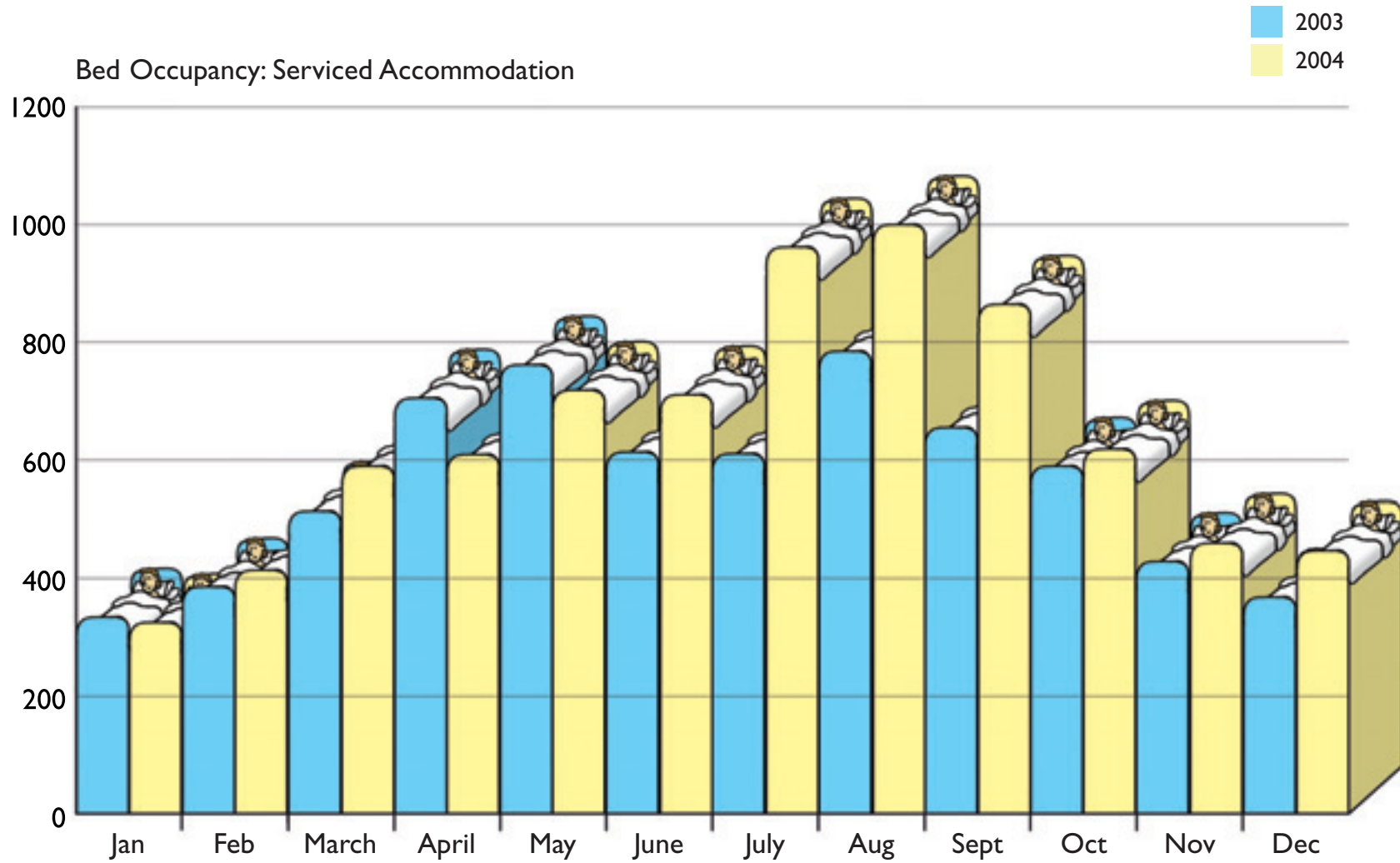
Source: NPA's 2005 5% survey

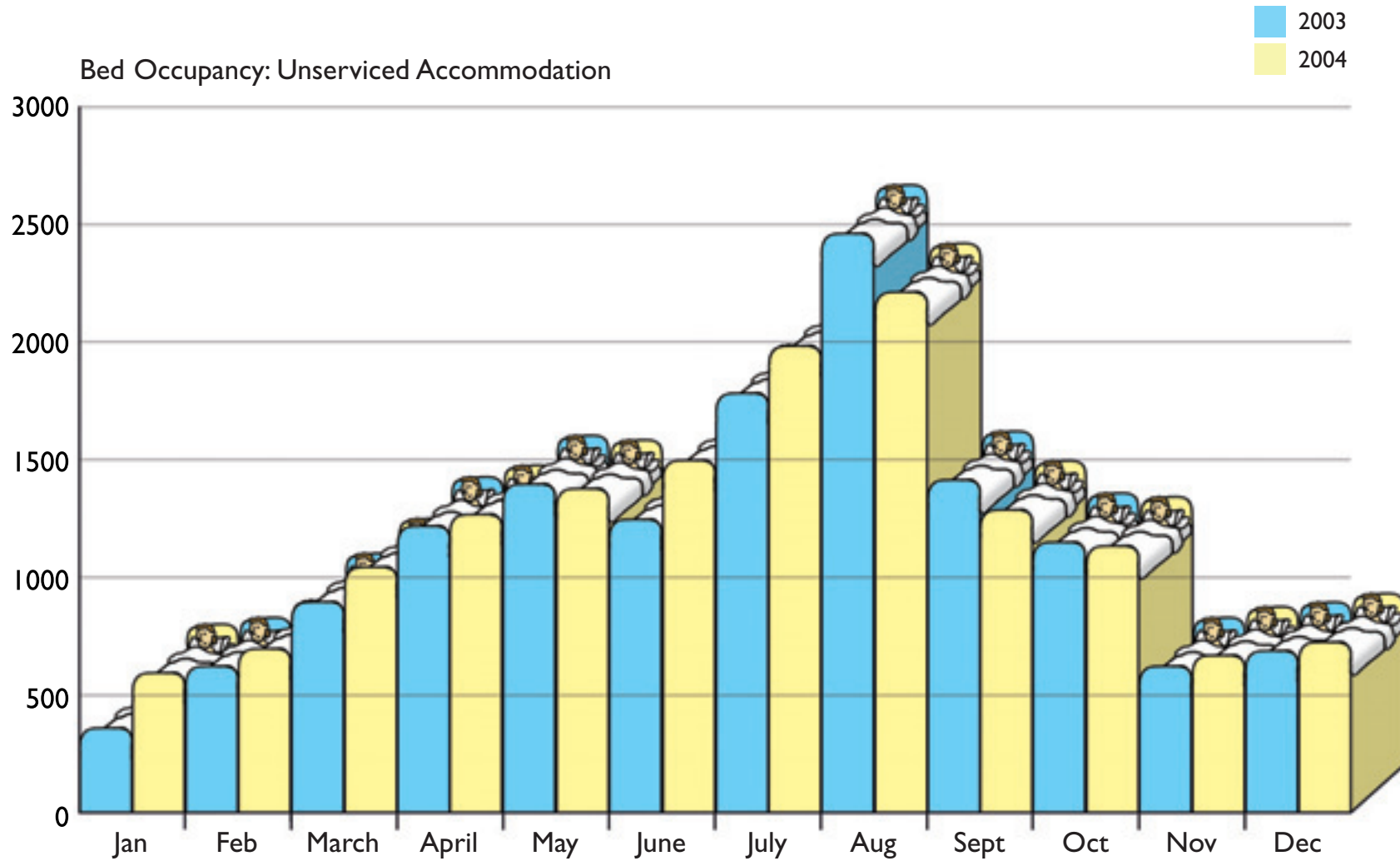
Comment

Walking is the key attraction of the Brecon Beacons National Park, while the popularity of off-road cycling is increasing. The NPA is supporting tourism based on both cycling and horse riding. The accessibility of the public rights of way network is therefore critical to the enjoyability of the Park.

Indicator 15

Visitor accommodation bed occupancy





Source: STEAM data

Comment

The numbers of occupied bed spaces in visitor accommodation is an indicator of the numbers of visitors staying in - and hopefully enjoying - the Park. (The percentage occupancy, which brings in the number of beds available, relates to the health of the tourism industry.) Bed occupancy

information is collected for the Park by STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Model), and collated monthly, in several categories, which have been combined into serviced and non-serviced accommodation for this indicator.

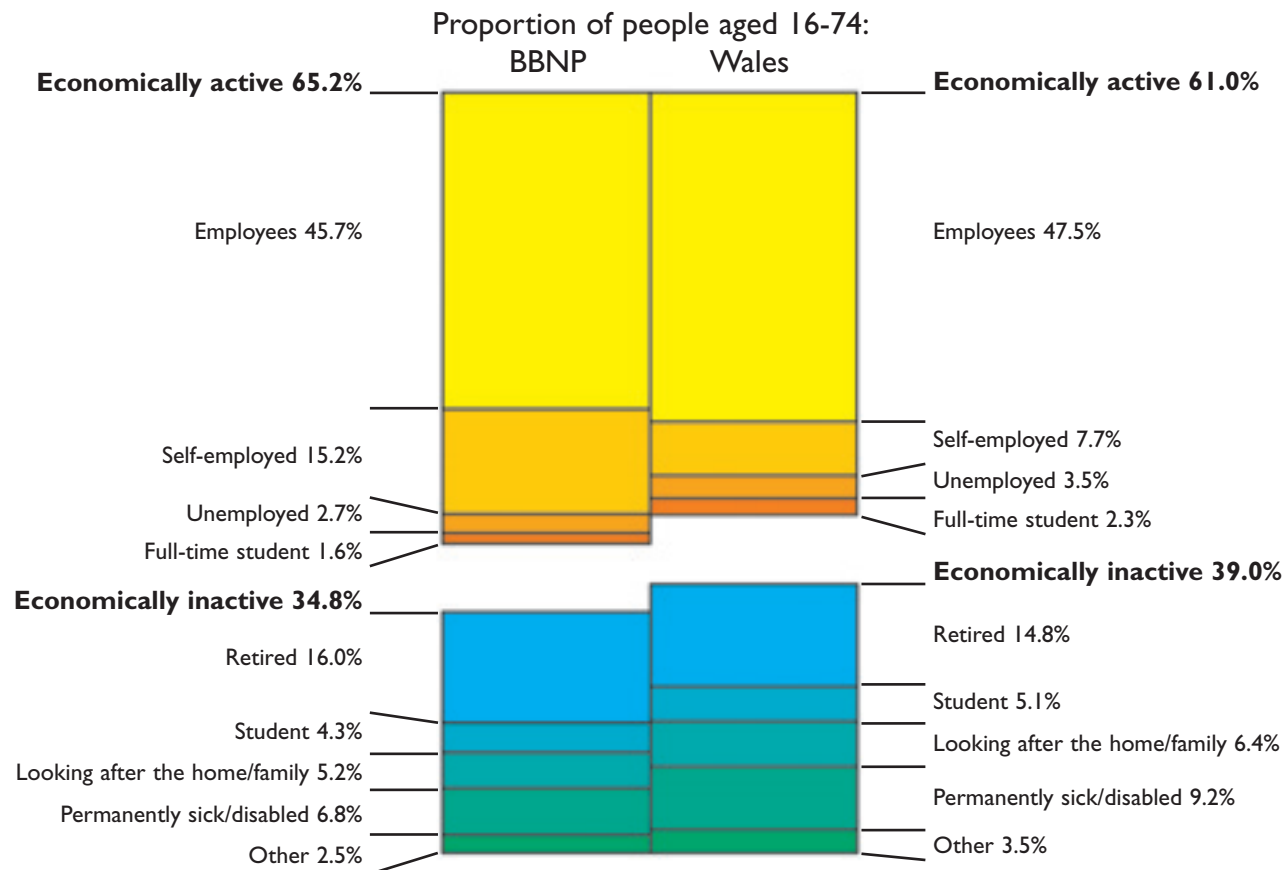
Vibrant Sustainable Communities

The NPA also has a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park, although without incurring significant expenditure. The NPA also serves the Park as planning authority, which gives it an additional involvement in community life. In practice, it can be difficult to separate community issues from those relating more directly to the NPA's statutory purposes. This section divides the NPA's role in relation to local communities into three: the Park's economy; its population and community life; and sustainable transport.

Sustainable Economic Activity Indicators

Most information on demographic, economic and social issues is collected by WAG or the national Census for Unitary Authority areas or sub-divisions of these. Because the Park spans 7 UA areas with population and its boundary cuts across Census output areas, data for the Park requires complex calculation, is not precise and is not available for topics where confidentiality could be an issue. Comparisons with previous Censuses may be unavailable.

Headline indicator 16 Economic Activity



Comment

It is hard to assess the significance of these figures without comparative data, which is not available for the Park from the 1991 Census. It is interesting to note that in 2001 the Park had a higher proportion of economically active people than Wales as a whole, including twice the

percentage of self-employed people, and a lower proportion of unemployed. The Park had a slightly higher percentage of retired people than Wales, but fewer in the other economically inactive categories.

Indicator 17

Employment by type of industry

Proportion of people aged 16-74 working in:	1991	2001
Agriculture and fishing*	10.2%	7.3%
Energy and water	2.6%	1.2%
Manufacturing	10.1%	10.8%
Construction	6.4%	7.1%
Distribution, hotels and restaurants**	17.8%	20.9%
Transport and communication***	4.1%	3.7%
Banking, finance and insurance	7.5%	10.5%
Public administration, education and health†	-	33.1%
Other services††	37.4%	5.3%
Not stated†††	2.0%	-
Total	98.1%	99.9%

* Includes forestry in 1991. Forestry not mentioned in 2001

** Distribution and catering in 1991

*** Transport only in 1991

† Not specified in 1991, but presumably included in Other services

†† Presumably 1991 figure includes public administration etc.

††† No category for Not stated in 2001

Comment

Calculations on the 2001 Census data were better than for 1991, and the Census data categories were changed, so the comparison is not exact. The main changes are a decrease in employment in agriculture (not unexpected, perhaps) and an increase in distribution, hotels and restaurants, and banking and finance. However, the Park's main employment category continues to be public administration, education and health. This is not surprising, as Powys County Council's Brecknock Shire Office is in Brecon, along with offices of Dyfed Powys Police, the Ministry of Defence and the NPA itself. There are 3 secondary schools and a number of primary schools in the Park and several nearby, plus the Brecon War Memorial Hospital.

Sources: 1991 Census; 2001 Census in Digest of Welsh Local Area Statistics 2004

Indicator 18

Tourism spend by sector of expenditure

£'s millions	2000	2001*	2002	2003	2004
Accommodation	6.8	5.8	7.0	7.4	7.9
Food & Drink	21.0	19.0	22.5	23.7	25.8
Recreation	6.9	6.2	7.4	7.8	8.5
Shopping	16.1	14.6	17.2	18.1	19.6
Transport	15.1	13.7	16.2	17.1	18.5
Indirect Expenditure	26.3	23.7	28.2	29.6	32.0
VAT	11.6	10.4	12.3	13.0	14.0
TOTAL	103.9	93.4	110.8	116.7	126.3

Comment

Tourism spend information is collected for the Park by STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Model). While the figures given may not be precise, the comparisons over the years are valid. They indicate the high, continuing and increasing importance of tourism to the economy of the Brecon Beacons National Park. Incidentally they show the tourism importance of access to the countryside, with total tourism spend falling by 10% during the year that much of the Park was out of bounds due to Foot and Mouth Disease.

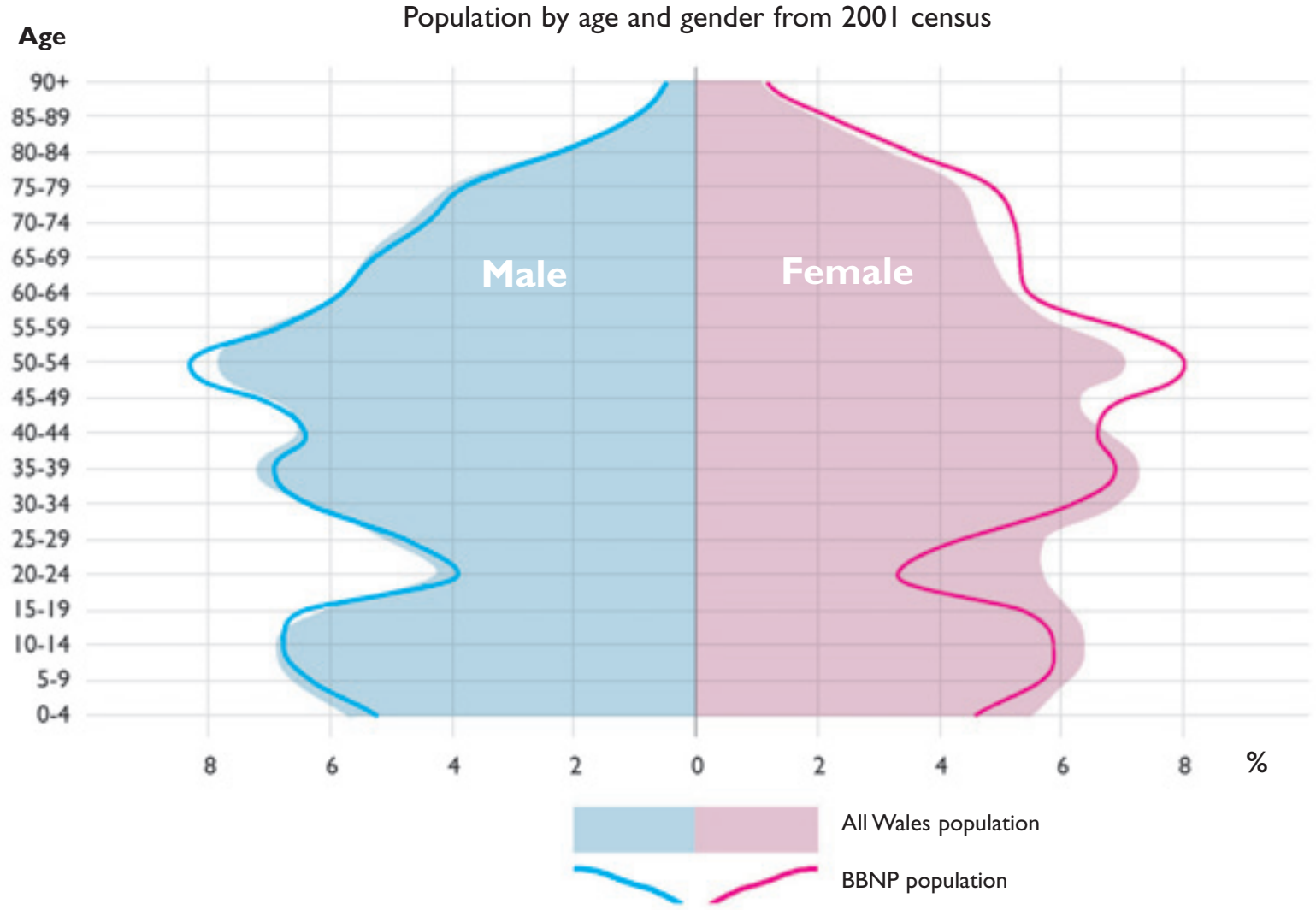
Source: STEAM 2000-2004

* 2001 was the year of Foot and Mouth Disease

Thriving Healthy Communities Indicators

Headline indicator 19

Population profile



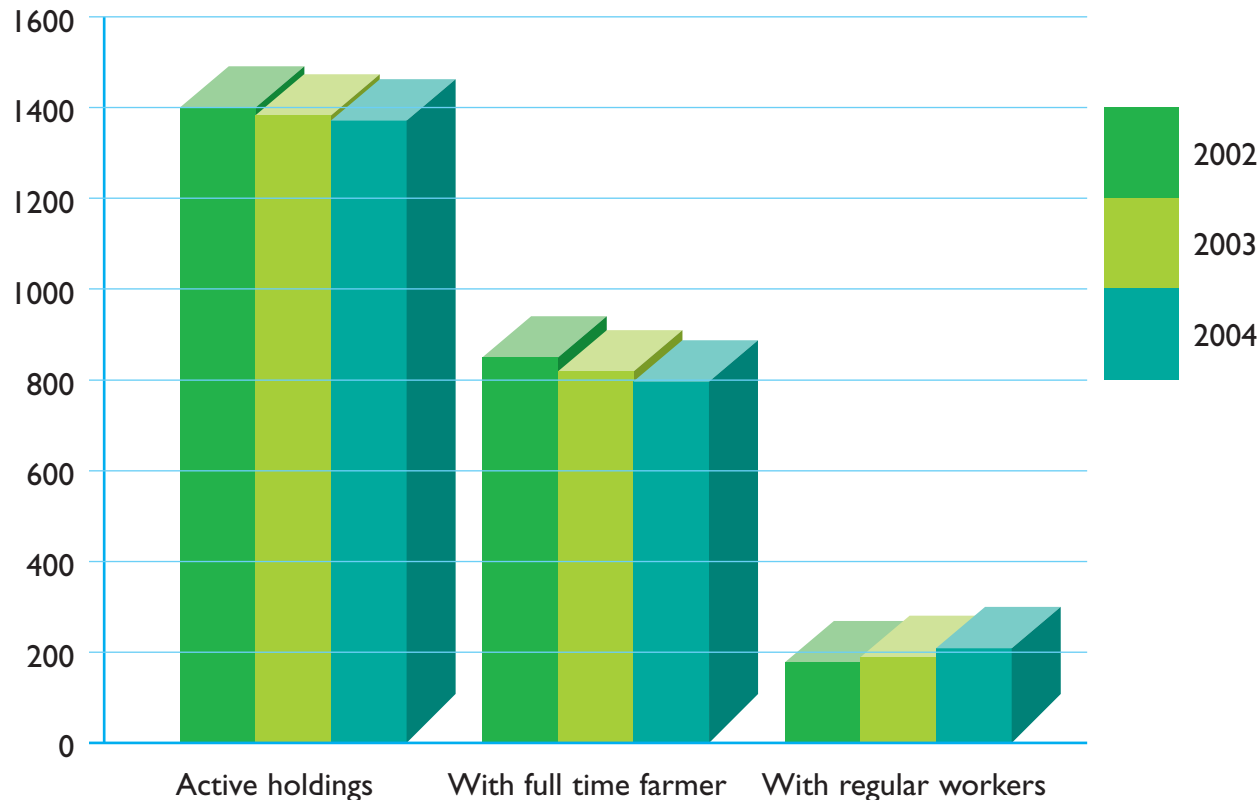
Comment

The Park's pyramid is more symmetrical than that for Wales as a whole. In relation to the population of Wales, the Park has a lower proportion of females in all age groups up to 30-34, especially from 15-34, but a higher proportion in each age band thereafter. However, for males there is a higher proportion than nationally from ages 5 to 19, and a very similar proportion thereafter. The birth rate (ages 0-5) in the Park is slightly below the national rate, and the proportions of people in age groups over 60 are slightly higher. Comparative data for the Park from 1991 is not available.

Source: 2001 Census of Population & Housing, Standard Table SO1, derived by Cardiff Research Centre

Indicator 20

Number of farms and farmers



Note: Agricultural statistics are collected for Small Areas based on community council areas, so there is not an exact fit for the Park. The figures in the table are for the sum of those Small Areas with more than half their area within the Park.

Comment

Agriculture is basic to the economy of the Park and its community life, as well as to its landscape and wildlife. The agricultural economy and society are changing throughout the UK, with fewer holdings and fewer people working full-time as farmers. In the Park, the amount of land in farm holdings remained fairly constant over the period 2002-2004. The slight fall in active holdings is likely to be due to farm amalgamations, and the fall in full time farmers to some taking paid work off the farm. These trends in turn may have contributed to an increase in hired or contract labour. Comparison with earlier data for the Park is not possible because different survey areas were used before 2002.

Source: WAG Agricultural Statistics

Indicator 21

Number and use of community meeting places



42 community, village and church halls or other meeting spaces available to the community, in 35 settlements in 25 community council areas.

Comment

Having somewhere to meet is central to community life. The Park’s communities are generally well-served with halls and places to meet. There are no community council areas with the bulk of their population in the Park which do not have a hall within the Park. There are 18 communities without a hall, but all but one of these are served by a hall outside the Park.

Data on the usage of halls would require considerable survey work, and is not available for this edition of the State of the Park Report.

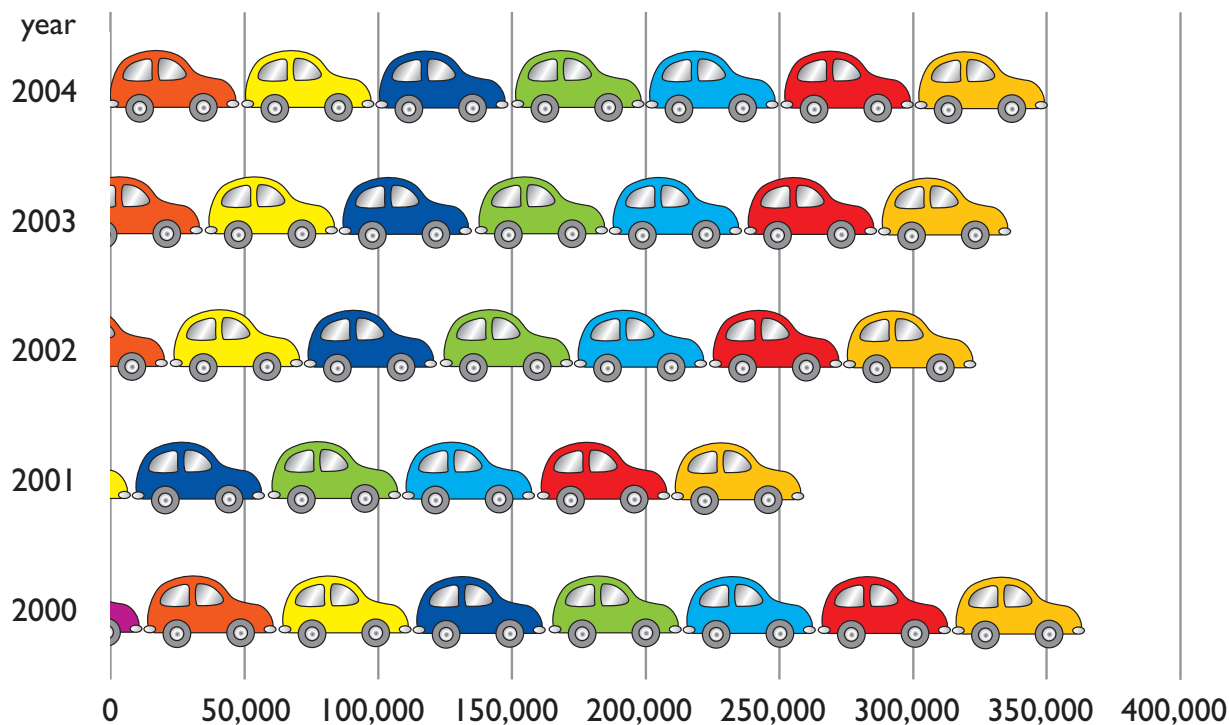
Source: NPA data

Improved Transport Indicators

Headline indicator 22

Amounts and types of traffic into, out of and within the Park

Tourist cars on the road in the Park



Source: STEAM report analysis 2005. BBNPA

Note. 2001 was the year of Foot and Mouth Disease

Comment

Detailed information on traffic movements around the Park is difficult to obtain as there are many roads of various grades, under the control of WAG and seven Unitary Authorities. The most accessible traffic data comes from STEAM (see under indicator 15) and relates to tourist traffic.

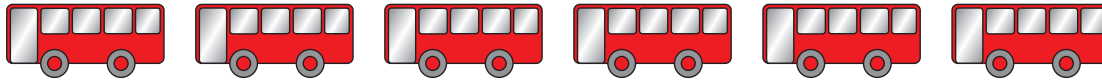
Between 2003 and 2004, the number of tourist cars on the road rose 4%. However, the amount of tourist traffic decreased between 2000 and 2004, with numbers not having reached those recorded prior to the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in 2001. This goes against the trend of an overall increase in vehicles on the roads in the same period, as reported in the Welsh Transport Statistics 2004. It is not possible to say whether it might be due to the NPA's efforts to encourage alternatives to the private car.

A special data collection exercise would be required to determine the trends in all traffic across the Park, so this information is not available.

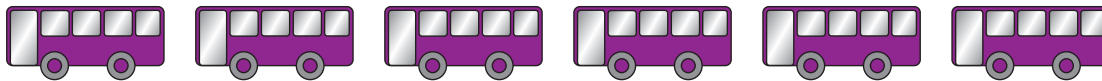
Indicator 23

Number of bus routes and service frequency

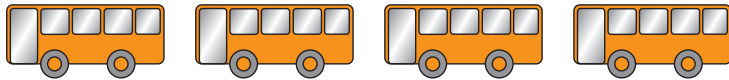
Scheduled services stopping in Park 16; of which:



With daily service Mon-Sun* 6

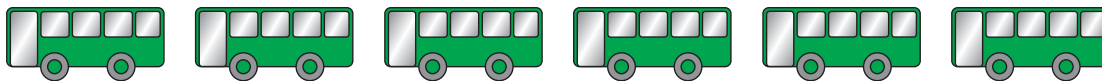


With daily service Mon-Sat 6



With less than one service per day 4

Beacons Bus services to/within the Park 9



Comment

Like most rural areas, the Park is not well-served by public transport. Brecon is the only place in the Park to be moderately well-served. It has an internal service to the various parts of the town, and links to the regional centres in most directions: Llandrindod Wells; Hereford; Abergavenny for Newport; Cardiff; Swansea; and Carmarthen via Llandovery. These services run several times daily, although not all are frequent or timely enough to allow commuting to work or school. Away from Brecon and these routes, services are less frequent except where peripheral services stop in the Park, such as between Abergavenny and Brynmawr.

A new cross-Wales service, and the reorganisation of regional services to link with this in Brecon, may make public transport in parts of the Park more efficient in future.

Beacons Bus, now in its eighth year, is a summer Sunday and Bank Holiday service organised by the NPA to enable people to visit the Park without a car. Specially commissioned buses run from Cardiff, Newport, Hereford, Carmarthen, Swansea, Bridgend and Porthcawl - bringing people into, around and out of the National Park. Some services have a trailer for bicycles, allowing one-way rides on the Taff Trail.

Source: Discover the Brecon Beacons by public transport, summer 2005; Beacons Bus timetable 2005

* includes a single daily Brecon-London service