

## Mountain biking survey summary

24<sup>th</sup> July 2020

The Malvern Hills Trust carried out a survey in the summer of 2019 following the conclusion of the Malverns by Mountain Bike project.

### Methodology

The questionnaire was developed by the Malvern Hills Trust and a student from Natural England to provide more information the motivations for mountain bikers riding on the Malvern Hills and to assess the outcomes of the Trust's Malverns by Mountain Bike campaign. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix 1.

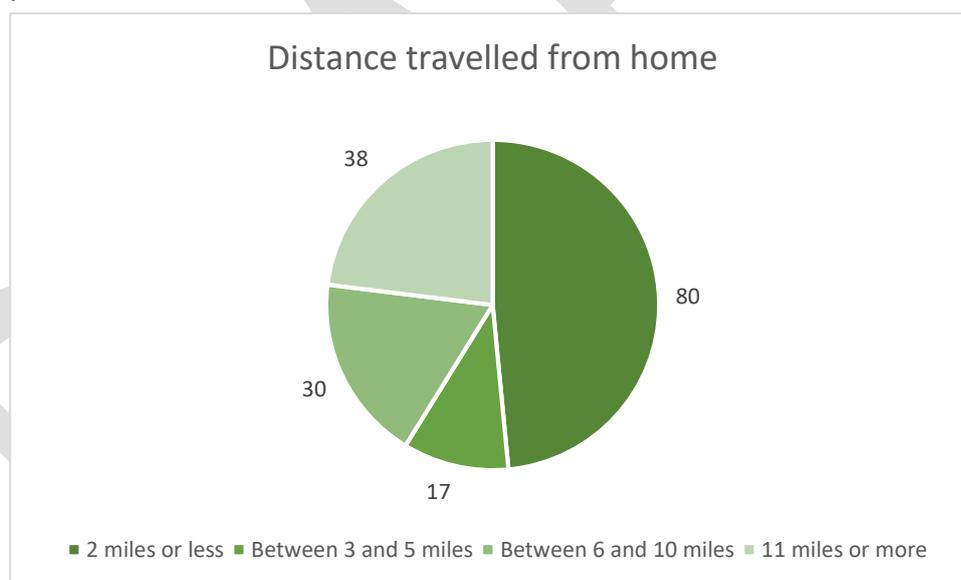
Respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire online on the Malvern Hills Trust's website which was available from the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019 to the 30<sup>th</sup> August 2019. 135 responses were submitted through the website.

Surveys were also conducted by two students in popular mountain bike locations and at popular times. A full survey timetable can be found in Appendix 2. 39 responses were collected in person.

In total there were 174 responses. 165 were identified as genuine when duplicates were removed (clearly identified from the free text sections on the online survey). An additional 4 displayed evidence that information was submitted by walkers in protest of mountain bikers on the Hills. These 4 are included in the data.

### Distance travelled from home

48 % of people travelled 2 miles or less to reach the Hills.



### Top three reasons for cycling on the Malverns

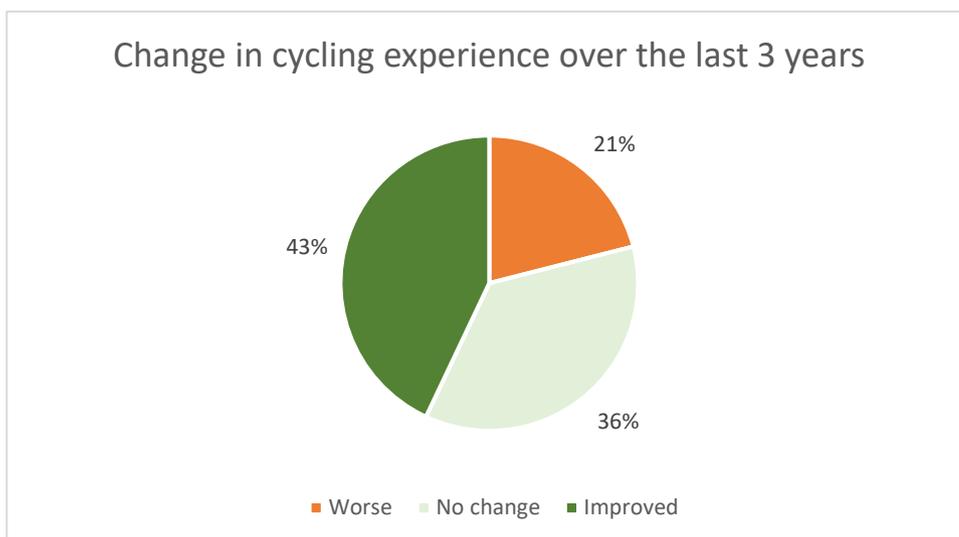
Rider's top reason for cycling here is the views and scenery – 53 %

Their second most popular reason is for exercise / fitness / wellbeing – 39 %

| Reason for cycling on the Malverns | Number of responses Reason 1 | Number of responses Reason 2 | Number of responses Reason 3 |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Views / scenery                    | 88                           | 0                            | 0                            |
| Local to the hills                 | 39                           | 29                           | 0                            |
| Exercise / fitness / wellbeing     | 27                           | 64                           | 20                           |
| Being outdoors                     | 4                            | 38                           | 25                           |
| Other                              | 4                            | 4                            | 16                           |
| Group or social activity           | 2                            | 11                           | 17                           |

|  |            |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|------------|
| Physical challenge of routes / terrain | 1          | 11         | 53         |
| Associated features                    | 0          | 2          | 2          |
| Nature / wildlife                      | 0          | 2          | 11         |
| Signage or route markings              | 0          | 3          | 5          |
| Variety of routes                      | 0          | 1          | 16         |
| <b>Total responses</b>                 | <b>165</b> | <b>165</b> | <b>165</b> |

### Cycling experience



43 % of respondents thought that the cycling experience on the Malverns had improved over the three years of the project (ending in September 2019).

The most mentioned reason given for why they think the cycling experience has improved is the waymarked trails (26 responses). MHT's better engagement with the public was the second most frequently given answer for why cycling on the Malverns has improved.

Only 21 % of the respondents thought that the cycling experience on the Hills had become worse over the period.

The most frequently mentioned reason for a worse experience is the negative attitude of other visitors towards cyclists (21 responses).

This free text answer has provided us with lots of information on how cyclists feel about the hills and commons so will certainly be important when making the next steps and future work.

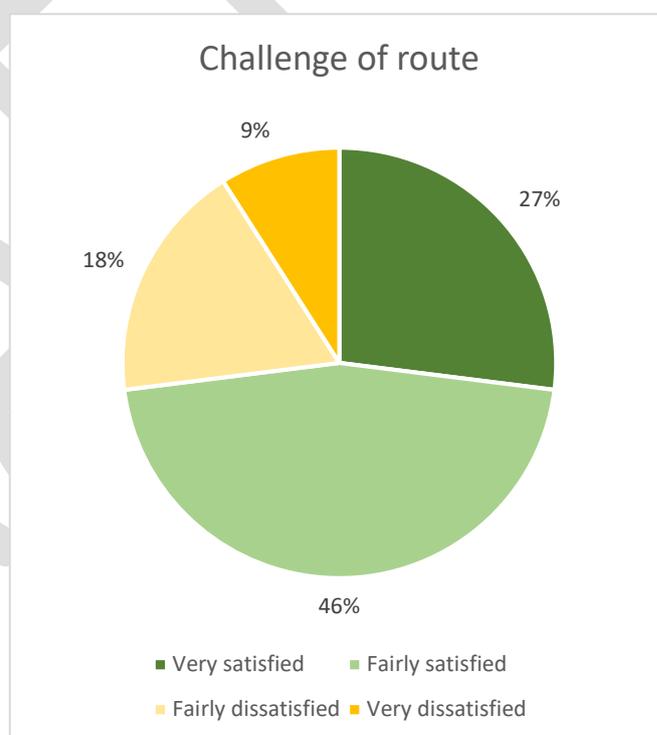
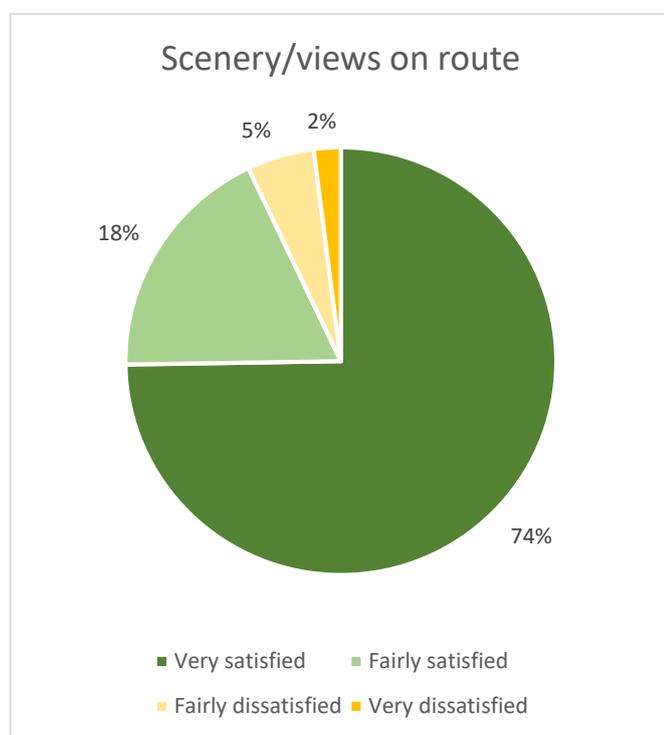
### Malverns by mountain bike campaign

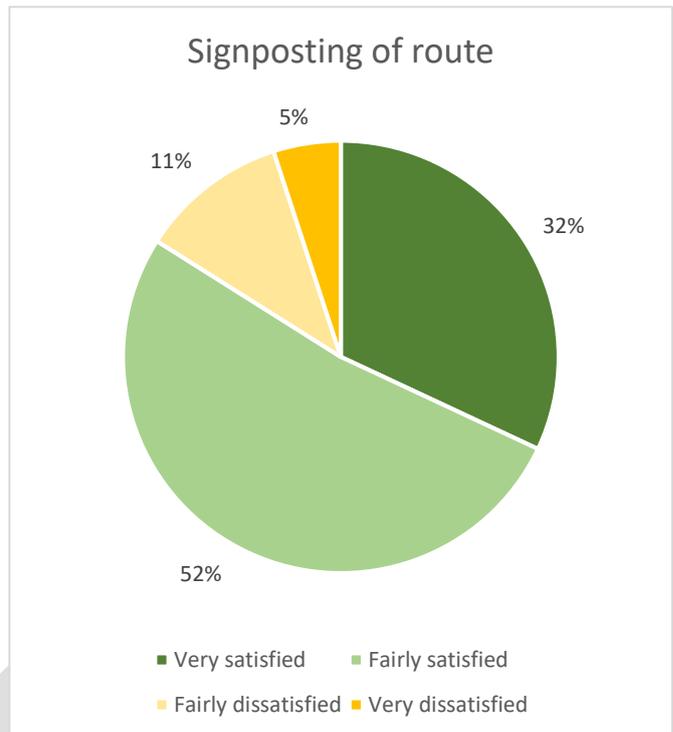
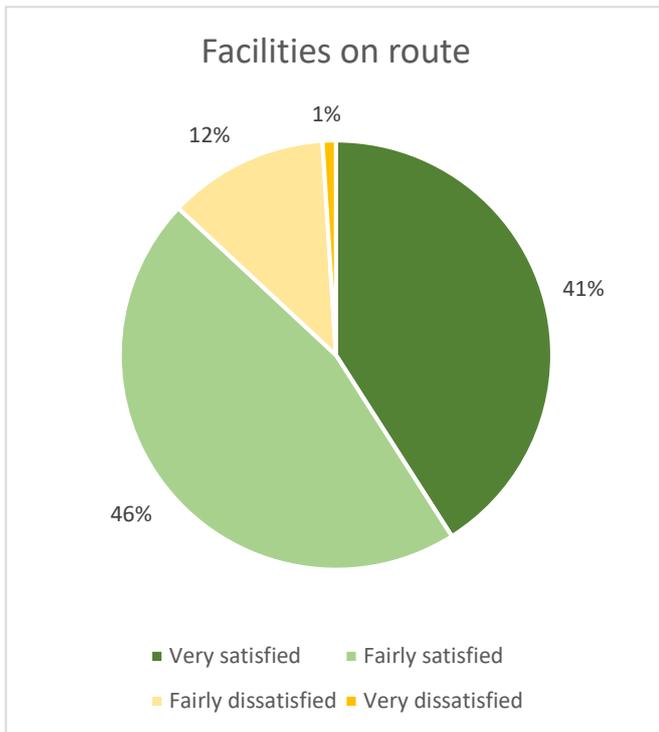
Of those who answered the survey, 73 % were aware the MHT had produced a cycling map and guide, 88 % were aware of the signposted routes, 59 % were aware that MHT had increased access for cyclists and 48 % were aware that MHT had a cycling code.

## Signposted routes

109 respondents have cycled the full or part of the signposted routes. 50 respondents had not ridden these routes and the remaining 6 respondents had left this question blank.

| Satisfaction level  | Number of responses  |   |   |   |
|---------------------|--|---|---|---|
|                     | How satisfied were you with the views/scenery along the route? | How satisfied were you with the challenge of the route? | How satisfied were you with the associated facilities (car parks, pubs, cafes) along the route? | How satisfied were you with the signage or route marking along the route? |
| Very satisfied      | 73   | 26  | 39  | 31  |
| Fairly satisfied    | 18   | 45  | 44  | 50  |
| Fairly dissatisfied | 5  | 18  | 11  | 11  |
| Very dissatisfied   | 2  | 9   | 1   | 5   |
| Blank/no response   | 11   | 11  | 14  | 12  |
| Total               | 109  | 109   | 109   | 109   |





Comments relating to the signposted routes included the following:

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Routes not technically challenging                                 | 12 responses |
| More signposting needed  | 11 responses |
| Good routes  | 8 responses  |
| Need better route design   | 7 responses  |
| Too physically challenging   | 5 responses  |
| More information needed for walkers                                | 4 responses  |
| Grading of routes needed   | 3 responses  |
| Other – More routes needed, confusions over bridleway terminology. |              |

## Sharing the space

### What could other visitors do to improve your riding experience on the Hills?

149 people responded with comments on what other visitors could do to improve the cycling experience. The top responses have been included in a table below. The totals add up to more than 149 as some people provided more than one suggestion.

|                 |              |  |
|-----------------|--------------|--|
| Be polite       | 55 responses | included 'positive attitude', 'smile', 'respect'             |
| Be aware        | 49 responses | included 'walkers be more aware of cyclists right of access' |
| Nothing         | 26 responses |  |
| Control dogs    | 13 responses | included 'have been bitten'                                  |
| Pick up dog poo | 10 responses |  |

Other comments included 'walkers get out of the way' (3 responses), 'take rubbish home' (1 response), 'walkers stay on footpaths not bridleways' (1 response).

## What actions have you taken to improve the experience of other visitors on the Hills?

149 people responded with comments with suggestions on what other visitors could do to improve the cycling experience. The top responses have been included in a table below. The totals add up to more than 149 as some people provided more than one suggestion.

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Respect other users when riding   | 55 responses                                |
| Say hi                            | 38 responses                                |
| Slow down                         | 38 responses                                |
| Offer help/assistance to visitors | 21 responses includes 'offering directions' |
| Avoid busy paths/times            | 20 responses                                |
| Ride with care                    | 18 responses                                |
| Give way                          | 16 responses                                |
| Use bell/call out                 | 13 responses                                |

Other comments included 'stay on cycle access routes' (3 responses), 'follow cycling code' (1 response), 'do nothing' (5 responses).

## What could MHT do to improve your mountain biking experience on the Hills?

153 people responded with comments with suggestions on what MHT could do to improve the cycling experience. The top responses have been included in a table below. The totals add up to more than 153 as some people provided more than one suggestion.

|                                    |              |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Provide more publicity/information | 34 responses |
| Create technical trails            | 27 responses |
| Increase cycle access              | 25 responses |
| MTB only trails                    | 17 responses |
| More signposted routes             | 15 responses |
| More signage                       | 12 responses |
| Allow wild trails                  | 8 responses  |
| Create cycle park                  | 7 responses  |

Other comments included 'Mountain bike festival' (4 responses), 'do nothing' (18 responses), 'curfew for cyclists' (2 responses)

## Summary

The results of the MTB survey have provided an important insight into the views and experiences of mountain bikers on the Malvern Hills.

Using this information, MHT can assess the impact and success of the Malverns by Mountain Bike project and also look towards potential further work in the future.

Beck Baker  
Community and Conservation Officer  
24<sup>th</sup> July 2020

## Appendix 1 – Copy of questionnaire

[1] How far have you travelled from home to visit the Hills today?

- 2 miles or less
- Between 3 and 5 miles
- Between 6 and 10 miles
- 11 miles or more

[2] How long have you been riding on the Hills for?

Not ridden the Hills before.

**If this option is selected go to questions 4, 6 and 7 ONLY.**

- Less than one year.
- Between 1 and 2 years.
- 3 years or more

[3] How often do you ride on the Malvern Hills?

- More than once a week
- More than once a month
- More than once every 3 months
- More than once a year
- Once a year or less

[4] Please **select three** of the most appropriate responses to the statement, **“I have chosen to ride on the Malvern Hills because....”**

- Views/scenery
- Local to the area [2 miles or less]
- Exercise / fitness / wellbeing
- Being outdoors
- Group or social activity
- Associated facilities [parking, café, pub etc]
- Signage or route markings
- Physical challenge of the routes
- Nature/wildlife
- Variety of routes
- Other **[Please explain]**

Other Free Text

[5] How do you feel your visitor experience as a cyclist on the Malvern Hills has changed over the last three years?

- Much improved
- A little improved
- No change
- A little worse
- Much worse

**Please explain your reasoning below.**

[6] Are you aware of the ‘Malverns by Mountain Bike’ campaign by the Malvern Hills Trust?

Yes / No

[7] The Malvern Hills Trust owns and cares for the Malvern Hills and Commons for both people and wildlife.

Did you know the Malvern Hills Trust....

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| a) Produced a free map and guide for mountain bikers.  | Yes / No |
| b) Created signposted trails for mountain bikers.  | Yes / No |
| c) Created access by providing additional cycle paths for mountain bikers, linking the existing bridleway network. | Yes / No |
| d) Produce their own Cycling Code  | Yes / No |

[8] We mentioned signposted trails for mountain bikers. Let me show you the route. **[Show them the route card]**

Have you ridden on a part or all of a Way Marked Trail?

|          |                                 |
|----------|---------------------------------|
| Yes / No | <b>If No go to question 10.</b> |
|----------|---------------------------------|

[9] When riding the Way Marked Trail [or part of it] how satisfied were you with....

|   | Very satisfied | Fairly satisfied | Fairly dissatisfied | Very dissatisfied |
|---|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Views/scenery                               |                |                  |                     |                   |
| Challenge offered by the route              |                |                  |                     |                   |
| Associated facilities [parking, café, etc.] |                |                  |                     |                   |
| Signage or route markings                   |                |                  |                     |                   |
| Other <b>[Please explain below]</b>         |                |                  |                     |                   |

[10] The Malvern Hills and Commons are a shared landscape, with lots of different types of visitor.

What could these other visitors [walkers, runners, horse riders] do to improve your riding experience on the Hills?

[11] What actions have you taken to improve the experience of other visitors [walkers, runners, horse riders] on the Hills?

[12] What could the Malvern Hills Trust do to improve your mountain biking experience on the Hills?

Thank you for your time.

DRAFT

## Appendix 2 - Survey timetable

| Date                  | Start Time | Finish Time | Duration          | Location                             | Number of surveys completed |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 18 <sup>th</sup> May  | 2:00       | 4:00        | 2:00              | British Camp                         | 1                           |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> May  | 7:00       | 8:30        | 1:30              | Wyche Cutting and Beacon Rd Car park | 8                           |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> May  | 10:15      | 12:15       | 2:00              | North Quarry Carpark                 | 5                           |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> June  | 9:30       | 11:30       | 2:00              | St Ann's Well                        | 3                           |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> June | 9:30       | 11:30       | 2:00              | British Camp                         | 8                           |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> July | 7:00       | 8:30        | 1:30              | Wyche Cutting                        | 7                           |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> July  | 1:00       | 3:00        | 2:00              | North Quarry Carpark                 | 5                           |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> July | 9:30       | 11:30       | 2:00              | St Ann's Well                        | 2                           |
|                       |            |             | 15 hours in total |                                      | 39 surveys in total         |