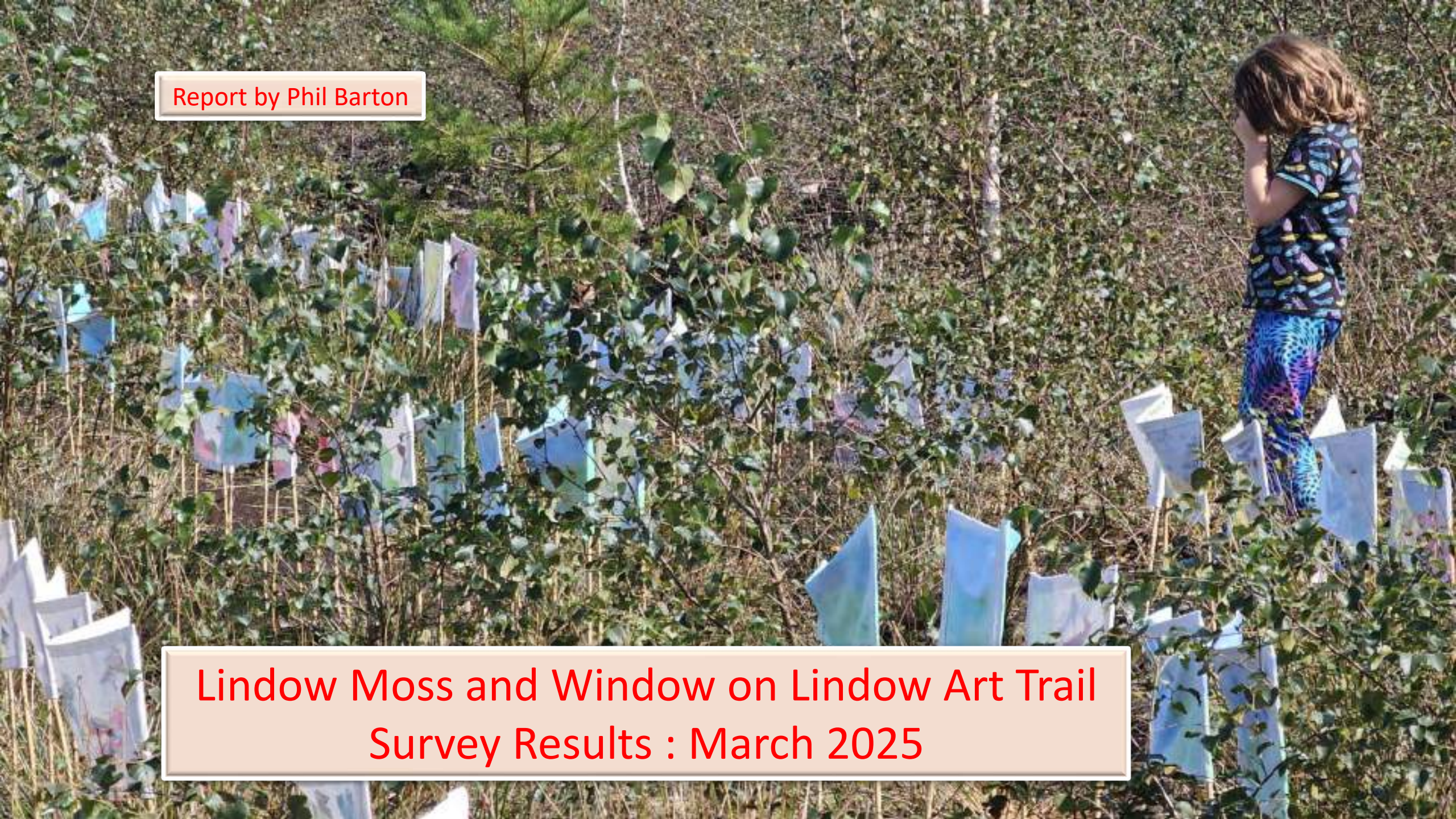


Report by Phil Barton

Lindow Moss and Window on Lindow Art Trail Survey Results : March 2025

SUMMARY

A survey was conducted of visitors to Lindow Moss in late 2024 and early 2025. In all 112 respondents reported on their recent visits to the Moss and whether or not they had walked the Art Trail (57 face-to-face and 55 by voluntarily completing an online form). Some 56% of visitors were from Wilmslow, 33% from close to Wilmslow and 11% from more than 15 miles away.

The survey results showed strong support for, and appreciation of, the Art Trail. More than 95% of respondents had walked the Art Trail and 25% were first-time visitors to the Moss who had come to see the Trail. Some 54% of the 112 respondents reported 'coming for first-time'...or...'more often' because of the Art Trail. On average each visitor came with 2.5 other people so the benefits of the Trail also contributed to social activity. The sample revealed that both younger (especially Primary School children) and older (over 65) visitors came in significant numbers.

Some 91% of Art Trail visitors rated the exhibition as excellent or good and only 1% of visitors recorded a 'disappointed' rating of the Trail. The Trail also contributed to the development of the Friends of Lindow Moss community group with 45 respondents signing up to the FoLM email list after their visit to the Trail.

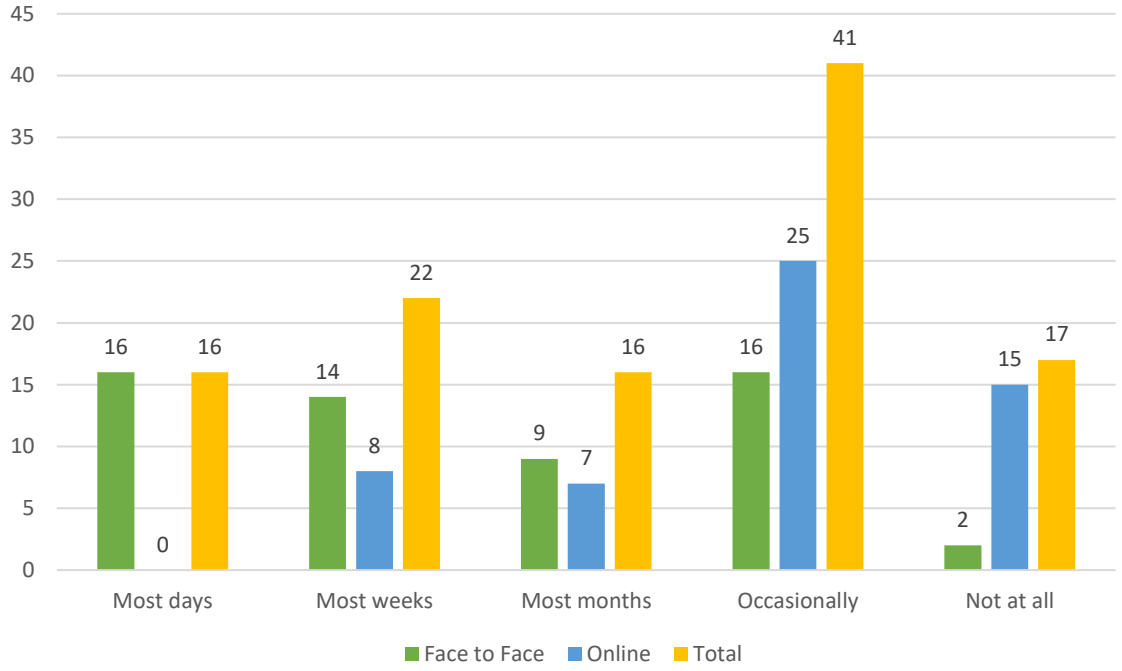
In addition, respondents showed strong support for the restoration of Lindow Moss from their comments, with 40% explicitly welcoming its Preservation & Restoration, 30% highlighting the benefit of The Moss in terms of environmental impact & education, their personal connection to and enjoyment of Lindow moss is important to 25% and 15% valued it as a site for community and social interaction.

Overall, the visitor survey showed strong support for the 2024 Window on Lindow Art Trail, for the restoration of Lindow Moss and for future creative events and exhibitions on the Moss.

- Where relevant, all results are shown separated for the Face to Face and the Online collection of data.
- The Face to Face survey was conducted between 2nd October and 16th November 2024. The Online survey portal was open between 15th October 2024 and 16th January 2025.
- In total 57 Face to Face (F2F) interviews were carried out and 55 Online (OL) responses received.
- This presentation has been prepared by Phil Barton and reviewed by David Hulme for Transition Wilmslow

All photos by Phil Barton unless credited otherwise

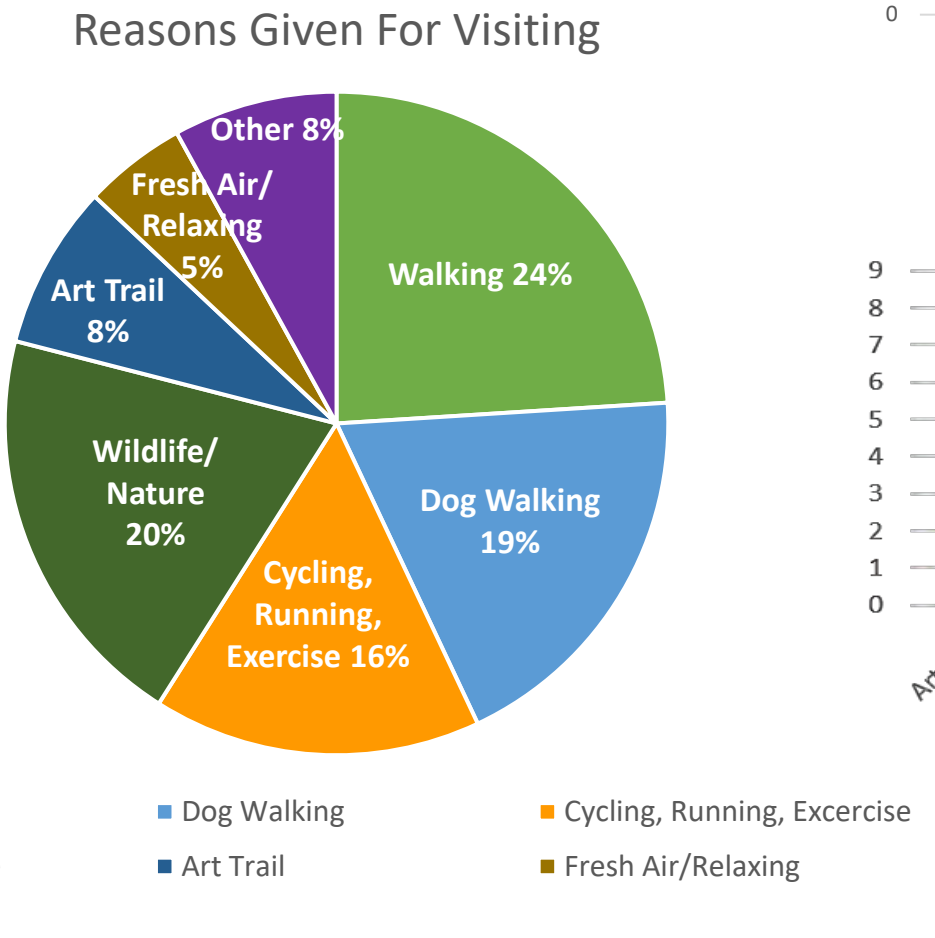
1. How often do you usually visit Lindow Moss?

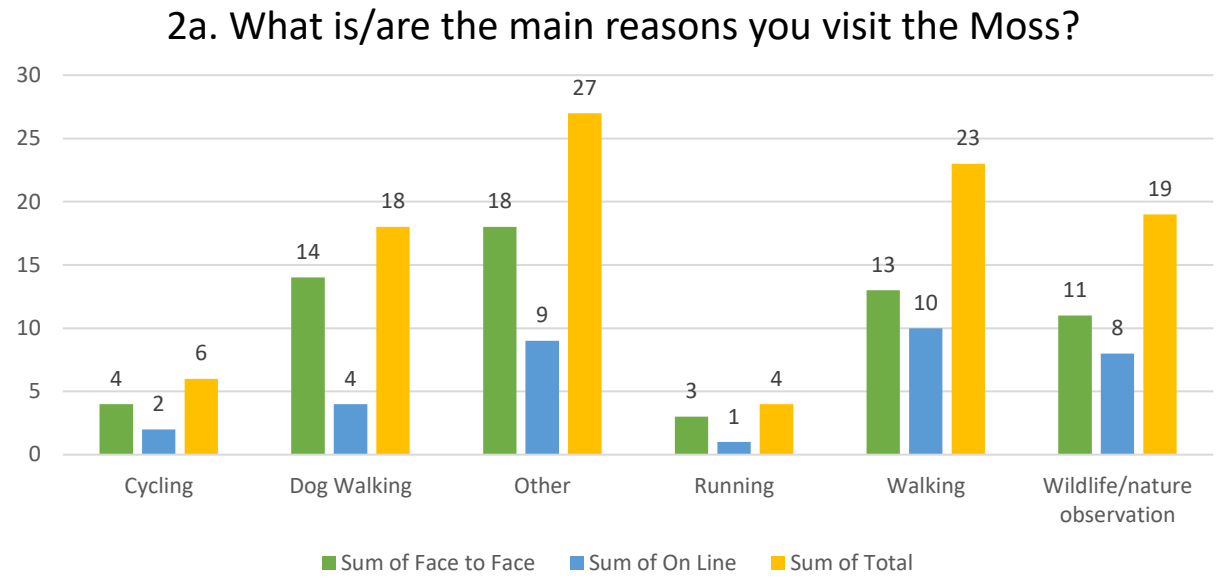


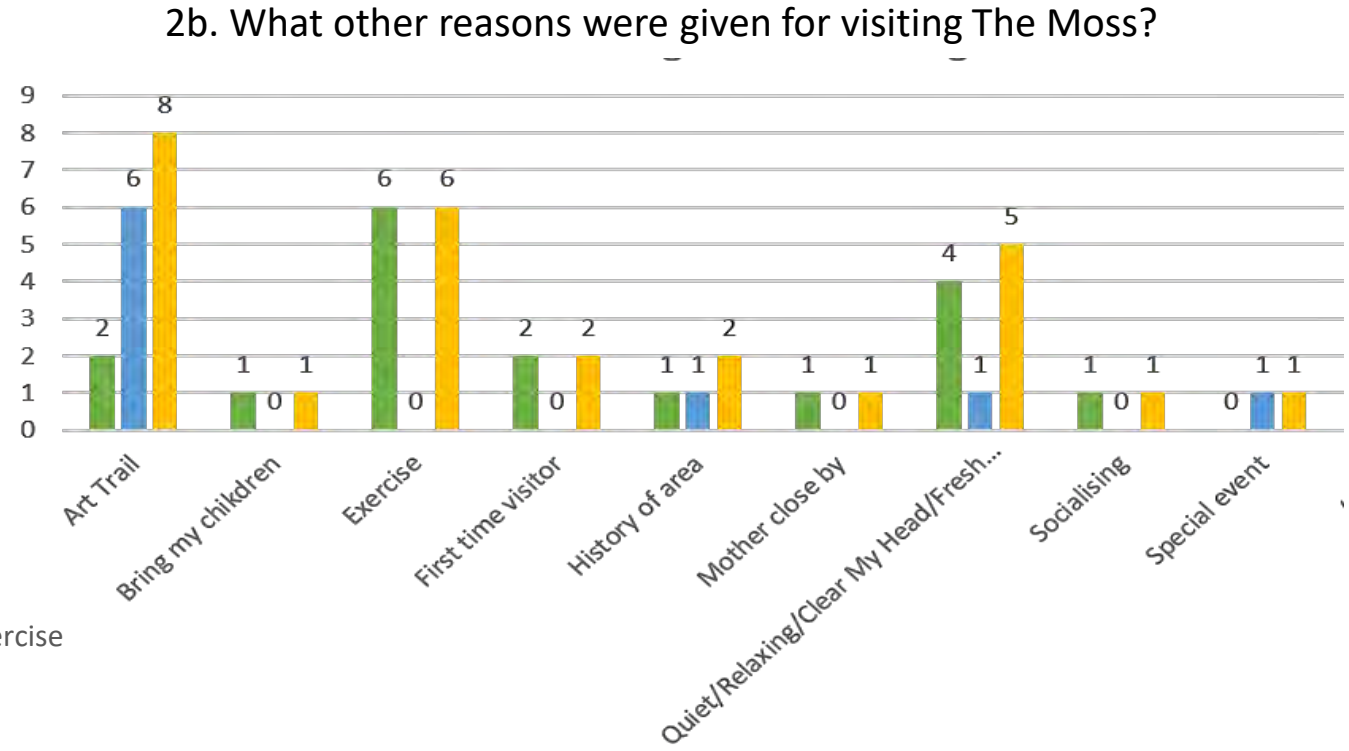
Unsurprisingly, F2F respondents visited more regularly, with 68% visiting at least once a month, whilst 72% of OL respondents visited occasionally or not at all.

See question 3 for details of distance travelled from home by the two cohorts.

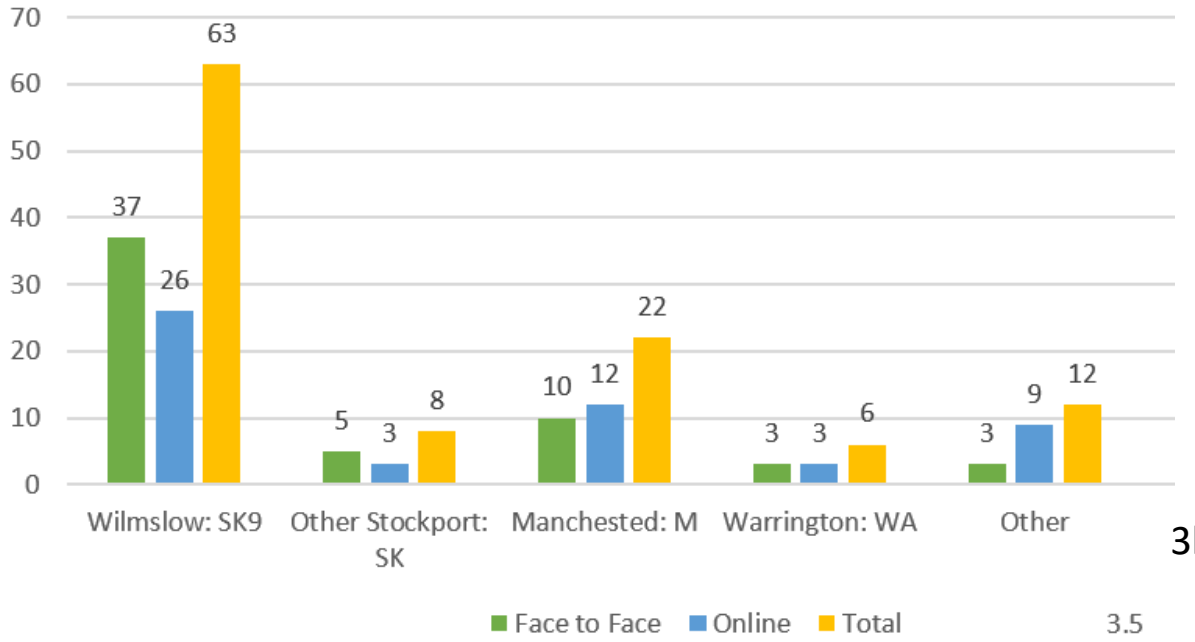
The art trail was the only reason given by more OL than F2F respondents, and 16% of the former gave no reason for visiting, presumably because they live further away and do not usually visit, but no reason given has not been included in these charts.



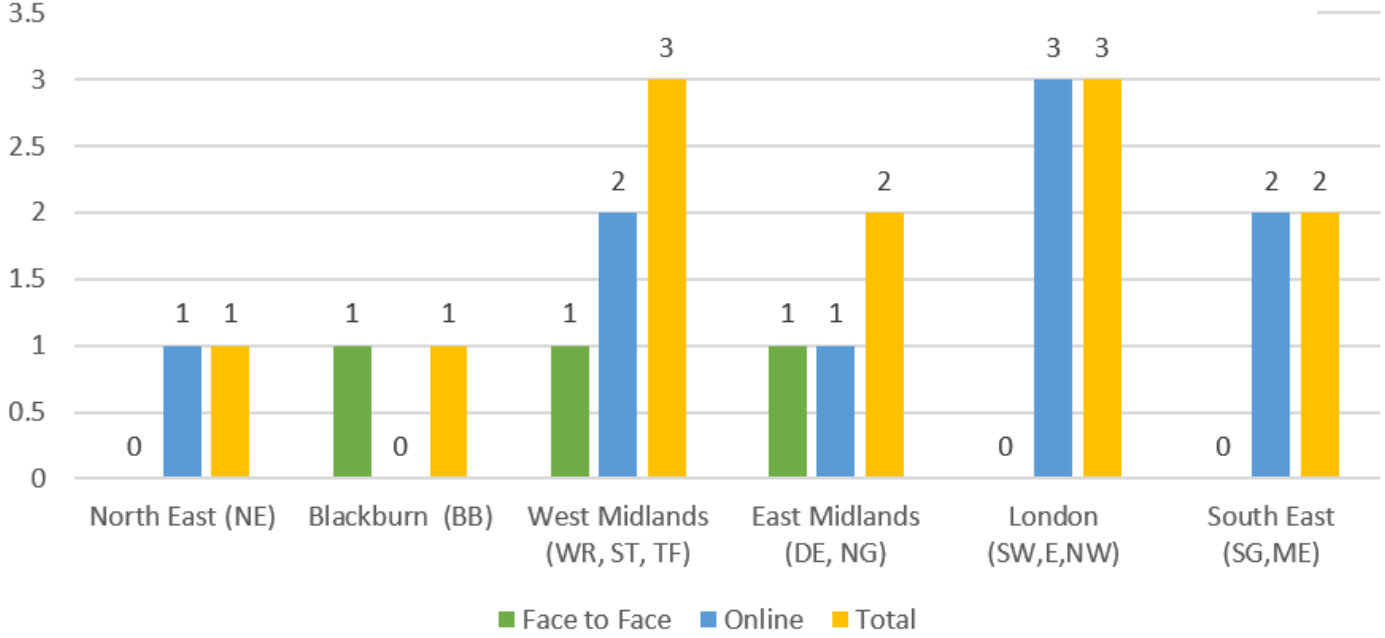




3a. Respondents'' Postcodes



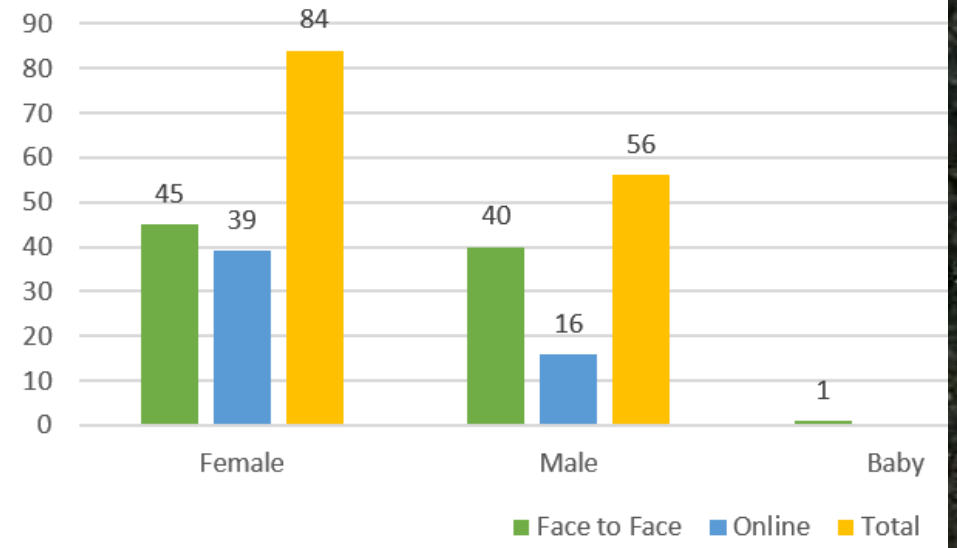
3b. Respondents originating more than c15 miles from Lindow Moss



56% of respondents live in Wilmslow (33% F2F & 23% OL) and 32% within a radius of about 15 miles from Lindow (19% F2F & 32% OL).

Of the 11% coming from further afield, all live in England and 3% were interviewed face to face and 8% responded on line.

4. Responses by Gender

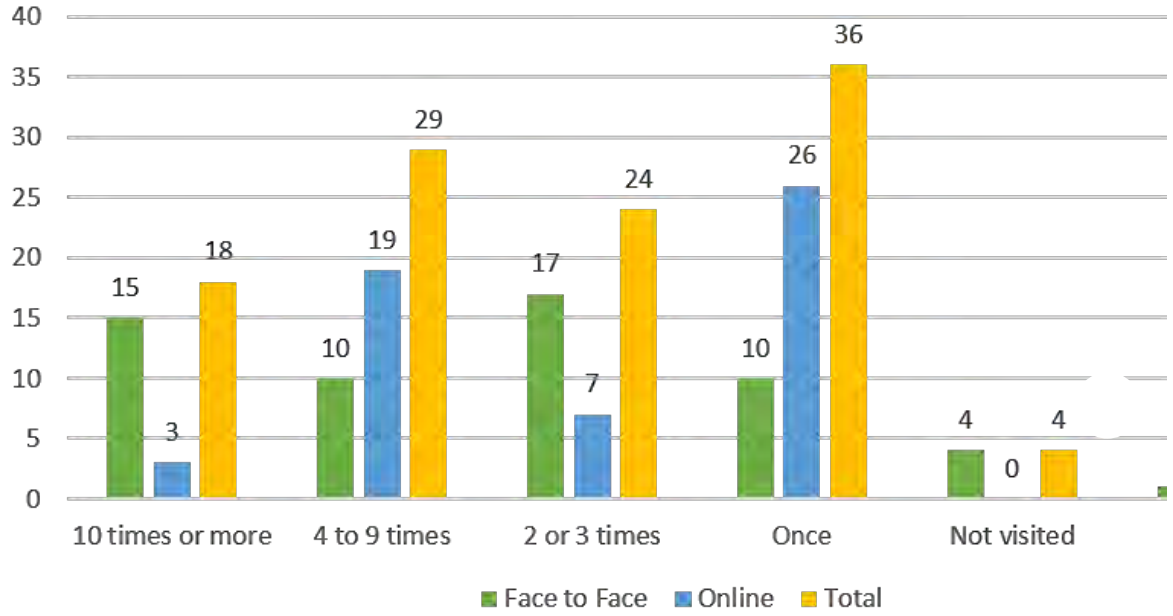


140 visitors' gender was declared, with several groups interviewed F2F.

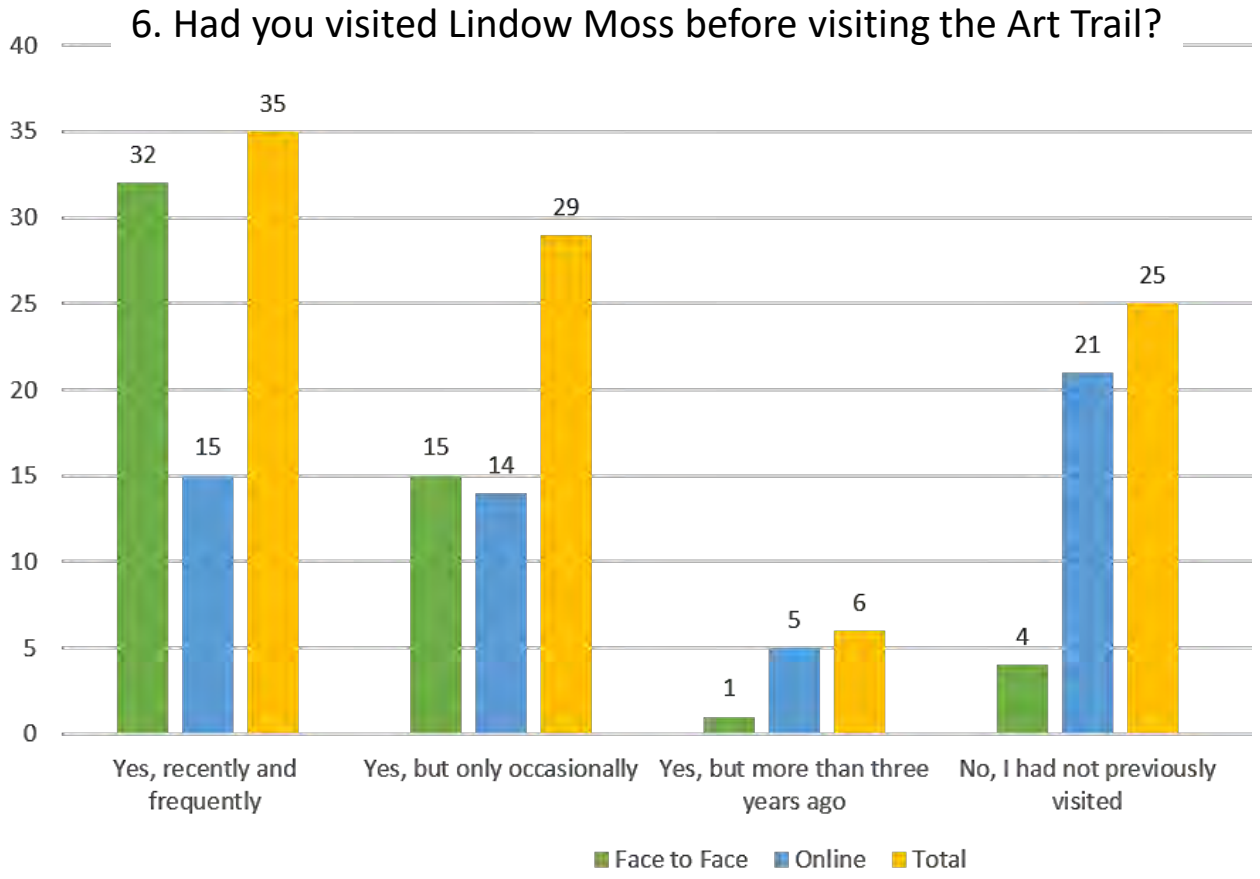
60% were female and 40% male. F2F split 53% female / 47% male and OL 71% female / 29% male.

Photo: Georgie Johnson

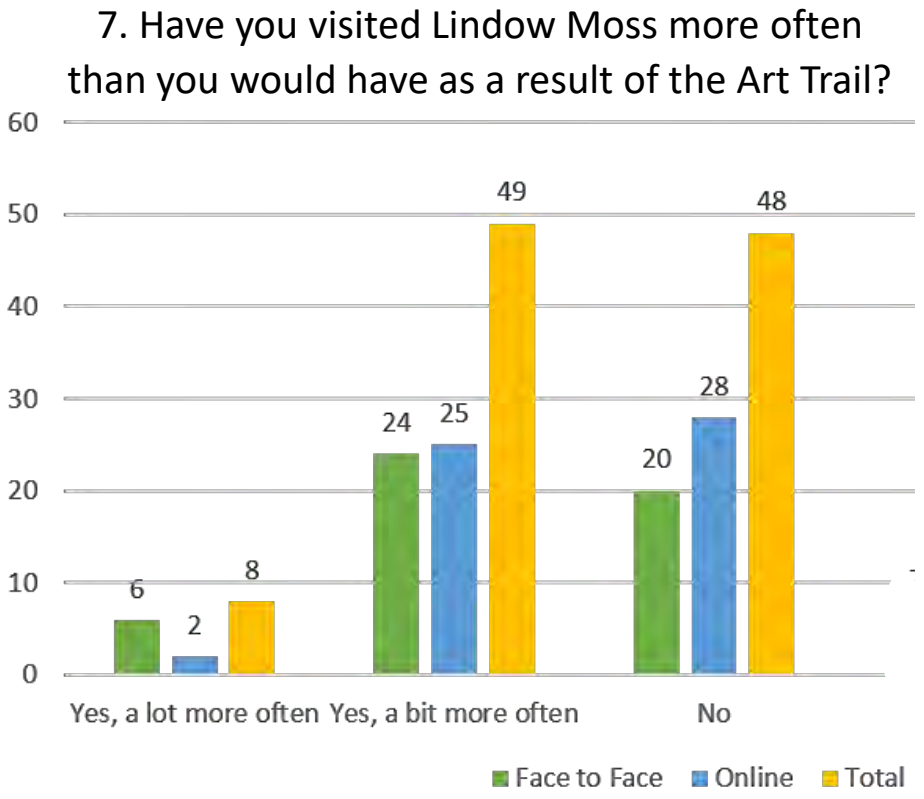
5. Have you personally visited the Window on Lindow Art Trail since it opened in June this year?



The pattern of visit frequency to the Art Trail specifically does not show clear trends except that F2F visits of 10 times or more predominates as did OL respondents visiting only once. The four not visited F2F responses were from interviewees who said that they had visited The Moss for other reasons than the art trail.

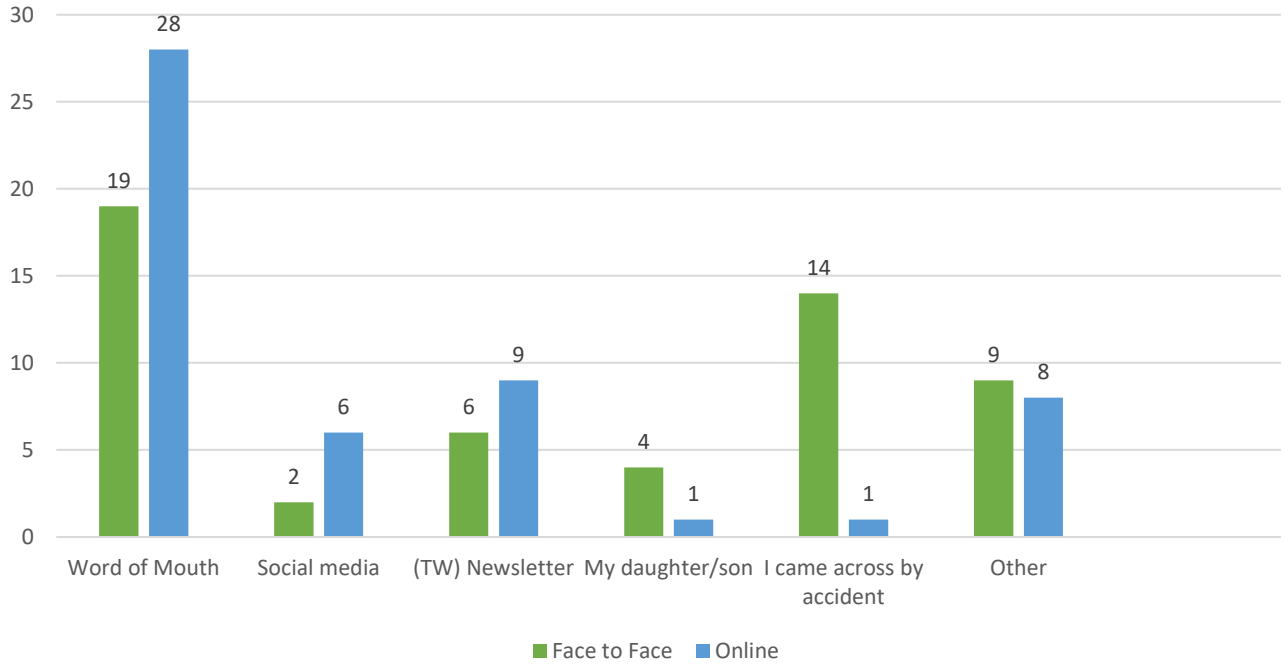


25% of respondents had visited The Moss for the first time as a result of the art trail. Unsurprisingly, twice as many of those visiting frequently were F2F responders.



54% of respondents had visited the Moss more often as a result of the art trail.

9. How did you hear about the Window on Lindow Art Trail?



Word of mouth, and finding it by accident were cited by 62% of F2F and word of mouth by 52% OL. Newsletters and social media also played a role.

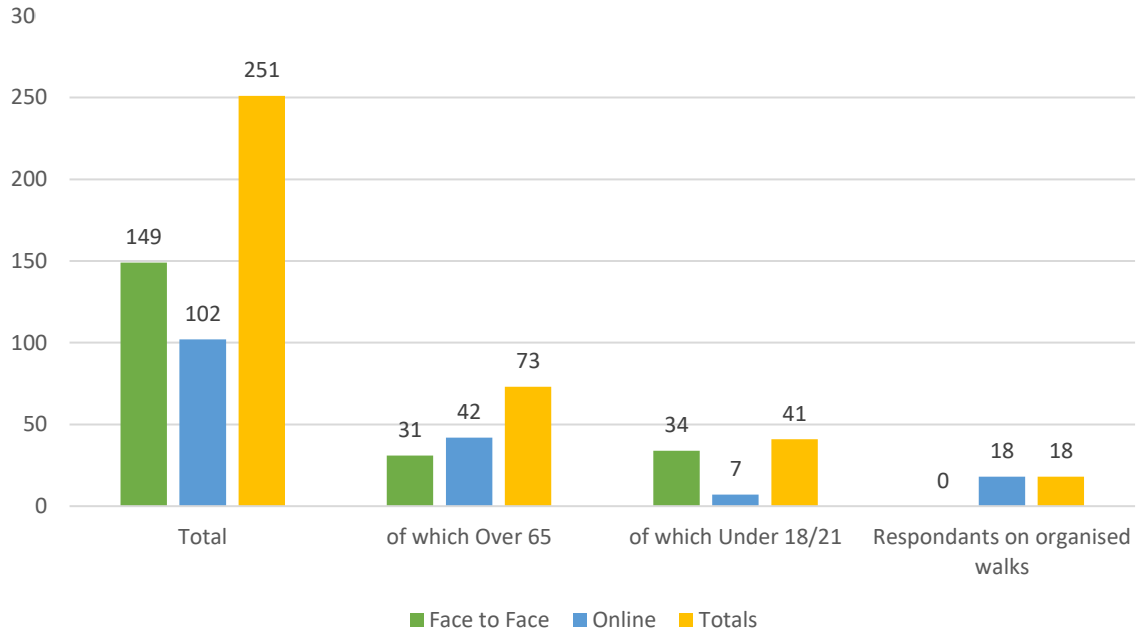
Other sources included other forms of word of mouth and on-site signs/leaflets:

Other Responses:	Face to Face	Online
On site signs/ leaflets	5	1
Library	1	
Animal Sanctuary	1	
Do You Know This Man signs	1	
Phil Barton	1	2
Family		2
June Jodrell Bank event		1
I was invited		1
Wilmslow Guild Natural History Soc.		1
My walking group		1
Total Other	9	9

Photo: John O'Brien

Photo: Anna Riordan

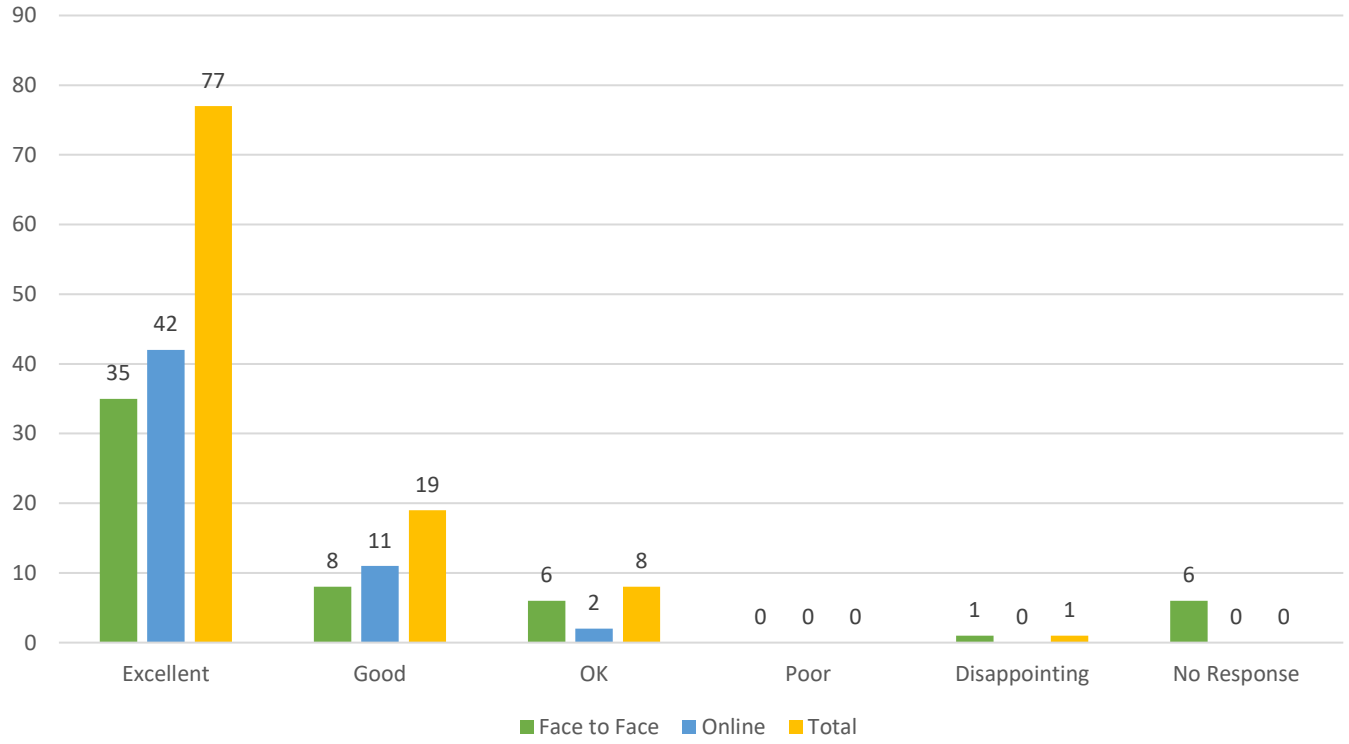
10. When you visited the Art Trail did you come with others?



Respondents indicated the number of people who visited with them. Their answers in several cases are open to interpretation, particularly in relation to “my family” and “with a group”. These numbers form a conservative estimate based on the responses given.

An average, each of 99 responders brought 2.5 people with them. Of those additional visitors, 28% were over 65 and 16% were under 21.

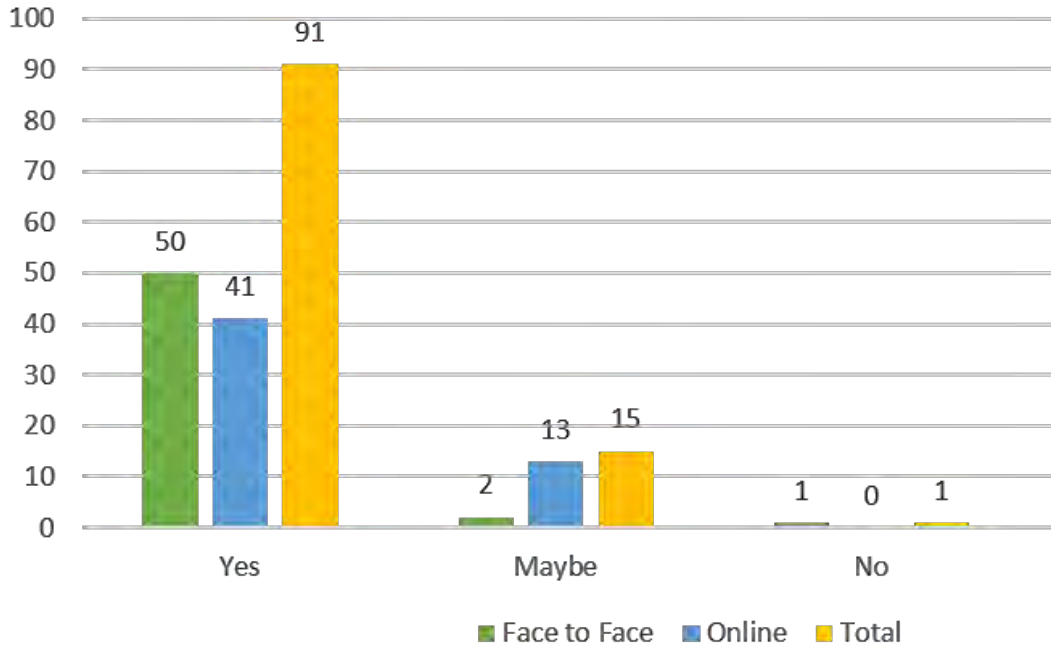
11. How would you rate your experience of visiting the Art Trail?



91% of those responding rated the Art Trail as excellent or good, 9% OK and 1% as disappointing.

Photo: Chris Hills

12. Would you like to see art displayed on Lindow Moss in future years?



45 respondents asked to be added to the Friends of Lindow Moss mailing list, with a further 13 saying they were already signed up.

There is strong support for future public art work, with 85% wanting more and a further 14% not against.

Photo: Jane Andrews

Comments: Lindow Moss

Note: Many comments touched on more than one subject area, so total is more than 100%. A degree of subjectivity in the analysis is inevitable, although Microsoft's CoPilot was most helpful!

1. Restoration and Preservation

Many comments (c40%) emphasise the importance of restoring and preserving Lindow Moss for future generations. There is a strong sentiment that the restoration project should be prioritised and expedited, with some criticism of the current pace and oversight.

> *"It's important to preserve this unique site for the education and enjoyment of future generations so they become aware of the rich history of this area. Hopefully encouraging some of them to help maintain this special place."*
>
> *"I would like to see the Moss restoration making faster progress. I would like Cheshire East Council to make Lindow Moss restoration a greater priority."*
>
> *"Incredible things you guys are doing to save the beautiful natural area so close to Wilmslow."*

2. Environmental Impact and Education (c30%)

There is a strong awareness of the environmental benefits of restoring Lindow Moss, particularly in terms of wildlife and carbon storage. Educational efforts, such as guided walks, are appreciated and seen as valuable in raising awareness about the importance of the restoration.

> *"Support the restoration especially if it helps store carbon."*
>
> *"An Ecologist from Manchester University also contributed to the walk guiding. He explained how the bog is being restored. This was most fascinating too and very positive to hear about.“*
>
> *“First visit. Would like to get my nursery children involved. Re-establishment of habitat. Gone from a tip to dragonflies, forest, badgers. Real community project.”*
>
> *“I feel The Moss is important because of its potential environmental impact and the perfect place to have an art trail to highlight and promote what is being done to save it.”*

3. Personal Connection and Enjoyment (c25%)

Lindow Moss holds a special place in the hearts of many individuals, providing them with cherished memories and a sense of intrigue. People enjoy walking, exploring, and experiencing the changing seasons in this unique landscape.

> *"It has provided me with many happy memories and it's great seeing so many people enjoying the area and art trail.“*
>
> *"For me Lindow Moss is a place of intrigue. The history of the land and the landscape. It's got to be one of the most fascinating walks I have undertaken and would want to repeat time and time again. I need to experience it with the changing seasons.“*
>
> *“Whilst it is both a beautiful & peaceful place, it can be foreboding & challenging to explore. But I love experiencing its variety of moods throughout the year & the freshness of the air.”*

4. Community and Social Interaction (c15%)

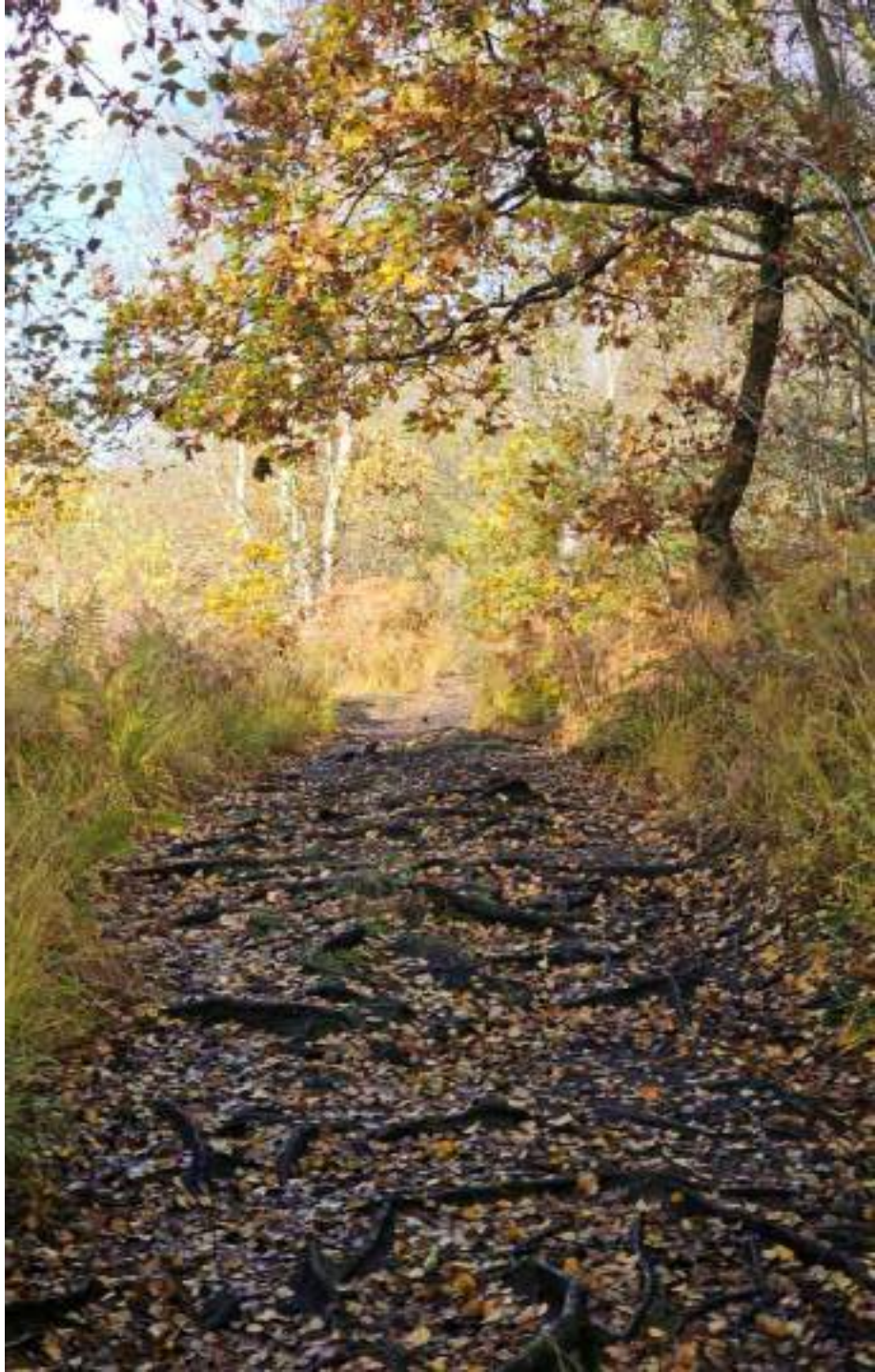
The area serves as a valuable community space where people can socialise, meet friends, and engage in recreational activities. It is a place for families and individuals to connect with nature and each other.

> *“We like to meet friends here for a walk then go for a coffee afterwards rather than sitting indoors to meet."*
>
> *"Kids love riding their bikes here and I love to run through and escape the kids here!“*
>
> *“Proud that this is going on in my community on my doorstep. Love the mix of art, social history nature and exercise.”*
>
> *“Am delighted to see so many people enjoying and discovering the Moss. It is worth treasuring.”*

5. Challenges and Concerns

Some (c10%) comments highlight practical challenges and concerns, such as the lack of facilities and the impact of nearby housing developments. While there is support for the restoration, there are also calls for better integration of new developments with the natural landscape.

> *"We don't use this space as much as we should, lack of toilets makes it hard for a little one."*
>
> *"I dislike the housing development; I am surprised and disappointed that the buildings are not designed to blend in to some extent with the landscape. However, I appreciate that this was a way to enable restoration of the Moss, which I hope is fulfilled.“*
>
> *"Would like better paths and wood chip putting down to improve how wet it is“*
>
> *“The restoration can't start soon enough, I am looking forward keenly to seeing the reincarnation of the peat landscape. I would like to keep that feeling of the bog being slightly magical, slightly dangerous, where history is both buried deep and revealed.”*



Comments: Art Trail

1. **Enjoyment and Inspiration** (c25%):
    - *"I thoroughly enjoyed the art trail and exhibits. It was very interesting and reminded me of things I had learned about this place as a child, but had not thought about in years!".*
    - *"There is a very high standard of art work and I found it very inspirational.“*
    - Parent: *“Great to get kids involved in nature.”* Child: *“It looks really cool.”*
    - *“Nice to see lots of families, more people, mixed groups.”*
2. **Variety and Quality of Artwork** (c20%:
    - *"Very impressed with the variety of artwork, especially when it embraces the social and economic history of the area. Also impressed with how the artwork is sympathetic and blends in with the natural environment."*
    - *"It was good to see such a diverse display of art, from the large piece comprising of all the school children's works to the individual pieces. The use of such a variety of materials too.“*
    - *“Discretion with which they've been placed, complement not dominate; Mix of materials; Well done – congratulations!”*
    - *“Different media are an advantage. Coloured ones draw attention and natural ones are more hidden.”*

3. **Educational Value** (c30%):

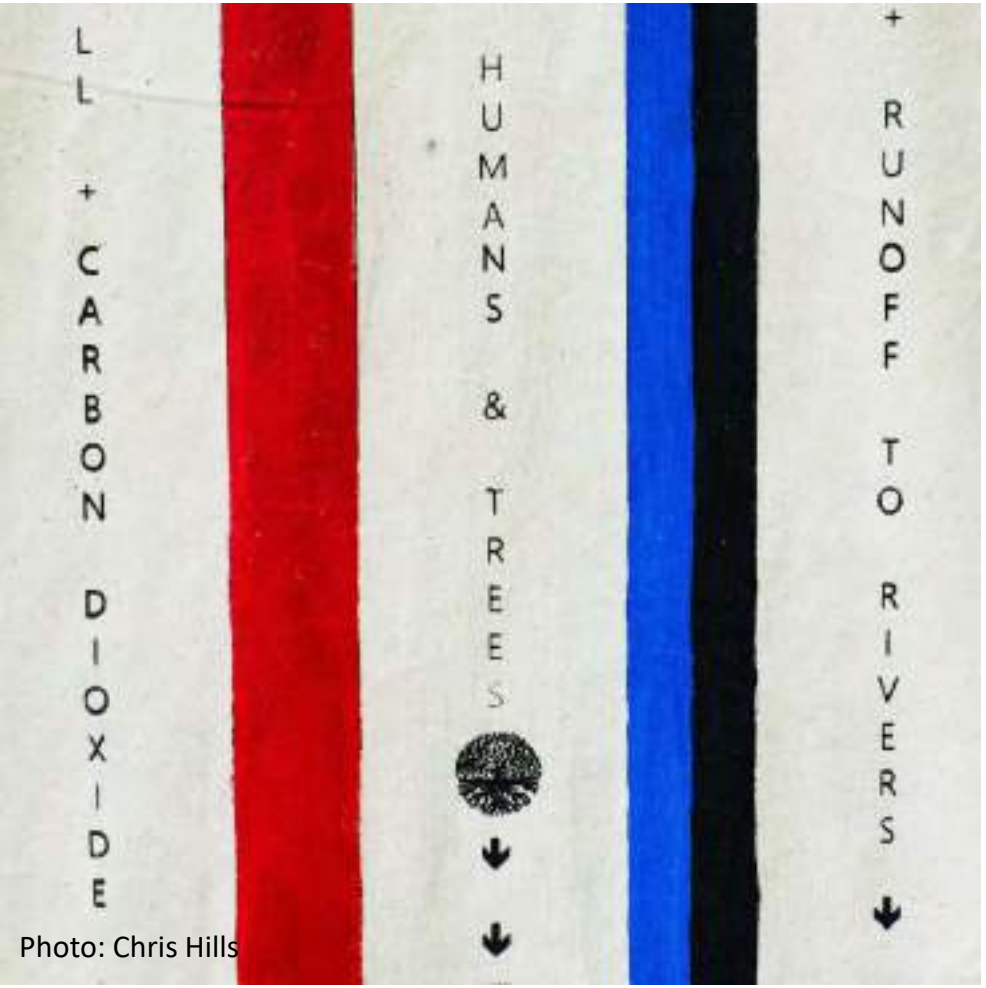


Photo: Chris Hills

- *"Leaflet really good. Learned about local history and area. [Made it] More interesting."*
- *"I learned a lot about the importance of peat to the environment, and how critical it is to restore the area. The art was thoughtful and creative, with well considered links to the area.“*
- *"The involvement of the school with the art project was important for me.“*
- *“The art trail was thought provoking, blended in well with the landscape, and reflected much about the historical and natural significance of the site. The guide leaflet was very useful in providing the background and context to the art works. The guided tour… was fantastic.”*
- *“We all enjoyed it hugely. It touched on so many important elements of living in the 21st century and the importance of sustainability, working towards net zero, story-telling, pre-history, landscape, and expression through art, sculpture and installations. It helped us all look and be in the place in a different way.”*
- *“I came on the official walk guided by the artist who had done most of the artworks. It was most fascinating to hear from him and to see the works. Without his direction I might not have spotted all the works. I thought the works great and very suitable to their situation.”*
- *“I learned a lot about the importance of peat to the environment, and how critical it is to restore the area. The art was thoughtful and creative, with well considered links to the area.”*

4. **Overall Positive Feedback** (c40%):

- *"Fantastic, love it. Trails are good when you have children (aged 5 and 7).“*
- *"Absolutely loved coming across art in the open. It was thought provoking and very much enjoyed following the trail map as well as just coming*
- *“Superb, entertaining, educational and thought-provoking.”*
- *“I feel the community has benefited and I would be supportive of any future ambitions for art displays there.”*
- *“It was a fantastic venue for the Window on Lindow Trail; it would be exciting to see other art displayed there.”*
- *“A fantastic community project and we loved the way the art works related directly to the Moss and Lindow Man. The banners from the school children were fantastic, as were all of the artists contributions.”*
- *“Seeing art in location, especially when it’s relevant to the location is brilliant. All the pieces of art were good to excellent and the history and science were fascinating.”*
- *“Fantastic & varied quality. I loved the natural materials used in many of the art pieces & the educational value of them. Of particular amazement to me was the interpretation depicted in the hundreds of banners made by the school children relating to the importance of Lindow Moss - a very moving work both individually & collectively.”*

Photo: Georgie Johnson

5. **Suggestions for Improvement** (c15%):

Greater Explanation and Information Boards:

- *“Would be improved if greater explanation. Need some information boards.“*
- *“it would be good to have some more on-site information about the restoration work on this site"*
- *“I came on the official walk guided by the artist who had done most of the artworks. It was most fascinating to hear from him and to see the works. Without his direction I might not have spotted all the works. I thought the works great and very suitable to their situation.”*
- *“Enjoyed a lone visit so much that I returned for a guided tour which was an even better experience - by far.”*

Better Signposting:

- Improve signposting outside the site - *“Needs better signposting outside the site.“; “More publicity online”; “Signs in front of artwork rather than a leaflet”*

Improved Accessibility:

- *“Liked it. Accessibility could be improved."*

Window on Lindow Art Trail
Primary Schools Project

Participants response to the question:

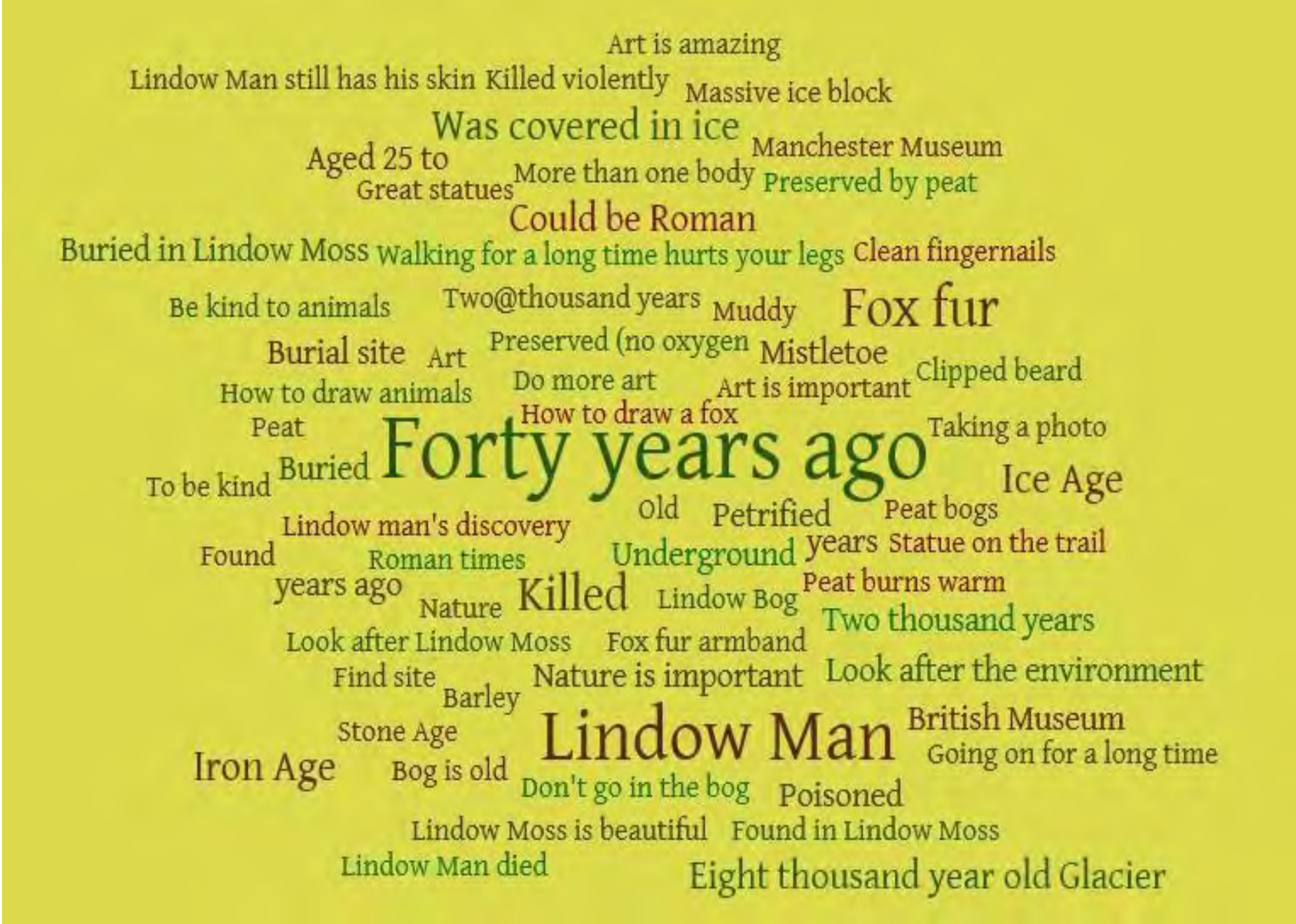
"Describe how do you feel about taking part in this art project in 1, 2 or 3 words."

Written on post it notes (for younger children by their teacher/helper) either on-site or within a fortnight after.

Window on Lindow Art Trail Primary Schools Project

Participants response to the question: "Please write what you have learnt about Lindow Moss and Lindow Man'.

Written on post it notes (for younger children by their teacher/helper) either on-site or within a fortnight afterwards.



Overall Conclusions

- Widespread support for the restoration of Lindow Moss and for Discover Lindow
- Strong evidence of increased visits and demographics and attraction of first-time visitors
- Strong support for the art trail and continued creative input
- Strong support for the restoration and protection of Lindow Moss
- Good evidence of (and welcome for) younger and older people's engagement
- Welcome for Art Trail educational and community dimensions
- Some suggestions for improvements:
  - Better information, signage on and off site
  - Frustration at pace of restoration
  - Some concerns about access, toilets and visitor centre (but also some about maintaining the liminal/ wild/ remote atmosphere of The Moss)

Photo: Pauline Handley

Transition Wilmslow

DISCOVER LINDOW 2024

Cheshire East Council

WILMSLOW TOWN COUNCIL

EVANS ARTS TRUST

Robert Clutterbuck Charitable Trust

Heritage Fund

POWERED BY LEVELLING UP

MANCHESTER 1824 The University of Manchester

Photo: Gorsey Bank Primary School

Window on Lindow Art Trail