

Dean Valley Cyclist Survey 2018

Undertaken by Dean Valley Regeneration Limited (DVRL). deanvalley.org.uk

A survey of cyclists who use the walkway was conducted during April and May 2018. The survey was conducted entirely online and advertised on the DVRL's website, Facebook and Twitter. Local cycling and community groups were also contacted via email.

This is part of our remit to engage with the community and to feed into the ongoing feasibility studies. DVRL wishes to find out what users of the walkway think.

The decision to focus on cyclists followed on from our survey previously conducted with the help of the Dean Village Association in 2016 where the responses were largely from walkers. It is planned to conduct a fuller face-to-face survey of users, which will require more effort and expense to organise.

Cycle users are more likely to be local, regular users rather than one-off visitors, so an online survey would reach them in a cost-effective manner. The survey also acts as a pilot for future studies to help identify any issues with the questions and format of the study.

79 responses were received. From the comments on the initial responses, the limited geographical remit of the survey was not clear. So the introductory text, on the survey, was updated to highlight the section of the walkway that DVRL is responsible for.

Most respondents were individual, experienced cyclists. Leisure and fitness was the main reason for using the path, although commuting was also popular and the most frequent times of morning and afternoon backed this up. 61% use the path less than once a week with only 6% using it daily.

65% were male and most were over 55 years old, with the 35-44 years group coming second. Postcode data proved difficult to interpret, though the majority of users were from the nearest districts of EH3 and EH4 with the Stockbridge end being more popular. There was also a strong showing from the EH11, 12 and 14 districts in the west of the city, which represent the areas around the Water of Leith upstream of the Dean Valley.

Surface quality and daytime visibility was generally rated as acceptable, but two thirds use the path after dark and rated the visibility at that time as poor. Lighting was the joint-second most requested improvement.

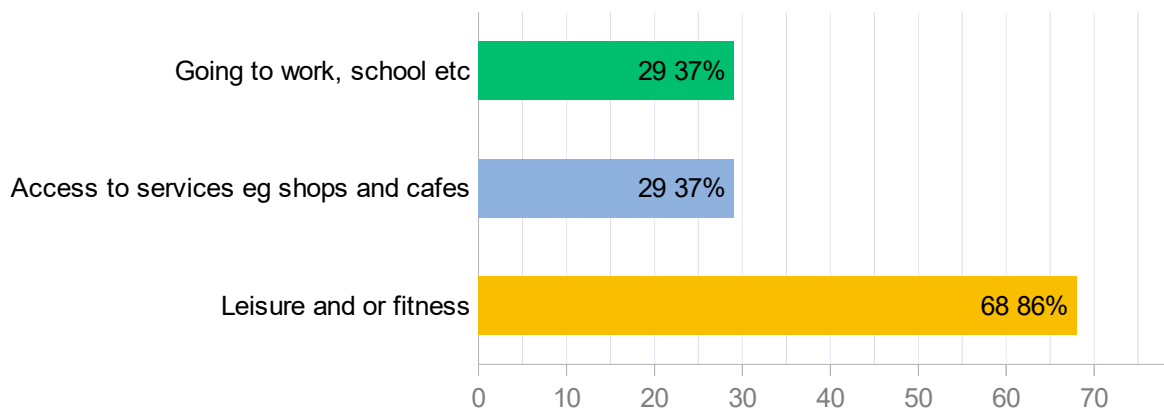
Interaction with pedestrians was an issue for 57%, though only a minority saw it as a serious problem. Dogs were frequently cited as a concern, both on and off lead.

Two thirds stated they would use the path more if it was improved, and the popular improvements were a smoother, clearer surface, signs/markings to help separate cyclists and pedestrians including keeping dogs under control, and lighting.

Although lack of consideration from other users of the path was a common concern, some felt that cyclist behaviour also needed to improve and cyclists going faster on an improved surface would be a danger. It was also noted that a shared, leisure-use pathway was not ideal for commuting and it was usually quicker to use the roads.

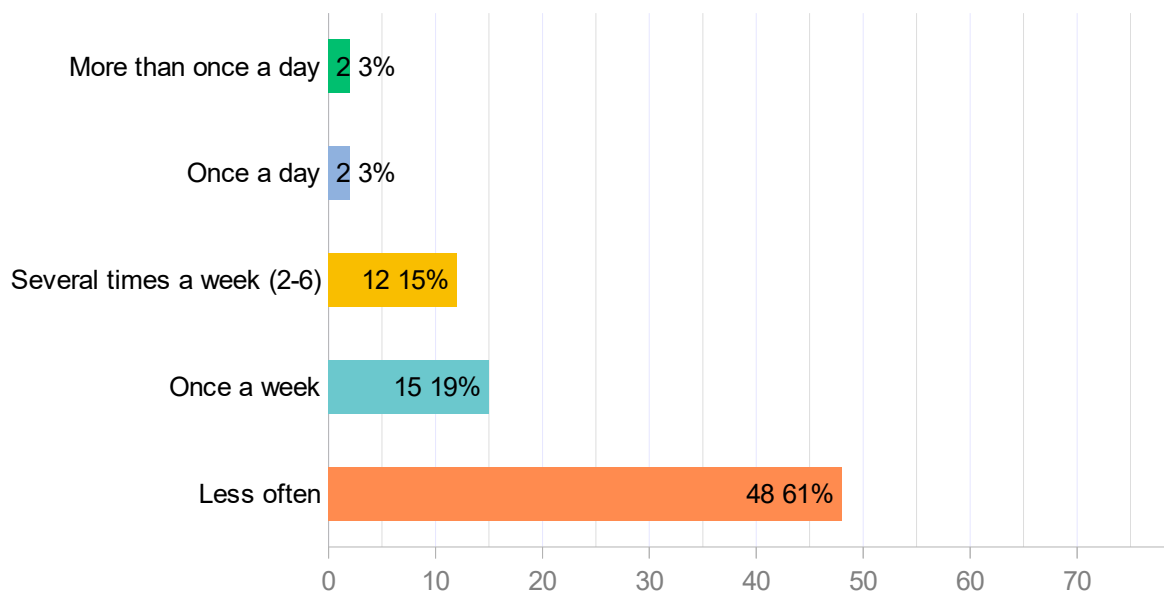
Q1 Why do you use the Dean Valley walkway?(Select all that apply)

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



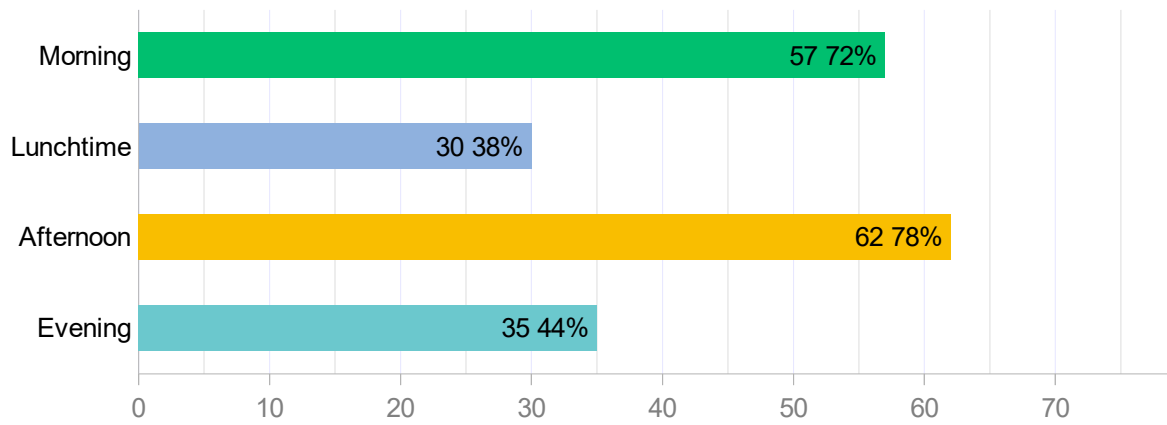
Q2. How often do you cycle along the walkway?

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



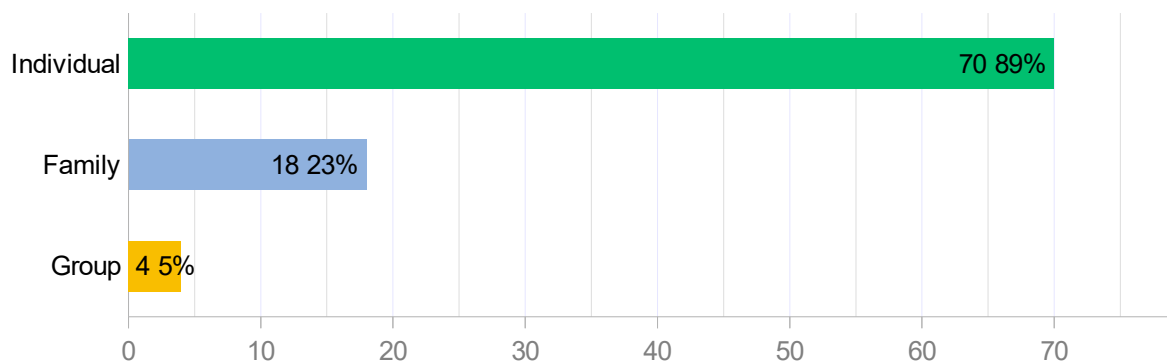
Q3. What times during the day do you use the walkway?(Select all that apply)

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



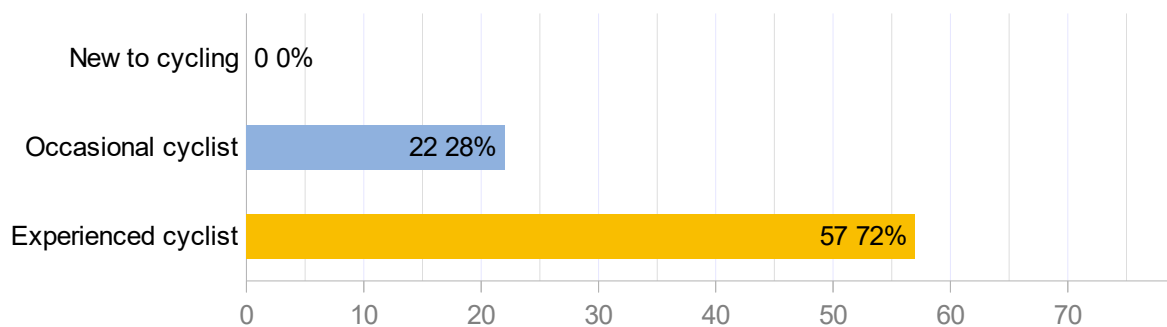
Q4. Do you cycle alone or in a group?(Select all that apply)

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



Q5. What kind of cyclist would you say you are?

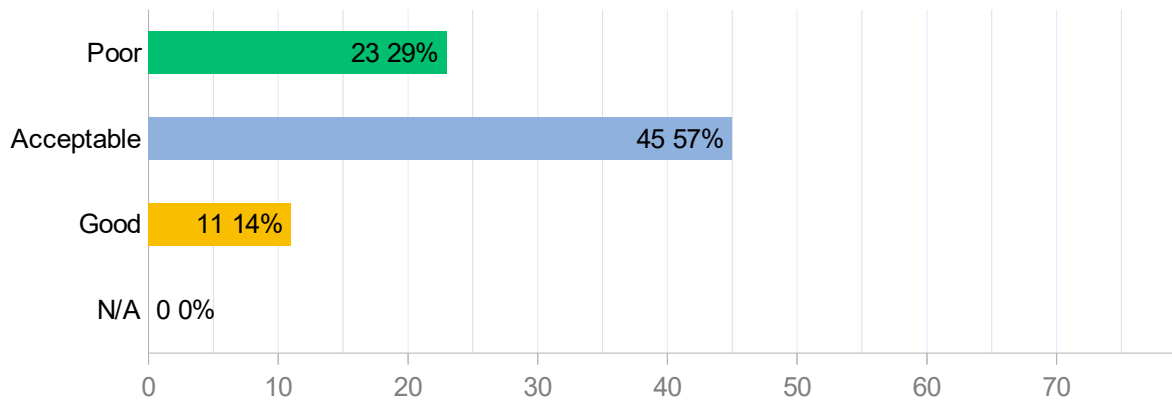
Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



How would you rate your experience of the following aspects of the walkway?

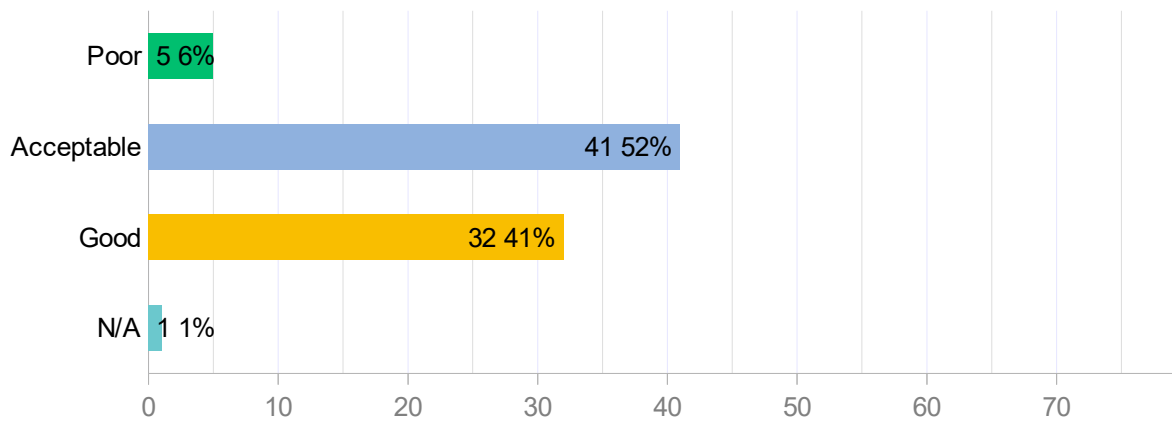
Q6. SURFACE QUALITY

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



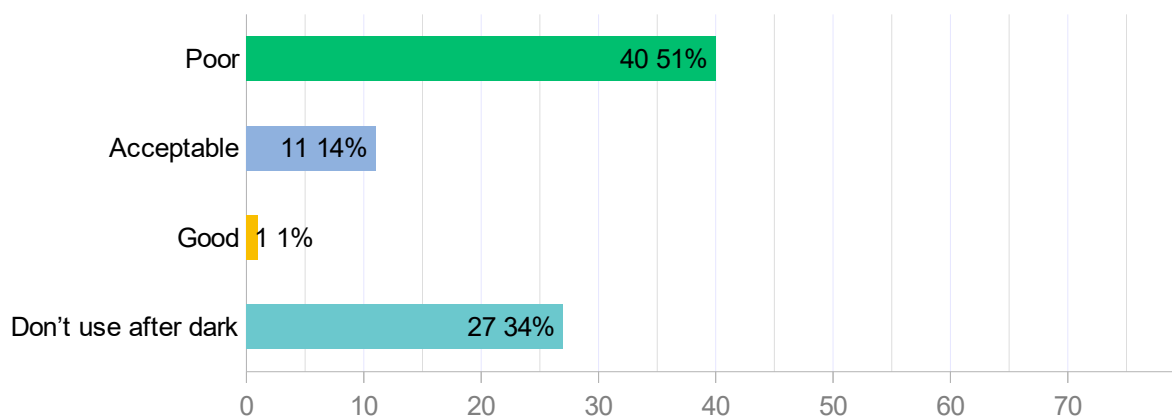
Q7. DAYTIME VISIBILITY

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



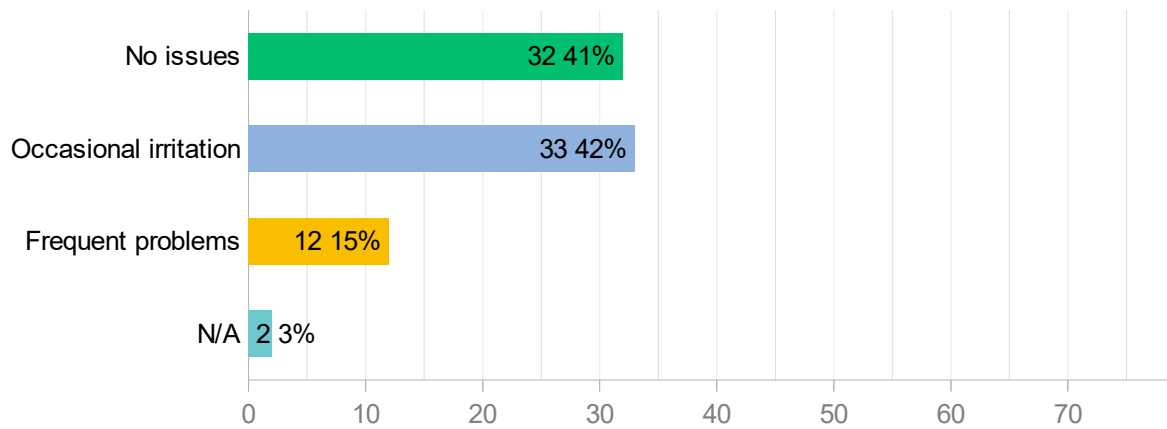
Q8. VISIBILITY AFTER DARK

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



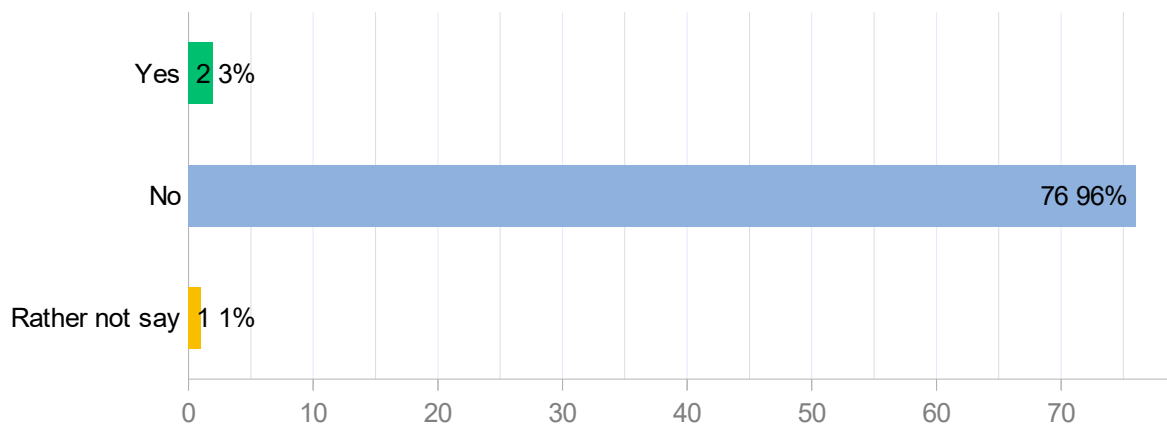
Q9. INTERACTION WITH PEDESTRIANS

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



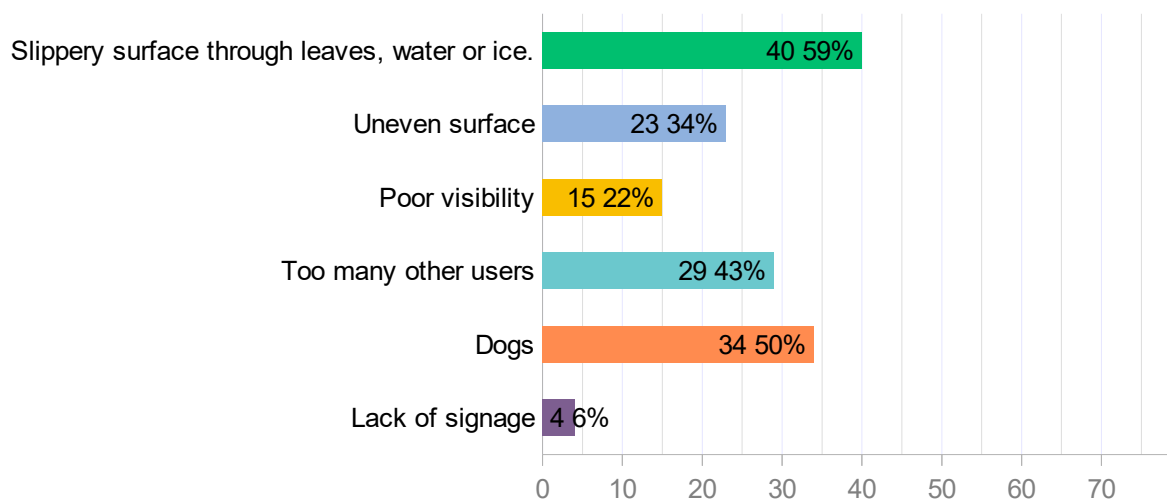
Q10. Have you ever witnessed a collision with a pedestrian?

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



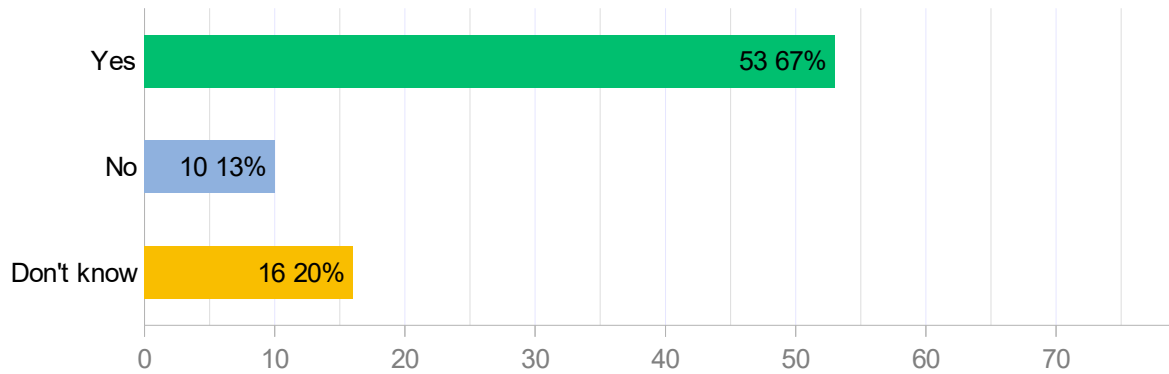
Q11. What issues deter you from using the walkway?(Select all that apply)

Answered: 68 Skipped: 11



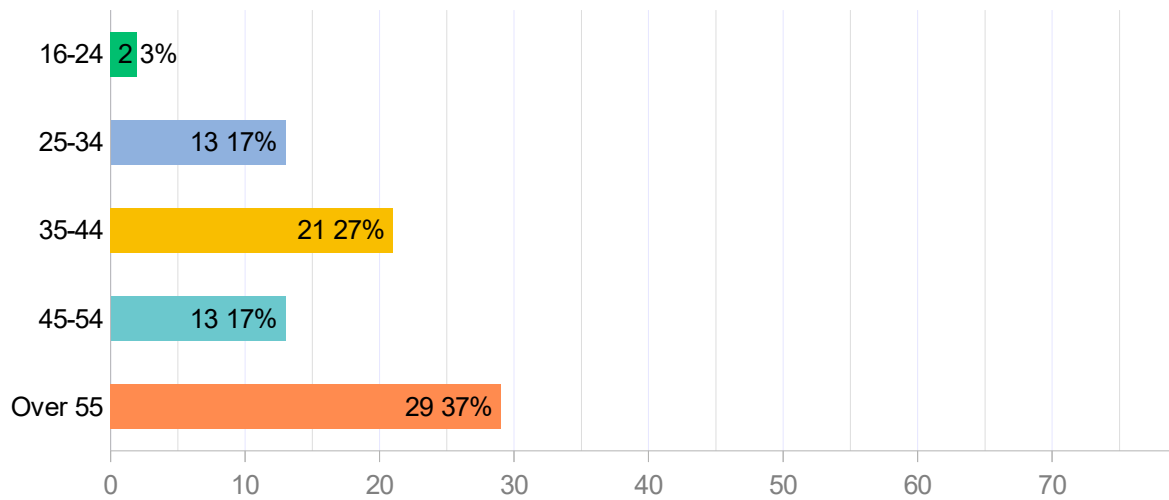
Q13. If the walkway was improved for cyclists would you use it more often?

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



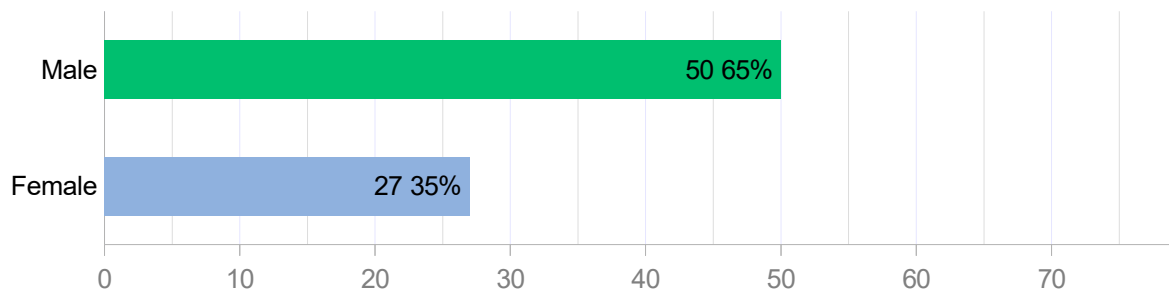
Q14. Age

Answered: 78 Skipped: 1



Q15. Gender

Answered: 77 Skipped: 2

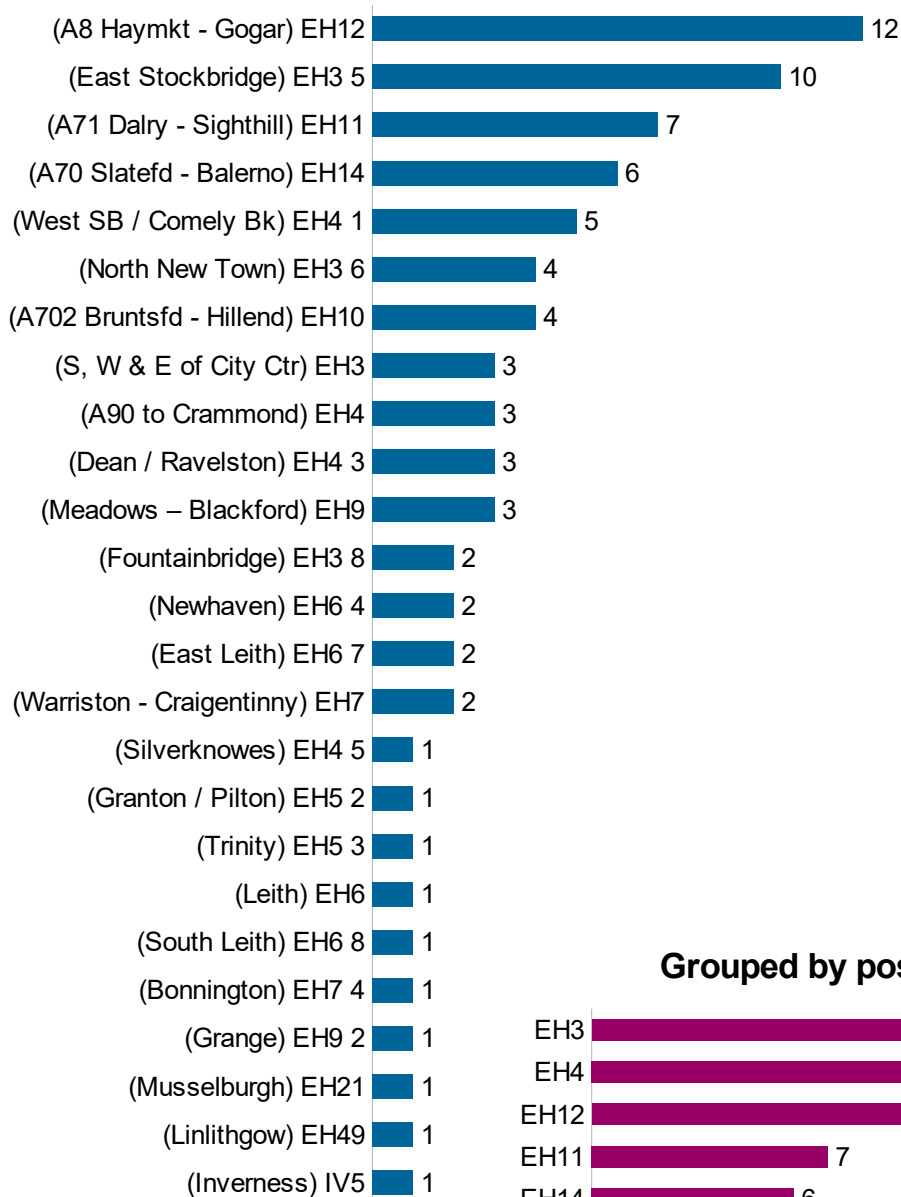


Q16. First four characters of your postcode, e.g. EH4 1

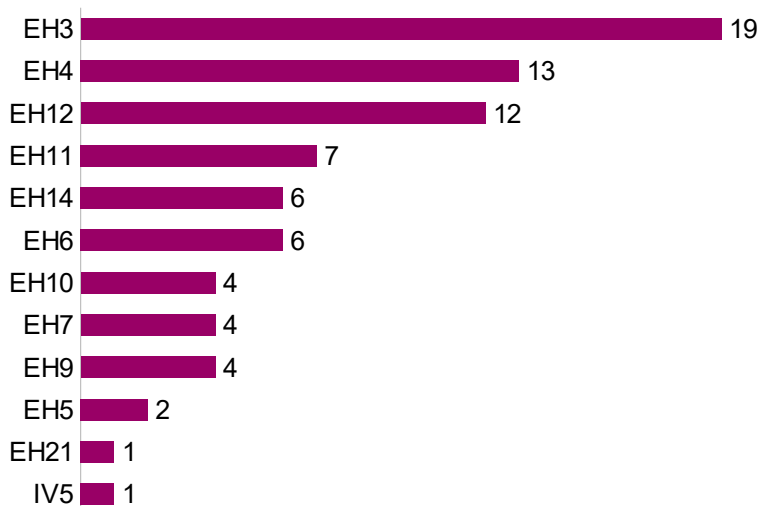
Answered: 78 Skipped: 1

There were some consistency issues with the data for this question. It was intended to collect postcode sectors (EH4 1) instead of just postcode districts (EH4) to get accurate data for the small catchment area, whilst preserving privacy. Unfortunately the instructions weren't clear and the input field was free-form text, resulting in a mixture of districts and sectors and some invalid districts when the space had been left out.

The presented data has had invalid / unlikely districts corrected to sectors.

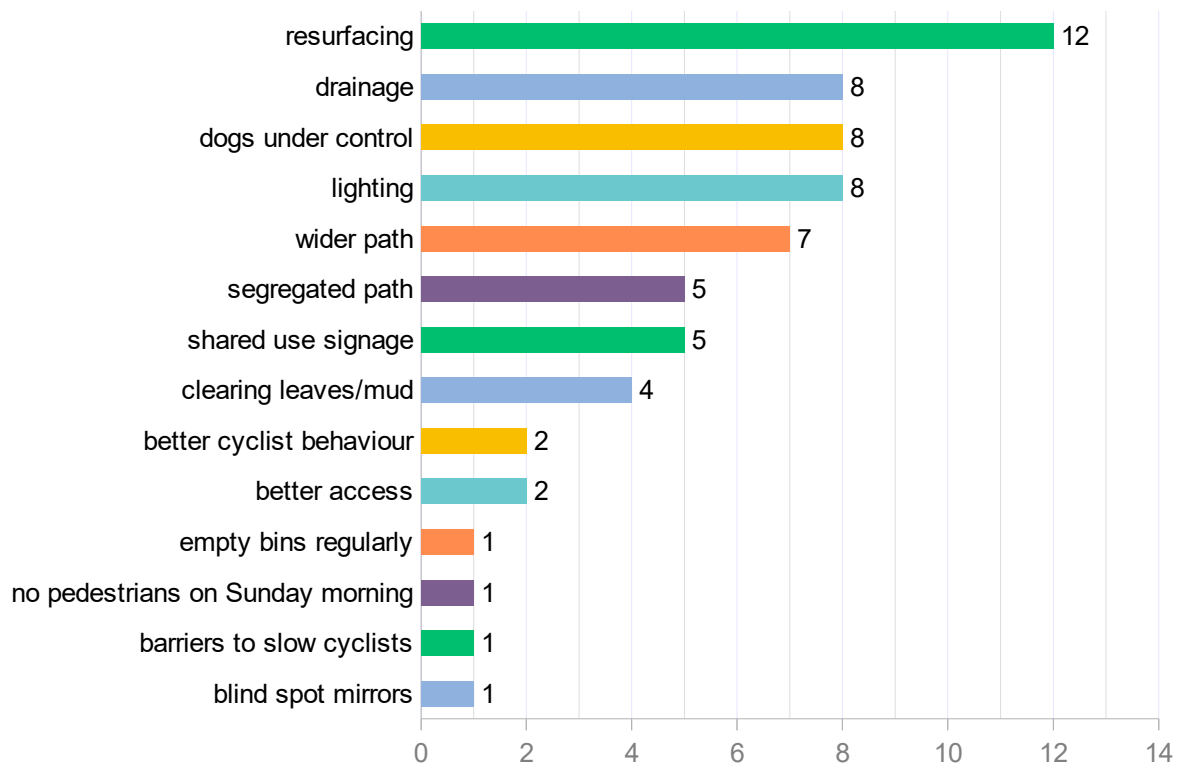


Grouped by postcode district

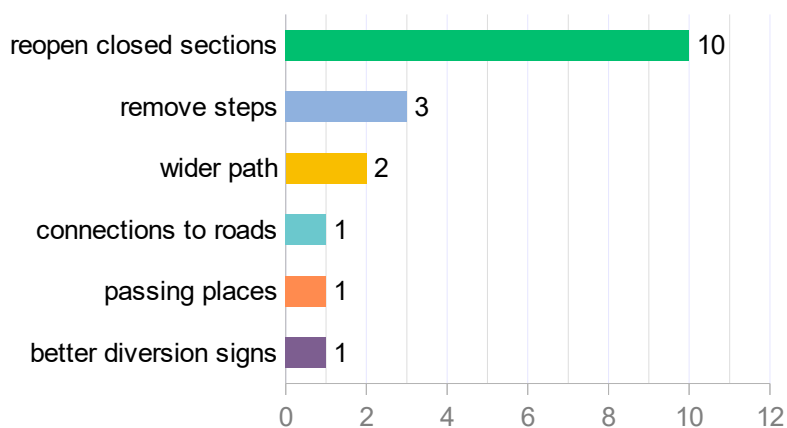


Q12. Are there any improvements that would give you a better experience?

Answered: 52 Skipped: 27



Improvements outwith the Dean Valley



- It was good that the Council removed the leaves earlier in the year, i.e. Once the leaves had stopped falling. In the past there has been a terrible mush of wet leaves to walk through. Be good if the "wet sections" are fixed. They can be really messy to walk through. My other gripe is the waste bins are often overflowing in the Walk and Dean Village. Worse at weekends, especially if there has been good weather or a Monday public holiday. Thanks for listening
- Better control of dogs that are not on leashes.
- This is a good path. What's more important is making segregated or safe routes for cyclists on the road. Less space for parking and cars!

- Segregated cycle path along Saunders Street linking with the Deanhaugh Street Bridge, the Water of Leith walkway on Pizza Express side of the bridge and St Bernards Row. Segregated cycle path between Miller Row and the Water of Leith walkway on Damside. Closing the Dean Path Bridge to motor vehicles. Splitting the path between Saunders Street and Miller row so that cyclists and pedestrians have their own clearly remarked space to reduce conflict.
- Better drainage to prevent large puddles/mud
- Widen the path and apply asphalt surfacing
- A wider path but that seems impossible.
- Better behaviour from some fellow cyclists. There are a lot of really quite rude and ignorant cyclists out there who seem to think that they have more entitlement to paths and routes than other people. Pedestrians have as much right as we do
- I try to avoid at busy times as the path is not sufficiently wide for bikes and a lot of people. Cleaning (removal of leaves and mud) would make a lot of difference, as would better drainage.
- Surfacing/lighting
- Lights would be excellent for the winter months. The cost is obviously a big factor. Cat's eyes similar to the canal would suffice. The problem with the surface is tree roots. The need for trees outweighs the negative side. Ban people from walking along it on a Sunday morning similar to Arthur's Seat!?!
- I think clearer signage that the path is mixed use: my only negative interactions on the route is when I've been verbally abused by other path users as a cyclist (shouting at me that cyclists aren't allowed to use the path etc), or when dogs have run out in front of me (not being kept on a lead). After a particularly harrowing experience where I was followed and shouted at by two women and their dogs, I avoided the route for over a year. Some signage at either end of the pathway to remind users of the uses of the path, a reminder to use bells to warn of approach, etc. would be really useful. I also think the mixed use path paving around Holyrood park (opposite the Palace area, green asphalt with the blue sign) has really helped make people more accepting of cyclists in this area, with minimal disturbance. As a female cyclist often using the path alone late at night (10pm some evenings in a week) I am sometimes a little spooked by the darkness, but even a few small uprights or catseyes would help with this without compromising the wildness/environmental benefit of the minimal light pollution.
- Connection between Bells Brae and upper parts past hotel.
- I would use it more if it was a continuous path - it's broken up with steps etc
- It was great when it was re-surfaced so the tree roots didn't bobble it. So doing something about the bobbled surface due to roots going across under the tarmac would be good. There are several places where water collects, forcing cyclists and walkers to use a thinner area of the route, and if the drainage could be sorted out there, it would be great for everyone.
- Reopen section in Dean village
- tackling the few sections prone to mud.
- Wider walkway, better surfacing.
- Better drainage, some lighting. Sharing this lovely route with pedestrians and dogs is fine as long as everyone is considerate.
- resurfacing, widening where possible
- Sort out the landslide ASAP..!
- Divisions of pedestrians and cyclists, dogs on leads.
- Signs that all dogs must be on leads.
- Leaf litter clearance on a regular basis when it is that time of year, November to January, say.
- Re surfacing would be beneficial to all not just cyclists. It is often very muddy and slippery underfoot. I had a fall on this pathway 2 years ago.
- Surface water doesn't drain away. Narrow paths
- The reason I don't use it more is that other sections are closed
- Repairing the landslip and open path between the village and Belford road.
- Signage with please be aware this is for pedestrians and cycling

- Create frequent barriers to deter speeding cyclists.
- Connecting to other roads in the area, consider to segregate cycling if possible. I mostly use the path on foot, so I know how it is for cyclist and pedestrians. Segregation often helps. However, the main issue is the connection in to roads into area
- The biggest improvement would be a continuous walkway between Stockbridge and Murrayfield.
- Better access
- The path above the weir is closed and has been for several years. This is really sad - it's the prettiest part
- If the walkway is to become a cycle way then you need to consider getting dog walkers to keep their animals on a short leash. Dogs run free from one side of the narrow path to the other. I've been over the handlebars twice avoiding them - and owners are adamant it's my fault.
- bike line
- More consistent path width, bike logo on surface, blue 'shared use' signs, more frequent cleaning of surface, tactile warnings at pinch points, separation of walkers and cyclists on busy sections, reinstatement of missing segment, proper grippy bike ramp at Roseburn, ramps rather than steps at bridges, mirrors at blind spots, discreet surface lighting at darkest sections.
- Lighting!
- Not as a cyclist. Improvements should be aimed at pedestrians. Though I personally am often on a bike, this is a route where cyclists should accept it is of limited cycling standard and mainly for walkers, who have priority.
- Widen the pinch point outside the hotel at Belford Road
- Better signage; dogs under control; better surfacing in places
- Lighting. I don't use it after dark. Fixing tree roots and drainage. Fixing the step up the slope at the Stockbridge end by the bridge. Poor surface under the Dean Bridge.
- Tree roots are a minor nuisance. Dogs are a bigger nuisance.
- Fix and re-open closed section after Dean bridge
- Access at the Dean end is pretty poor.
- Surface
- Poor / no lighting at night means frequent lumps and bumps become extremely hazardous. Lighting and dealing with tree roots would help. It can be busy with pedestrians. I don't mind this (But perhaps they don't like). I do, however, object to owners of dogs not having them under control, and also dog walkers who think their dog is under control when it is on 20m long stretchy lead. Those things are lethal. So need more courtesy from (many) dog walkers 're use of this and other paths.
- Possibly signs saying 'look out for cyclists'. Most pedestrians and dog walkers are not aware/deliberately obstructive. I often ride on the busy road instead.
- Not having the big detours because of landslips etc. As an occasional cyclist but more frequent pushchair walker I would love the path to be wider, smoother, no steps, no need to reverse to get past when someone comes the other way etc.
- Passing places. Fewer unrepaired landslips. Persecution of dog****s.
- Properly signed diversions
- Opening the path on west side of Dean Village that's been closed for a couple of years

Q17. Any other comments

Answered: 21 Skipped: 58

- Need to design the connections between this type of cycle and walking route so that children can confidently and safely use without mixing with motor vehicles.
- I really enjoy cycling along here occasionally when it is quiet but when I do so it is usually part of a longer cycle that goes on to Belford, and it is this part of the route past Dean Village to Corstorphine Road that acts as a deterrent, it has a very narrow path and a lot of recreational walkers, but this is perhaps a good thing. I more frequently use this route as a recreational walker rather than a cyclist and when I do so I like the fact that there are not too many cyclists to look out for. I think upgrading the path would be good for cyclists but not so good for walkers as the bumps and slidy bits reduce cycle speed. It would be alright to have better surface and leisure cycling but I don't think it would be good if it got sucked into being just another part of the councils cycling infrastructure, we really need to have proper road cycling provision not speedy commute cyclists tearing through our parks and leisure spaces. Best of luck with it.
- I used to use this path as part of my route to work, but found another route when the roadworks on Dean Path made it difficult to access the route. My experience is that it does not work as a cycle route in very wet periods, due to mud and leaves. With it's current width and popularity as a dog-walking route, i do not envisage the path being able to be a major cycling route.
- Good stretch of cycle path overall. Unfortunately due to the recent land movement path stops after Dean Village.
- I think it is a good amenity. I use it infrequently - sometimes several times a week, sometimes not at all for months at a time. It depends on where I am going. I most often use it as a quieter route for getting from the West End back in to Stockbridge. I think it is good that it is mixed riding/walking. If they were separated I think that cyclists would try to go too fast along it at time when it is being heavily used by pedestrians (Sunday afternoons etc).
- I might not be appropriate to improve the walkway surface too much as it would be unfortunate to attract cyclists who want to go fast!
- Thanks for raising the profile of active travel! I mostly use this route as a pleasant way to ride from home to the shops and cafes of Stockbridge.
- Love the path
- surface uneven and difficulty going down steps by waterfall with bike. Flooding near dean village by footbridge, which prevents the path from being used.
- It is usually a pleasure to use the walk and cycleway.
- This walkway is so beautiful it is very sad that the path from the village to the West End remains closed after 2 years. Even if I could not cycle this path I walk it every day anyway and I am saddened by its closure. It would also be beneficial if signage could encourage responsible cycling and respectful pedestrians!
- The path needs to be reopened - this should be a big priority
- Lights would really make it safer, but possibly attract other nighttime people.
- Why are you only asking about cycling and not walking?
- Thanks for consulting! The path is a wonderful resource in need of update/upgrade
- Scenic, very nice path. I walk it more often than I cycle it. Cycling disrupted by closure higher up. Metal steps at the Weir are a deterrent - need cycle ramp. At Damside footbridge, cyclists should be signed to go via Damside not Hawthornbank
- Thank you for your efforts in improving this section of the walkway. I hope you might also look at the section upstream from Dean Village (between the village and the modern art gallery).
- I don't cycle on the walkway that often - it isn't really suitable for regular cycling in my opinion. I go that way if I'm happy to pootle, and slow down or stop for pedestrians, dogs etc.
- 1. Dog walkers and paths generally. There needs to be more guidance 're courtesy. 2. Pedestrians / runners on paths.... On unlit roads highway code suggests peds/runners should walk on right into on going traffic. On shared paths it seems to me it is more efficient for all

"traffic" (peds, runners, and cyclists) to be on the right. When using narrowish shared path (even NEPN) and cyclists going both directions, and most peds/runners on left, but you then find yourself approaching peds walking towards you on "your side" of path it creates awkward jams (and dangerous overtakes from boy racers). Is there any guidance for walkers /runners on shared paths. If not should there be? My feeling is that there would be less conflict if all were encouraged to be on the left particularly at "rush hours".

- This route is a shared use path, cyclists should behave responsibly as should dog walkers and other pedestrians
- Love the path and I used to use it when working in Stockbridge as could cycle there from Roseburn. Now unusable as there's the huge diversion on the west side of Dean Village.